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Ugly spat between BJP MLA, minister

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: The BS Yediyurappa government suffered embarrassment on the first day of the monsoon assembly session on Monday after horticulture minister KC Narayana Gowda and BJP MLA from Kadur Belli Prakash argued over a fund request and nearly came to blows. The heated exchange, which reportedly involved abuses, occurred at a make-shift lounge outside the assembly hall.

Later in the day, the two men downplayed the incident, with Prakash saying it was just a disagreement between brothers.

Shortly after the assembly session began, Gowda went to the lounge for a coffee with some of his former JD(S) colleagues, including Malvalli MLA K Annadani. Prakash joined Gowda and enquired about funds for his constituency and transfer of officials.

After hearing Prakash's demands, the minister reportedly said he would clear relevant files this week. Unhappy with the response, Prakash, according to reports, insisted that the government should do more for the constituency. He said, "In other states, the work of legislators is done immediately. Guess, we are all 'nalayaks' (idiots)." Gowda disapproved of the comments, losing his



AT ODDS: KC Narayana Gowda and Belli Prakash (right)

cool. There was a heated argument and abusive words were allegedly exchanged.

Congress MLA Satish Jarkiholi and others tried to calm the two down, separating them. Jarkiholi pulled Prakash away, while Annadani spoke to Gowda.

After the news of the row spread, Gowda said it was a minor issue. "It was a very small issue and there is no need to blow it up. All his files have been cleared and I have nothing with me. Prakash and I are party colleagues. He is considered a hothead and I became upset with his language. But it is a very small issue. If required, I shall bring it to the notice of the chief minister," he said.

Prakash said he legislature funding with folded hands. He said, "It is not between brothers, leave us."

Some political analysts said the row showed the underlying tensions among MLAs, mostly loyalists and new entrants.