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# 1 year after LS loss, Gowda and Kharge set to enter RS now

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**Bengaluru:** JD(S) supremo and former Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda and Congress veteran Mallikarjun M Kharge, who lost the 2019 Lok Sabha elections from Tumakuru and Kalaburagi, respectively, are set to enter the Rajya Sabha through deft understanding between the two parties.

The Congress has nominated 78-year-old Kharge, a nine-time MLA and a two-time Lok Sabha member, to contest the June 19 biennial elections. The assembly will vote to fill four seats that will fall vacant after the term of incumbents — Prabhakar Kore (BJP), BK Hariprasad, Rajeev Gowda (both Cong) and Kupendra Reddy (JDS)—ends on June 25.

The JD(S) said it has decided to nominate 87-year-old Gowda after the Congress president Sonia Gandhi informally offered to support him by transferring its surplus votes to facilitate his entry into the elders' house.

The BJP will easily two of the four seats at stake. The names doing the rounds are eminent banker KV Kamath, Info



Deve Gowda, Mallikarjun Kharge

## Disqualified MLAs lobby for council

Pressure is building on chief minister BS Yediyurappa to send three disqualified MLAs — MTB Nagaraj, AH Vishwanath and R Shankar — to the legislative council and eventually make them ministers. Twelve seats will be vacant by June-end. Several ministers have backed the crossover MLAs, saying they played a crucial role in bringing BJP to office. **TNN**

sys Foundation chairperson Sudha Murty, two-time RS member Prabhakar Kore, Ramesh Katti, Tejaswini Ananth Kumar and party's general secretary P Muralidhar Rao.

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## High command will decide on backing Gowda, says DKS

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Former chief minister and JDLP leader HD Kumaraswamy said party legislators were unanimous that Gowda's presence in the Rajya Sabha was the need of the hour. "While Gowda is yet to give his consent, the legislators are hopeful of convincing him," he said.

The Congress high command will take a call on supporting Gowda, said KPCC president DK Shivakumar.

A candidate needs 45 votes to win the election. With 34 MLAs, JD(S) needs 11 more to ensure Gowda has a smooth sail. The BJP, too, may help him by choosing not to field its candidate. The BJP, with 117 legislators, is assured of two seats. With 68 lawmakers, the Congress will win one seat comfortably and have 23 surplus votes.

Gowda may be forced into a contest if BJP heeds the pleas of a section of its workers and fields a third candidate for the elections. "Our core committee meeting will discuss this on Saturday and take a decision," said BJP spokesperson N Ravikumar.