

# High voltage debate ends as Speaker drops privilege motions

**Sudhakar vents anger at ex-speaker Ramesh Kumar, Siddaramaiah defends latter**

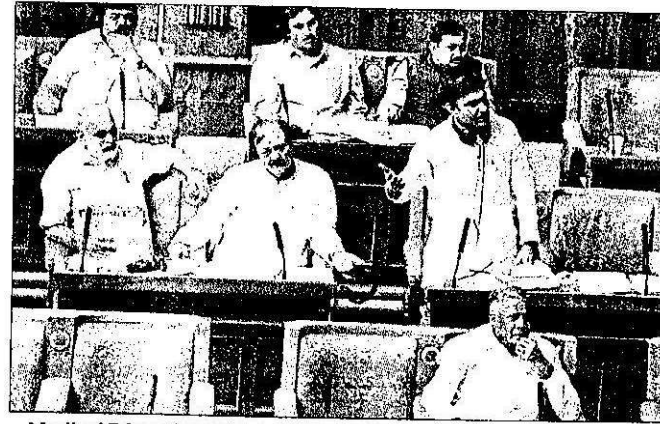
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BENGALURU, DHNS

Assembly Speaker Vishweshwar Hegde Kageri dropped the privilege motions moved by both the ruling BJP and the Opposition Congress on Thursday.

The BJP had demanded action against former speaker K R Ramesh Kumar for allegedly using an expletive against Medical Education Minister K Sudhakar. On the other hand, the Congress had accused Sudhakar of making derogatory remarks against Kumar.

Kageri decided to drop both the privilege motions after Kumar and Sudhakar expressed regret.



Medical Education Minister K Sudhakar and former speaker K R Ramesh Kumar (right) make their points in the Assembly on Thursday.

However, Sudhakar made full use of the opportunity to attack Kumar, who as the speaker, had disqualified him and 16 other MLAs last year.

"For months together, we were labelled as disqualified MLAs. We didn't know what our future will be," he said, adding that his seven-year-old son asked him what 'disqualified MLA' meant.

Sudhakar quoted Kumar's remarks during the trust vote last year and accused him of being prejudiced as a Speaker.

"The statements he made at that time clearly expressed his loyalty to the Congress. As Speaker, Kumar asked if the Congress and JD(S) would ever take back the MLAs. Is it the domain of the Speaker? He had also said that he was in that chair because of Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and Siddaramaiah. He was prejudiced," Sudhakar said.

An emotional Sudhakar also said, if it was found that the rebels had sold themselves to the BJP for money, they could all be "hanged".



Meanwhile, Kumar said the Supreme Court had upheld the disqualification of the MLAs and that he stood by every word he had uttered in the Assembly. "No regulations stop me from expressing my observations. Besides being the Speaker, one is also a member of the House," he asserted.

Earlier in the day, Leader of the Opposition Siddaramaiah made a case for the Congress' privilege motion against Sudhakar. "It was under the provisions of the 10th

Schedule that Kumar, as Speaker, passed the order of disqualification. He did so after hearing both sides and passed a judicious order. It was then challenged in the Supreme Court, which upheld it," he said.

"But when Sudhakar says he suffered injustice from the seat of the Speaker, and that there was a conspiracy, it amounts of breach of the Speaker's privilege and contempt of the House. It brings disrepute to the chair and to Kumar," he said.