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Ex-speaker, minister trade slurs in house

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: In an expletive-laden faceoff in the legislative assembly, former speaker KR Ramesh Kumar and medical education minister K S. Akhatar locked horns on Tuesday with both abusing each other in unparliamentary language.

The war of words between the two started when Sudhakar accused the speaker's chair—then occupied by Kumar—of meting out injustice to him and 16 other MLAs, who switched sides from Congress and JD(S) to BJP. He was referring to Kumar's decision to disqualify them.

Kumar took strong objection when Sudhakar began reading out the Supreme Court's observations on the speaker's role while upholding their disqualification.

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Former speaker threatens to quit after fracas

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When members of the treasury bench, including Sudhakar, tried to shout him down, Kumar protested, resulting in a war of words. "This chair meted out injustice to us. Our political career would have been over. There was a conspiracy to finish us off politically," Sudhakar said. When Sudhakar persisted

on discussing the issue, Kumar sought the intervention of law and parliamentary affairs minister JC Madhuswamy. When the latter did not react, Kumar rushed to the well of the house. Both Sudhakar and Kumar used unparliamentary words against each other. Ministers Ramesh Jarkiholi, Anand Singh and Shivaram Hebbar, who were also disqualified by Ku-

mar, rushed to Sudhakar's support. "If this is the kind of debate and language being used in the house, I don't want to continue as a member. I will quit," Kumar said and left the house.

As allegations and counter-allegations flew, Congress MLA Shivanand Patil, who was in the chair, adjourned the house for 15 minutes.

But the pandemonium

continued when the house reconvened. Opposition leader Siddaramaiah sought to move a privilege motion against Sudhakar, while ruling party MLAs demanded Kumar's suspension. As both sides stuck to their demands, the house was adjourned for the day.

The minister said he, too, would move a privilege motion against Kumar