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Chief Minister

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# I'm not clinging on to power: Kumaraswamy

CM asks BSY to 'expose his government'



Having a word: Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy with Minister D.K. Shivakumar in the House. ■ K. MURALI KUMAR

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Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy used the debate on confidence motion moved by him as an opportunity to insist that he was "not clinging to power" and narrated political ordeals he had experienced since he headed the coalition government in 2006 and during the Opposition BJP's recent attempts to topple the present coalition government.

Mr. Kumaraswamy said that 14 months of the JD (S)-Congress coalition was now reaching its final stage. He reiterated that he was not interested in official positions and it was the Congress that had urged him to become Chief Minister after the fractured mandate in 2018. "Power is not permanent. Power comes and goes," Mr. Kumaraswamy said. "The BJP may have won 303 seats today. But I would like to remind the BJP that the late Rajiv Gandhi had won a mandate with more than 400 seats. But what happened later? Let them not assume power is permanent," he said.

Recalling episodes of political turbulence during the 2008-13 BJP government, he said it was the BJP that started a new chapter in the State's history by getting MLAs to resign to circumvent the anti-defection law. Suggesting how it only led to instability in the BJP government, he said: "I

will also see how stable a government you would give after all this exercise," he told BJP members. Alleging that the BJP had been making attempts to topple the coalition government from day one, the Chief Minister said: "You are enjoying now, but it's temporary. You will also face it in future."

## Seeks detailed debate

He argued for a detailed debate on the allegations the Opposition had made against his government and over how the BJP had systematically been circumventing the anti-defection law and thereby our democracy. "It needs to be recorded for posterity," he said.

He insisted that there should not be a sense of urgency in the voting on the trust vote. He recalled that the former Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee took 10 days to debate and put motion of confidence to vote in 1999. "Why such a hurry now," he asked.

Responding to allegations that the government was effecting transfers before he had proved that he enjoyed the confidence of the House, the Chief Minister said he had not taken any policy decisions and the government was still in office and transfers were regular business. At one point he addressed the Leader of the Opposition B.S. Yeddyurappa asking him to "expose his government".