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PAPER CLIPPINGS

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Cabinet

ಇಲಾಖೆ / ವಿಷಯ : DEPARTMENT / SUBJECT:

ಪತ್ರಿಕೆಯ ಹೆಸರು : NAME OF THE NEWS PAPER: The Hindu

ದಿನಾಂಕ : DATE : 27/12

Four portfolio reshuffles on, disgruntlement continues

Bid to placate some Ministers has left others miffed

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

Despite four portfolio reshuffles in the State Cabinet in the last week alone, disgruntlement among Ministers over the departments allotted to them is still a reality, sources in the BJP and government said.

C.P. Yogeshwar, from whom the Chief Minister took the Minor Irrigation Department to allot it to J.C. Madhuswamy, and B.S. Anand Singh, who lost the Forest Department and later the Tourism Department in a matter of two days, are said to be upset over the change in portfolios.

Municipal Administration Minister N. Nagaraj (MTB) is also believed to be upset that he did not get the Housing Department, which was his choice. The Chief Minister has only been to placate K. Sudhakar and J.C. Madhuswamy, who got back the Medical Education and Minor Irrigation portfolios, respectively, in the two portfolio rejigs on Monday.

"My portfolios were changed four times in a few days, which hurt me. I had decided to resign as Minister after the Republic Day function today and told the party so. But the party leaders spoke to me and reallocated me Minor Irrigation Department, a portfolio that I have a passion for," Mr.



(Top) C.P. Yogeshwar and (above) B.S. Anand Singh.

Madhuswamy said on Tuesday.

A compromise

But with this, Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa has ended up creating two new disgruntled Ministers in Mr. Yogeshwar and Mr. Singh, sources said. Mr. Yediyurappa is said to have spoken to Mr. Singh on Tuesday and tried to placate him.

"Given that the State government is carving out Vijayanagara district, a long-standing demand of Mr. Singh, and has assured him that he would be made the district in-charge Minister, the Chief

Minister has requested him to take charge and manage the department allotted. Given that he has now been assigned the Infrastructure Development Department, a key portfolio the Chief Minister himself held, he seems to have withdrawn his threat to resign, though he remains disgruntled," a senior party leader said.

However, the Chief Minister has not been able to placate Mr. Yogeshwar yet, sources said. Given that Mr. Yogeshwar has built his image on the rejuvenation and refilling of lakes in Channapatna, he was keen on the Minor Irrigation portfolio, which he has now lost to get the Tourism Department. "The Chief Minister has faced opposition from various quarters for taking him, a person who was defeated in the Assembly polls, into the Cabinet. We hope that he will not make a fuss over the portfolio," a close associate of Mr. Yediyurappa's said.

Meanwhile, it was pointed out that despite four portfolio rejigs in an attempt to placate his Ministers, the Chief Minister has not given up the plum portfolios of Energy and Bengaluru Development. Doing so would have given him a lot of elbow room to manoeuvre and reduced heartburn among the Ministers.