

DEPARTMENT / SUBJECT: Council Election

NAME OF THE NEWS PAPER: Times of India DATE: 19/6/20



BJP leaders Aravind Limbavali, DyCM Govind Karjol and Nalin Kumar Kateel accompany MLC candidate Pratap Simha Nayak, while (right) Congress leaders Ramalinga Red Dinesh Gundu Rao, Siddaramaiah and DK Shivakumar join candidate B K Hariprasad as they file their nomination papers in Bengaluru on Thursday | EXPRESS

## Cabinet next stop for 2 BJP nominees

Nagaraj, Shankar confident of being inducted as CM fulfilled promise of making them MLCs

ANUSHA RAVI @Bengaluru

TWO of the four candidates from the BJP who filed their nominations on Thursday for the upcoming MLC polls are gearing up not just to return as legislators but become ministers in the B S Yediyurappa cabinet. After Yediyurappa fulfilled his assurance of making them MLCs, despite resistance from within the party, M T B Nagaraj and R Shankar are confident of being inducted as ministers.

With the BJP parliamentary committee clearing three out of his four candidates, Yediyurappa is now compelled to accommodate candidates picked primarily by the party and backed by the Sangh when he nominates five members to the Legislative Council. Yediyurappa had vigorously lobbied for Shankar, Nagaraj, A H Vishwanath and Sunil Vallyapure to be made MLC candidates. The party agreed to three of his candidates but left out Vishwanath and accommodated former Dakshina Kannada party unit chief

Pratap Simha Nayak as its fourth candidate.

The logic behind the selection was to reward Shankar and Sunil Vallyapure for cooperating with the party and not contesting the December 2019 bypolls from Ranebennur and the May 2019 bypolls from Chincholi respectively. While the party pointed out that Nagaraj and Vishwanath had been given tickets to contest the December 2019 bypolls but had lost, the former has been made an MLC candidate to compensate for his electoral loss against ex-BJP youth leader Sharath Bachegowda who broke away from the party and contested independently.

Neither Yediyurappa nor the two MLC candidates have made any secret in the past about the two becoming ministers. "The party has made me an MLC candidate and I am hopeful I will be made a minister too. We quit our former parties and joined the BJP and we were promised cabinet berths but the final decision lies with the Chief Min-

ister," Nagaraj told *The New Indian Express*.

If the two are inducted into the cabinet, Yediyurappa will be left with just four more berths of which two, in his own words, have to be kept vacant for two more former Congress MLAs who were disqualified — Muniratna and Pratap Gowda Patil. But a host of aspirants, including Umesh Katti, Halappa Achar, Arvind Limbavali, etc, are vying for those last two cabinet berths.

Of the two candidates fielded by the Congress, B K Hariprasad is said to be the central leadership, specifically Ahmed Patel's, pick while Nassir Ahmed is said to be backed by former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah.

Even as theories that Hariprasad's candidature is aimed at undermining Siddaramaiah's clout are being floated, sources say that the apparent warmth between Hariprasad and KPCC chief D K Shivakumar, whose cold rivalry with Siddaramaiah is no secret, is more of an afterthought.

## Will it be hat-trick for Shankar?

BENGALURU: Former minister R Shankar, who filed his nomination for the MLC election on a BJP ticket on Thursday, could be looking at becoming minister for the third time in two years.

Shankar was lone MLA from the Karnataka Praja Jan Paksha after defeating then assembly Speaker KB Koliwad the Congress in Ranebennur constituency.

In 2018, when Yediyurappa was preparing to take oath as CM, Shankar was seen at Yediyurappa's residence, announcing his support to him. But the very evening, he was also at the KPCC office, extending his support to the Congress-JDS coalition government headed by Kumaraswamy.

During the bypolls, the BJP gave a ticket to Arunkumar Patil from Ranebennur and Yediyurappa assured him that he would be given an MLC ticket, and inducted him into the ministry.