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ಇಲಾಖೆ / ವಿಷಯ : DEPARTMENT / SUBJECT: *Case matter*

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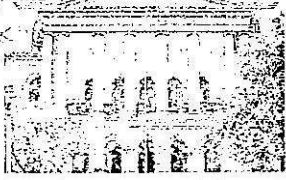
## HC notice on nominations to wildlife board

Nine people nominated either have links to ruling BJP or were recommended by Ministers and MLAs

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
BENGALURU

The High Court of Karnataka on Thursday ordered issue of notice on a PIL petition questioning the legality of nominating nine people, including son of an MLA not having suitable qualification as per the Wildlife (Protection), 1972, as members of the State Board for Wildlife.

A Division Bench comprising Chief Justice Abhay Shreeniwas Oka and Justice Suraj Govindaraj passed the order on the petition, filed by one Boja Raju G.M., city-



based environmental engineer.

The nine people nominated to the board either have links with the ruling BJP or were recommended by Ministers and MLAs, the petitioner stated based on the information secured under RTI, while pointing out that one of the members, Alak-

Vishwanath, is the son of S.R. Vishwanath, Yelahanka MLA.

### Legal sanctity

Interestingly, the petition, filed through advocate Sreeja Chakraborty, also questioned the legal sanctity of the board's decision taken in January 2021 to reject the proposal to declare 5,100 acres of land from Hesaraghatta lake and grassland as "Greater Hesaraghatta Grassland Conservation Reserve". The petitioner contended that the rejection

was influenced by the presence of Mr. S.R. Vishwanath, who was invited to the meeting chaired by the Chief Minister as a "special invitee."

The others whose nominations are under challenge are: Chetan B., professional rugby player; Somasekhar A.R., professor of paediatrics; Naveen J.S., aide of Revenue Minister R. Ashok; Vinod Kumar B. Naika, journalist; Dinesh Singhi, miner; K.S.N. Chikkeruru, retired IPS officer; Thyag Uttappa, coffee planter; and Jo-

seph Hoover, journalist and activist.

The petitioner also questioned the nomination of one Siddharth Goenka as representative of a non-government organisation called 'Banneghatta Wildlife Association'. It was contended in the petition that it could not find such a NGO, while pointing that Mr. Goenka was a trustee of Banneghatta Nature Conservation Trust, and was serving as Rajya Saanchalak-Gau Samrakshana Prakosth, BJP Karnataka.