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CM rules out Cabinet expansion any time soon

'Merely posing for pics with Yuvaraj no crime'

KOPPAL, DHNS

Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa on Saturday hinted that the Cabinet expansion would not take place any time soon and that the same would be taken up only after a green signal from the party high command.

He was speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the foundation-laying ceremony for setting up the country's first toy-manufacturing cluster at Bhanapur village in the district. To a query on ministers and BJP MLAs posing for photographs with Yuvaraj, who has been arrested in cheating cases, the CM said merely posing for pictures was not a crime. An investigation is going on against Yuvaraj and truth will come out once the investigation is over, he added.

Asked about the cut in funds released to the Kalyana Karnataka Region Development Board, the CM said the funds had been cut as the state's financial con-

dition was not good, due to Covid-19, floods and rain damages.

"We will take up development works in the coming days. The people should cooperate with the government," Yedi-

Yediyurappa in Delhi today

BENGALURU, DHNS: Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa is scheduled to visit New Delhi on Sunday amid speculation that he will look to secure the BJP central leadership's nod to expand or reshuffle his Cabinet, a long-pending exercise.

Apparently, the CM is likely to try meeting Union Home Minister Amit Shah and BJP national president J P Nadda to discuss the Cabinet expansion. Yediyurappa had discussed this with BJP national general secretary in charge of Karnataka Arun Singh when he was in the state recently.

However, Yediyurappa's official tour programme states that he will meet union ministers.

According to the chief minister's

office, Yediyurappa will depart Bengaluru at 8.20 am from the Kempegowda International Airport and reach New Delhi at 11.05 am. Yediyurappa has not fixed a schedule for his return.

There are seven berths vacant in the 34-member Cabinet and more than a dozen ministerial aspirants are waiting in the wings to be inducted and they have been mounting pressure on Yediyurappa.

The CM has been pointing to the party high command, saying he will expand the Cabinet only after he gets permission from the top. Also, there is little clarity on whether Yediyurappa will go in for a reshuffle by dropping some incumbent ministers or expands the ministry.

yurappa said.

He said the work on the toy cluster in Koppal would be completed soon and Prime Minister Narendra Modi would be invited to inaugurate the facility.