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Only 10 will make it to BSY cabinet, old-timers must wait

ASHWINI M SRIPAD @Bengaluru

NEARLY two months after the assembly bypolls, newly-elected BJP MLAs are all to be inducted into Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa's Cabinet on Thursday morning.

However, BJP loyalists who were hoping to make it to the ministry will have to wait a little longer. The new ministers are likely to be allotted portfolios on Thursday evening or Friday.

Though the CM had earlier announced that he would induct 13 legislators, including 10 newly-elected MLAs and three old-timers, he changed his plans in the last minute after hectic lobbying over the last two days by ministerial aspirants and also voices of discontent over the possible induction of CP Yogeshwara, who had lost the 2018 elections.

"I was told by our party central leadership to induct only 10 ministers on February 6. I will be meeting them soon in New Delhi after the



MINISTERIAL ASPIRANTS BICKER OVER CAR NUMBERS

The newly elected MLAs are yet to be inducted into the cabinet, but they are already fighting for favourite car registration numbers. This is because it is numerology that is 'driving' them to go in for a particular number. **PS**

oath-taking ceremony and discuss the issue. For now, we will induct only 10 newly-elected MLAs. The remaining will be inducted later," Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa said on Wednesday.

Athani MLA Mahesh Kumathalli will be the only newly-elected MLA to be left out of the ministry. He was part of the team of 17 Congress-JDS legislators which had helped in the formation of the BJP government.

"I will speak to Kumathalli as it will be difficult to induct him now," the CM said but assured the MLA of giving him a "bigger responsibility" later. **PS**

Portfolios will be announced on Thursday or Friday, says Pralhad Joshi

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ACCORDING to party sources, senior leaders including Umesh Katti, Aravind Limbavalli and Yogeshwara too were to be inducted on Thursday. However, given the lobbying by legislators from different regions and also the opposition to some names, the CM was forced to change his plans. "We are 100% sure of inducting Umesh Katti into the ministry after discussing with the top brass," the CM said, giving some hope for the party veteran from Belagavi who was

miffed over not being considered in the first round itself when Laxman Savadi, who had lost 2018 assembly polls, was made Deputy Chief Minister.

"Portfolios for the new ministers will be announced either on Thursday evening or on Friday," Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Minister Pralhad Joshi told The New Indian Express. Joshi, who is currently busy with the ongoing Parliament session, said the induction of other ministers is unlikely before the state assembly session starts on February 17.

Party seniors are likely to be inducted only during the reshuffle in June. "Inducting only three old-timers may create fresh trouble. The CM may decide to reshuffle his ministry in June when the government completes almost one year so that more seniors and party loyalists can be accommodated in the cabinet," said sources in the know of the developments.

Currently, there are 18 ministers, including the CM, in the cabinet which has a sanctioned strength of 34. Sixteen berths are vacant. "There is some re-

sistance within the party. Legislators from Kalyana Karnataka region are demanding representation for them in the cabinet, so are the MLAs from central Karnataka region. When such is the situation, inducting only three can add fuel to the fire. So, it will be kept on hold at least for time being," the sources said.

"In June or July, the CM can drop five people from the cabinet when a reshuffle is planned. Then, eleven can be inducted, accommodating MLAs from the Yediyurappa as well as BL Santosh camps," sources said.

On Wednesday evening, the CM called all the 10 MLAs personally to invite them for the oath-taking ceremony at Raj Bhavan on Thursday. Hirekerur MLA B C Patil tweeted that February 5, 4.34 pm will be special for him as the CM himself had called and invited him to take oath. "I will be taking oath as cabinet minister on Thursday, need blessings," he wrote.

The new ministers are likely to be given the additional portfolios that are with the current ministers apart from the ministries that are with the CM.

Who'll Make It

- S T Somashiekar (Yeshwanthpur)
- Gopalraiah (Mahabaleswara)
- Byrachi Basavaraj (K.R. Puram)
- Dr K Surihakar (Chikkaballapur)
- Shrimant Patil (Kaggalwadi)
- Shivaram Hebbar (Yellapur)
- Ramesh Jarkihoti (Gokul)
- B C Patil (Hirekerur)
- Anand Singh (Vijayanagara)
- K C Narayanagowda (KR Puram)