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BJP MLA Basanagouda Patil Yatnal speaks about B R Ambedkar during the Assembly session at Vidhana Soudha in Bengaluru on Friday | EXPRESS

# Yatnal hails Ambedkar, Savarkar in assembly

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

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MLA Basanagouda Patil Yatnal, who recently courted controversy after calling centenarian freedom fighter H S Doreswamy a 'fake' and 'Pakistani agent', spoke at length about Babasaheb Ambedkar, Veer Savarkar and the Constitution, here on Friday. Yatnal spoke about the similarities between the great social reformer Basavanna and Ambedkar.

Referring to the freedom struggle, he mentioned Veer Savarkar over half-a-dozen times.

Earlier, he had challenged Doreswamy to prove that he had suffered as many lathi blows as Savarkar and prove if he was jailed at Kaala Pani and the Andamans. On Friday, he said that many leaders of freedom struggle have not been given their due recognition.

Yatnal's statement against Doreswamy had hit headlines, led to protests, and now has

taken up most of the time of the legislature since it convened on Monday. The Congress has demanded that his assembly membership be revoked as his comments were in violation of the Constitution. There was widespread criticism of his statements, saying he was doing it for publicity.

While Yatnal was speaking about Ambedkar's opinion on Article 370 on Friday, Congress leader and former minister Priyank Kharge interrupted to correct him. Yatnal said, "Babasaheb was not in favour of Article 370 on granting special status as he believed that a state should not be alienated but be a part of India."

Yatnal spoke of how Ambedkar, who had suffered as a Dalit, wanted to ensure that he did not die a Hindu and considered other religions. Speaker Vishweshwar Hegde Kageri intervened and spoke about Ambedkar's views on religion.