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Karnataka Legislative Assembly

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Vishweshwar Hegde Kageri to be elected Legislative Assembly Speaker unopposed

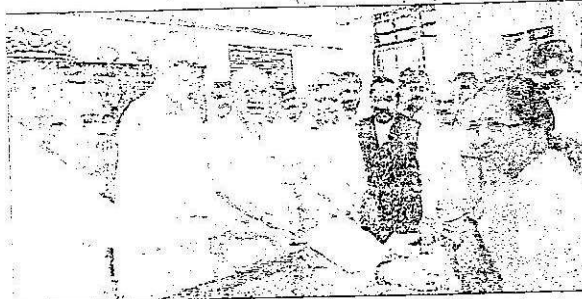
BENGALURU, DENIS: Six-time BJP legislator Vishweshwar Hegde Kageri is all set to be elected as Legislative Assembly Speaker unopposed as the Opposition Congress and the JD(S) have not fielded their candidates for the post.

On Tuesday, Kageri was the only one to file nomination for Speakers' elections scheduled for Wednesday. Since there were no contenders for the post, Kageri will be declared as the new Speaker of the Assembly when session resumes.

The post of the Speaker fell vacant following resignation of K R Ramesh Kumar who was at the centre of a month-long political drama that culminated with the collapse of Congress-JD(S) coalition government.

Surprise pick

Kageri's selection came as a surprise as the state leadership preferred K G Bopaiah for the post. However, the BJP central leadership asked Kageri to file his nomination, overlooking Bopaiah who had attracted the



BJP MLA Vishweshwar Hegde Kageri submits his nomination to Karnataka Assembly Secretary MK Vishalakshi for the election to Speaker's post, in Bengaluru on Tuesday. Party leader Govind Karjol, Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa, former chief minister Jagadish Shettar, and former deputy chief minister K S Eshwarappa are seen. DH PHOTO

wrath of the Supreme Court during his previous tenure as Speaker (2009-13).

This was seen as the BJP central leadership snubbing the state leadership, indicating its hold on the affairs ahead of the Cabinet expansion.

"We were asked to send three names on Monday night and the party selected Bopaiah, Kageri and Jagadish Shettar. However, when Bopaiah's nomination remained a

mere formality, the national leadership of the party asked Kageri to file nomination for the Speaker's post on Tuesday morning," a senior BJP leader told *DH*.

Kageri served as the primary and secondary education minister in the previous BJP government (2008-13). Having represented Ankola three times between 1994 and 2007, Kageri shifted to Sirsi after Ankola constituen-

cy ceased to exist following delimitation.

Hailing from a middle class Havyaka Brahmin family in Sirsitaluk of Uttara Kannada district, Kageri became a full-time worker of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP). He earned his bachelor degree in Arts from Karnatak University.

Kageri served as ABVP's state secretary before being into the BJP in 1990. He was in the forefront of the 'Save Education Movement' launched by the ABVP during 1983-87 when the Ramakrishna Hegde government was in office.