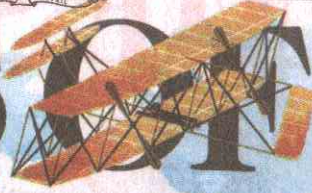


THE TIMES OF INDIA



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Govt, oppn come together briefly to pass disabilities bill

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: The treasury and opposition benches came together briefly in the Lok Sabha on the last day of the winter session on Friday to clear the disabilities bill that raises the number of recognised categories to 21, from seven, besides hiking reservation in government jobs from 3% to 4%.

The Rights of Persons

► **Disruptions lead to winter washout, P 10 & 12**

with Disabilities Bill, 2016, for the first time, also includes acid attack and Parkinson's disease in the list of recognised disabilities.

Though the entire opposition supported the bill, Congress and Telangana Rashtra Samithi members pressed for division on an amendment on the issue of reservation. They wanted an amendment to increase the reservation for the disabled to 5%, arguing that the original bill, introduced by the UPA-II government in

QUOTA IN JOBS RAISED TO 4%

► Quota for disabled in government jobs up from 3% to 4%

► List of disabilities expanded from 7 to 21. New entries include acid attack victims, Parkinson's patients and those suffering from blood disorders like thalassemia



► Those with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities like Down's syndrome, autism and dyslexia eligible for job quota for first time

► Free education for children aged 6 to 18 with high level of disability

2014, had provided for it.

The amendment was, however, defeated by 121 to 43 votes. Prime Minister Narendra Modi was present in the House during the discussion and division which saw the House run smoothly for over two hours, leading to passage of the bill. The bonhomie over the politically sensitive issue was similar to the one witnessed in the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday when the upper House passed the bill.

Replying to the debate, mi-

nister of social justice and empowerment 'Thaawar' Chand Gehlot said a scheme of "universal identity card for the disabled" was on the anvil and an agency had already been finalised for it. The proposed card would also be linked to Aadhaar to help the disabled all over the country in a seamless fashion, he said. The card would also resolve the problem of getting disability certificates, he said.

► **Foreign tie-up, P 16**