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Minister

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# After Cabinet expansion, only one slot is now vacant

R. Shankar and H. Nagesh inducted into Kumaraswamy's Ministry

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
BENGALURU

In an attempt to douse the simmering discontent in the governing coalition and ensure stability of the one-year-old government, Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy expanded his Cabinet on Friday by inducting Karnataka Pragnyavantha Janatha Party MLA for Ranebennur R. Shankar and Independent MLA for Mulbagal H. Nagesh.

With the Ministry size fixed at 34, only one berth is now vacant in the State Cabinet after Friday's expansion. The Congress and the Janata Dal (Secular) have signed a pact to have 22 and 12 Cabinet berths, respectively. The Congress has filled its quota of 22 Ministers while the JD (S) has filled 11.

Governor Vajubhai R. Vala administered the oath to the new Cabinet Ministers in the Glass House at the Raj Bhavan in the presence of Mr. Kumaraswamy and Deputy Chief Minister G. Parameshwara. Both Mr. Shankar and Mr. Nagesh are first-time



New entrants: H. Nagesh and R. Shankar after taking oath at the Raj Bhavan in Bengaluru on Friday. ■ K MURALI KUMAR

MLAs. Congress Legislature Party leader Siddaramaiah, Cabinet Ministers, and Congress and JD(S) leaders attended the programme. A large number of relatives and supporters of the newly sworn-in Ministers were also present.

Mr. Shankar became a Minister in the Kumaraswamy government for the second time in less than seven months while Mr. Nagesh, former KPTCL director and a close associate of Water Resources

Minister D.K. Shivakumar, became a Minister for the first time.

Mr. Shankar, who defeated the former Legislative Assembly Speaker K.B. Koliwad of the Congress in Assembly elections, was first inducted when Mr. Kumaraswamy formed his Cabinet in June 2018 and was given the Forest portfolio. He was dropped during the Cabinet expansion in December 2018.

Leaving out senior leaders

## Shankar merges KPJP with Congress

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
BENGALURU

Newly sworn-in Minister R. Shankar has merged his Karnataka Pragnyavantha Janatha Party (KPJP) with the Congress.

Before taking oath as Minister on Friday, Mr. Shankar gave a letter to Congress Legislature Party leader Siddaramaiah stating that he had merged the KPJP with the Congress. Mr. Shankar was inducted into the Cabinet under the Congress quota. He is expected to take primary membership of the party in a day or two.

in favour of the two Independents is expected to reignite anger among leaders of both the Congress and the JD(S), source said.