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ಇಲಾಖೆ / ವಿಷಯ : DEPARTMENT / SUBJECT: Karnataka Legislative Council

Nominated

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Vishwanath, Yogeshwar, Bharathi Shetty among 5 nominated to Council

Shantaram Budna Siddi and Talwar Sabanna are two surprise choices

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The BJP government on Wednesday nominated five people, including former Ministers C.P. Yogeshwar and A.H. Vishwanath, and the former MLC Bharathi Shetty, to the Legislative Council just a few days ahead of its first anniversary. In a surprise choice, the party has also chosen two low-profile candidates, Shantaram Budna Siddi and Talwar Sabanna.

While the 55-year-old Mr. Siddi is the first person from the tribal Siddi community to become a graduate, Dr. Sabanna, who hails from an OBC community, is a professor in the Economics Department of Rani Channamma University, Belagavi. Both of



(From left) A.H. Vishwanath, C.P. Yogeshwar, Bharathi Shetty, and Talwar Sabanna.

them have links with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh.

Balancing act

BJP insiders said the choice of candidates for the Upper House shows that the party central leadership has maintained a balance between the party organisation, promise of protecting political interests of newcomers, and political freedom of the Chief Minister.

Mr. Yogeshwar had lost the Assembly elections in 2018 from Channapatna against the former Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy, while Mr. Vishwanath, who migrated to the BJP from the JD(S), had lost the byelection. Ms. Shetty, a close associate of Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa, had served as an MLC earlier.

Mr. Yogeshwar, who had played a prominent role in 'Operation Lotus' (the code

name for wooing legislators from other parties into the BJP), was upset over not getting political accommodation.

Similarly, Mr. Vishwanath too was agitated over not getting his due despite crossing floors to the BJP. The party has now pacified both of them through their nomination to the Council.

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Vishwanath, Yogeshwar, Bharathi Shetty nominated

Similarly, the trend of recognising low-profile persons from the party cadre too has continued with the nomination of Dr. Sabanna and Mr. Siddi, party leaders observe.

Cabinet expansion?

The nomination of both Mr. Yogeshwar and Mr. Vishwanath, who are strong aspirants for ministerial berths, has triggered political spec

ulation that Cabinet expansion is on the cards.

While a section of the party leaders feel that the present situation, with COVID-19 pandemic at its peak, may not be conducive for any ministerial expansion, the aspirants are hoping that the party leadership would take up the exercise as soon as the situation comes under control.