

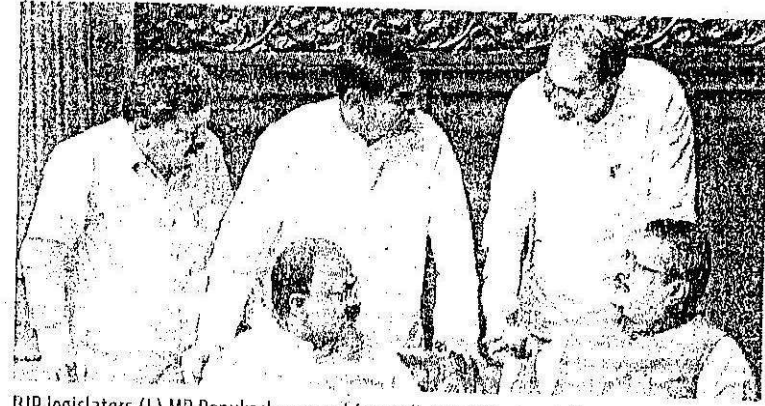
Mayhem drowns Constitution debate, Speaker chides Cong for 'partisan' remark

ANUSHA RAVI @Bengaluru 4/3/20

THE much-anticipated debate on the Indian Constitution to mark 70 years of its adoption was drowned in voices of protest in the Karnataka Legislative Assembly on Tuesday. After a delay of more than two-and-a-half hours and two adjournments, the House convened, but to continuous protests by the Congress.

Hours of talks between the ruling party, Speaker Vishweshwara Hegde Kageri and the Congress failed to end the logjam, with the House witnessing utter mayhem and no discussion on the Constitution taking place. Amid chants of "save the Constitution" by Congress legislators, Speaker Kageri read out the Preamble and proceeded to deliver his address without as much batting an eyelid.

"You have succumbed to the pressure of the ruling party and have given a partisan ruling," alleged Siddaramaiah, Leader of Opposition, addressing the Speaker. Congress legislators who were already in the well of the House intensified their sloganeering after the Speaker ruled that he was rejecting the party's notice against BJP legislator Basangouda Yatnal for his comments against freedom fighter HS Doreswamy. On the Speaker and Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa's insistence on



BJP legislators (L) MP Renukacharya and (seated) Arvind Limbavali, Basangouda Patil Yatnal and others during the assembly session at Vidhana Soudha on Tuesday | EXPRESS

Monday, the Congress submitted a notice, but was countered with another technicality that they should issue a notice to the MLA concerned. "Fundamental duties enshrined in the Constitution under Article 51 (A) (b) mandates that we cherish and follow the noble ideals which inspired our national struggle for freedom. Yatnal, by insulting a freedom fighter, has violated this article of the Constitution," Siddaramaiah said, going on to accuse Sangha Parivar for prodding the BJP to speak against freedom fighters.

An enraged BJP then retorted. BJP's Madhuswamy pointed out that ideals were not equal to individuals. "Siddaramaiah is not

above the law. His only intention as the Leader of Opposition is to stall the House," he said.

With his mind set on beginning the discussion on the Constitution in the second half of the session, Speaker Kageri raced through his 40-page address amid protests. "Your behaviour during my address has been absolutely unacceptable. People of this state have watched how you behaved. It is against the Constitution and this House's decorum," an agitated Kageri chided the Congress. With the party refusing to back down and accusing the Speaker of muzzling the Opposition's rights, the House was adjourned for the day.

Cong delegation to meet Gov

Bengaluru: The Congress has decided to take the issue of BJP leaders making controversial remarks to the Governor. A delegation led by former CM Siddaramaiah is meeting the Governor at 10.45 am on Wednesday. Senior leader VS Ugrappa said they are approaching the Governor seeking directions to the Speaker to take action against BJP MLA Basangouda Patil Yatnal for his derogatory remarks against HS Doreswamy. The Congress is also likely to complain against the Speaker for not allowing discussions on the issue. ENS

Oppn to move resolution against CAA

Bengaluru: Opposition parties in the Legislative Council are planning to move a resolution against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA). Congress MLC Ivan D'Souza told reporters that a submission has already been made in this regard about 10 days ago. ENS