

**MORE TROUBLE**

## Santhosh's appointment challenged

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THE Karnataka High Court on Tuesday issued a notice to the state government on a PIL, questioning the appointment of N R Santhosh as political secretary to CM B S Yediyurappa. A division bench of Chief Justice Abhay Shreeniwas Oka and Justice S Vishwajith Shetty also issued a notice to Santhosh.

Accusing the CM of abusing power, the petitioner, S Umapathi, a city-based advocate, challenged the government's order appointing Santhosh as political secretary with the status of state minister.

He contended that the post of 'political secretary' was created and accorded Cabinet status without any rules. The post was created to accommodate Santhosh, who is Yediyurappa's relative, the plea said.

The petitioner submitted that the CM issued a note dated May 28 directing the chief secretary to appoint Santhosh with immediate effect, without any authority of law. The very next day, the Additional Chief Secretary, Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms, issued a notification on the appointment.

As there was opposition within the government and party workers, the order was not given effect. On June 22, the CM issued another note and Santhosh was appointed the same day, the petitioner claimed. The petitioner said he had given a representation in October to the office of the Chief Secretary and the DPAR against the appointment. But the representation was not accepted by Santhosh's staff and was asked to be sent by post which returned unclaimed, he added.

The petitioner alleged that political followers in Santhosh's office are abusing the public office.