

ಪತ್ರಿಕಾ ತುಣುಕುಗಳು
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ಇಲಾಖೆ / ವಿಷಯ : DEPARTMENT / SUBJECT: Minister

ಪತ್ರಿಕೆಯ ಹೆಸರು : NAME OF THE NEWS PAPER: Deccan Herald ದಿನಾಂಕ : DATE : 13/10/2019

TV ban: Law minister backs Speaker's decision

BENGALURU, DHNS

The ruling BJP defended Speaker Vishweshwara Hegde Kageri's decision to prohibit news channels from covering the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly, even as the Opposition Congress called it "the murder of democracy."

Kageri had ordered that news channels should not be allowed to record the proceedings of the winter session of the legislature, saying it was in line with the system that exists in the Parliament. Kageri said private news channels could use the feed from pub-

lic broadcaster Doordarshan, which was roped in to cover the session.

'Practice in many states'

Taking the Speaker's side, Law Minister JC Madhuswamy said this system was prevalent in many other states and that it was a decision taken at a conference of all Speakers.

"This proposal is 10 years old. The Speaker alone shouldn't be blamed," he said.

But Leader of the Opposition Siddaramaiah minced no words in criticising the Speaker's decision to keep news cameras out. "With news channels around, legislators would be

on their toes," Siddaramaiah said during a debate.

"I request the Speaker to reconsider his decision. Not everyone can read a newspaper. Electronic media is the most effective medium to reach the people of the state."

Siddaramaiah pointed out that the Congress government he headed had plans to start its own TV channel to broadcast Assembly proceedings.

"But we dropped that idea," he said.

"My personal view is that curtailing press rights will only hurt democracy. There must be transparency in the way this House functions."