

DATE: DEPARTMENT / SUBJECT:

Other Study

NAME OF THE NEWS PAPER:

The Hindu

DATE: 3/12/2019

Congress's Patole elected Maharashtra Speaker

Will present report on finances: CM

ALOK DESHPANDE
MUMBAI

Senior Congress MLA Nana Patole was elected unopposed as the Speaker of the Maharashtra Assembly on Sunday after the BJP withdrew its candidate Kisan Kathore.



Speaker Nana Patole at the Vidhan Bhavan on Sunday. •PTI

At the special session of the Assembly, BJP legislature party leader and former Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis was named Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly by Mr. Patole. Minister and NCP MLA Jayant Patil said he appreciated the spirit of understanding shown by the Opposition BJP in withdrawing its candidate and ensuring that Mr. Patole is elected unopposed.

At a press conference after the session, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray said the government would review the fiscal health of the

State and bring out a report. Minister Chhagan Bhujbal, who also addressed the media, said a White Paper on the financial condition would be issued soon. The statement comes hours after Governor B.S. Keshyari in his address to the joint session of the legislature said a report on the financial condition would be presented to the people.

CM, FADNAVIS SPAR PAGE 10

Uddhav and Fadnavis spar in Assembly

Bitterness among former allies spills over in session

ALOK DESHPANDE
MUMBAI

The political clash between Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray and the BJP in the Assembly on Sunday morning while congratulating Devendra Fadnavis on his appointment as the Leader of the Opposition was an indication that the former allies are in no mood to forgive the other.

"I will not hesitate to admit that we have been good friends for a long time," Mr. Thackeray said after Mr. Fadnavis was named the Leader of Opposition. "Had you listened to us, I would have been sitting at home in the



Maharashtra CM Uddhav Thackeray and Leader of the Opposition Devendra Fadnavis in the Assembly. •PTI

ing today's developments on TV," he added.

Mr. Thackeray said he had "found a friend in my opponents for the past 20 years and my friend for the past 20 years is sitting in Opposition."

"Let's work towards betterment for the needy by

keeping the word 'opposition' out," he added.

Mr. Fadnavis replied that he did not consider the opposition an enemy. "We believe that democracy is an answer to everything. I did say that I will return, but I never announced that 'possible,'" he said.

Will not dump Hindutva, says CM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI

Notwithstanding the ruling Shiv Sena-NCP-Congress combine mentioning the word "secular" in the preamble of its Common Minimum Programme (CMP), Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray on Sunday said he would never abandon the ideology of Hindutva. Mr. Thackeray, who heads the Sena, told the Assembly that the ideology of Hindutva can't be separated from him.

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