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## Several ministers missing as new prez Kateel takes charge

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

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Bengaluru: Nalin Kumar Kateel took charge as the new president of the state BJP unit, replacing chief minister BS Yediyurappa, who was at the helm since April 2016. Kateel took charge as the 18th president on a day when the party's first state president, AK Subbalaah, passed away.

Kateel, known for his inflammatory speeches, began his stint with chants of "Sri Ramachandra ki jai", "PM Modi ki jai" and "Amit Shah ki jai". A building contractor, Kateel joined the RSS at the age of 18 and began his political career in the BJP in 2004.

Some newly appointed ministers including R Ashoka and disgruntled MLAs skipped the coronation event, indicating that all is not well in the party. Ashoka was reportedly in Bengaluru, but still didn't turn up. Others including CC Patil, Jagadish Shettar and B Sreeramulu either came late or left early.

Addressing party workers, Kateel said he was humbled by the responsibility. "Even an ordinary party worker can hold the top-most post. This can happen only in the BJP," Kateel said. "I'm not a scholar or an intellectual, just a humble party worker. I feared accepting this post, but I also



PASSING THE BATON: Outgoing chief BS Yediyurappa crowns Nalin Kumar Kateel as the new president of the state BJP unit

believe seniors like Yediyurappa will stand by me."

Yediyurappa said the party had to keep the momentum going. "We set a record during the Lok Sabha elections by winning 26 of the 28 seats in the state. I am confident Kateel will

take the party to greater heights," he said.

Hitting the ground running, Kateel held a meeting with those in charge of internal elections for the forthcoming mandal (taluk) and district-level office bearers.

### Case against Kateel quashed

The Karnataka high court on Tuesday quashed proceedings against new state BJP president Nalin Kumar Kateel in a provocative speech case. Allowing a petition filed by Kateel, Justice PS Dinesh Kumar noted that under Sec 155 of Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC), when offences alleged are purely non-cognizable in nature, it is for the informant/complainant to seek permission

from the magistrate to register an FIR. Justice Kumar stated that the complainant, Ullal Block Congress Committee, had not complied with the rule. It is alleged that Kateel, on January 1, 2017, had threatened to burn the entire district if the police failed to book the culprits who murdered 27-year-old Karthik Raj, son of one Umesh Ganiga, a former vice-president of the taluk panchayat. TNN