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DyCM Laxman Savadi at Vidhana Soudha in Bengaluru on Monday | EXPRESS

## DyCM Savadi elected MLC with 113 votes, opponent gets zero

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

DEPUTY Chief Minister Laxman Savadi crossed a minor hurdle to continue in his post, and got elected as an MLC in an election for a lone seat on Monday morning.

He secured 113 votes, while his opponent, independent candidate Anil Kumar, polled 'zero'. Anil's defeat was perhaps a reflection of the unity, or rather disunity, of opposition parties in the state. It was JDS leader H D Revanna who propped up the 'Congressman' Anil, who was once a follower of former minister (late) MP Prakash, as the independent candidate. Revanna had got ten JDS MLAs to sign in the proposers' form, but the party with just 34 MLAs was in no position to challenge the candidature of Savadi and desperately needed Congress' help. But once the Grand Old Party spurned overtures from the JDS, Anil was bound to fail. To heap more humiliation on him, both Congress and JDS MLAs failed to turn up for voting and that was the reason Anil drew a blank.

Even the lone JDS MLA, G T

Deve Gowda, who was present, did not vote for Anil. He later said that since the ballot was a secret exercise, he could not tell who he supported. But since Anil drew a blank, it was clear who did Deve Gowda vote for. JDS leader H D Kumaraswamy said that he too is not sure whose side G T Deve Gowda was on.

Officials said that Anil approached them and tried to withdraw the candidature, but the rule stipulates that once the candidates are gazetted, they cannot withdraw.

From the ruling camp, all the BJP members turned up and voted for Savadi. Of the 120 votes cast, seven were declared invalid. A verification revealed that six legislators had marked the box with a tick, while they had to write the numeric '1', and the other member had inked an 'X'. All the seven votes were, however, for Savadi.

Since Savadi was not a legislator when he was appointed as DM on August 29, he had to get elected as a member of either House before the expiry of six months.