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ANYONE'S GAME

High voting in MLC election ups hopes of all

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WITH the voting percentage high in the election to West Graduates' constituency of the Legislative Council, both Congress and BJP are doing their own math on the victory of their candidate. But the independent, Basavaraj Gurikar, could upset expectations of both national parties on the counting day, November 10.

Contrary to earlier elections, the turnout at Wednesday's hustings was 20 per cent more than the previous polls. The polling percentage stood at 70.11 per cent as against 49.48 in 2014.

The higher turnout was seen despite lesser number of voters being enrolled for the election this year. The total number of voters registered was 74,472 as against 94,352 in the previous election. Everybody had expected the polling not to cross the halfway mark as graduates in the constituency had not shown interest in enrolling themselves.

But it is upside down now.

Both BJP and Congress claimed that the high voter turnout is an indicator of their candidate's victory. But political observers said it is difficult to predict as it is a three-way contest and not a two-horse race.

BJP leaders said that a strong network of party workers and using them strategically pushed the turnout high which is an advantage for their candidate

S V Sankanur. "Moreover, our party is in power and has the ability to deliver what is promised," they asserted.

But Congress leaders said that a large number of youngsters turned up to vote as they are disappointed with the governance of BJP governments at the state and Centre which would favour party candidate R M Kuberappa.

Meanwhile, Basavaraj Gurikar, who enjoys the backing of JDS, argued that his candidature has given an option for voters as they have already experimented with both Congress and the BJP.