

DEPARTMENT / SUBJECT: Council Election

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BJP brass does balancing act to keep Yediyurappa happy

Picks 2 Of 4 Names CM Had Suggested



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Bengaluru: The BJP leadership in New Delhi has tried to perform a balancing act while deciding candidates for the June 29 Karnataka legislative council polls. BJP Central Election Committee late on Wednesday named MTB Nagaraj, R Shankar, Sunil Vallyapure and Pratap Simha Nayak as the candidates.

The committee chose to field two candidates from the list of four recommended by chief minister BS Yediyurappa, while naming two others suggested by the party's brass. By doing so, the party leadership has saved Yediyurappa from facing an embarrassing situation once again after it ignored his choice of candidates for two Rajya Sabha seats by selecting grassroots workers Ashok Gasti and Eranna Kadadi.

Sources said Nagaraj and Shankar (both Kurubas) were Yediyurappa's picks, while Vallyapure (ST) and Nayak's names were suggested by the party's SC face Aravind Limbavali and BJP state president Nalin Kumar Kateel, respectively.

Nagaraj and Shankar had played a key role in formation of the BJP government after the coup that led to collapse of the Congress-JD(S) coalition and had subsequently defected to the saffron party. While Nagaraj lost the bypolls held last December, Shankar did not contest after Yediyurappa promised him a council berth.

Party sources said Santosh had also battled for Nagaraj's candidature notwithstanding widespread resentment in the party. "If BJP wanted to keep the promise made by Yediyurappa to all the defectors, even AH Vishwanath, who unsuccessfully contested bypolls from Hunsur, should have been considered. It shows Nagaraj had the backing of a senior leader in Delhi," said

BJP candidates MTB Nagaraj, R Shankar, Pratap Simha Nayak and Sunil Vallyapure. Nagaraj and Shankar had played a key role in formation of the BJP government. Vallyapure was considered for an MLC berth since he'd given up his seat ahead of the LS elections. Nayak's candidature is being seen as the party brass' attempt to reward loyal district-level functionaries

id a senior party functionary. Vallyapure, an ex-minister and MLA from Chincholi, was considered for an MLC seat since he'd given up his seat when the party decided to field Avinash Jadhav, son of Umesh Jadhav, who had resigned as Chincholi MLA, against Congress veteran Mallikarjun Kharge in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls. Sources said Amit Shah had reportedly promised Vallyapure he would be considered for the upper house.

However, Nayak's candidature is being seen as the party brass' continued attempt to reward loyal district-level functionaries. While Yediyurappa had recommended H Vishwanath, ex-JD(S) state president and MLA who had defected to BJP, Nayak — who was Dakshina Kannada district president — was picked. "Nayak's candidature is a surprise for everyone as he was not even in the reckoning," said a senior functionary and confidant of BL Santosh, adding Nagaraj was considered over Vishwanath as he had lost the bypolls because party MPBN Bachhe Gowda's son Sharath contested as a rebel. The party had asked Vishwanath not to contest, quoting an internal survey, but he ignored the request.

9 file nominations for MLC polls

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Candidates of all the three major political parties filed nomination papers for the June 29 legislative council polls on Thursday, the last day to do so.

Accompanied by senior party leaders, BJP candidates MTB Nagaraj, R Shankar, Sunil Vallyapure and Pratap Simha Nayak filed nominations at the office of legislative assembly secretary MK Vishalakshi, who is also returning officer for the polls.

Congress candidates BK Hariprasad (top right) and incumbent MLC Naseer Ahmed, accompanied by senior party functionaries Siddaramaiah and DK Shivakumar, also filed their nomination papers.

The JD(S) sprang a surprise by fielding grassroots party worker Inchara Govind Raja, an agriculturist. The move appears to be an effort to shed the long-standing Appa-Makkala (father sons) party image, and strengthen its base in Kolar district, where it has been steadily losing ground.

Two independent candidates — Yadvanahalli Krishnegowda and Mandikkal Nagaraj — also filed their nominations. As there are no proposers to their names, the papers are expected to be rejected. Scrutiny of the papers will be held on Friday. The last date for drawal is June 22.

