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Parties give no-confidence motion notice

But motion cannot be moved without filling post of Deputy Chairman of Council, say Secretariat sources

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After the fiasco over the no-confidence motion moved against Legislative Council Chairman K. Prathapachandra Shetty in the winter session of the legislature, the BJP and JD (S) have given another notice to move the motion in the upcoming joint session, which will commence on Thursday.

Attempts by the BJP and the JD(S) to unseat the Chairman on December 15 had led to acrimonious scenes after the Chairman rejected the notice on the grounds that it did not state any specific reason for moving it. "Notice has been given by both parties separately again to move the no-confidence motion," JD(S) leader Basavaraj Horatti, who is the most senior member of the Council, confirmed.

However, sources said that the Chairman cannot be removed without the post of Deputy Chairman being filled. That post is now lying vacant after the death of JD(S) member S.L. Dharme Gowda. Incidentally, Dharme Gowda allegedly committed suicide citing the December 15 fracas in the Council where he was pulled around as he sat on the Chairman's seat. While Congress members tried to unseat him



Attempts by the BJP and JD(S) to unseat the Council Chairman on December 15 had led to acrimonious scenes. ■ FILE PHOTO

by dragging him, BJP members pushed him back on that day.

Meanwhile, the Council Secretariat has announced January 28 as the date for filing nominations by members wishing to contest for the post of Deputy Chairman. Depending on the number of candidates in the fray, the election dates will be notified, sources said. "In all probability, it will be unanimous," a source said.

Mr. Horatti said, "Only after the election of a Deputy Chairman can the Chairman step down - if he wishes to - by tendering his resignation. Otherwise, we will see whether the Chairman will allow the

motion of no confidence or delay further."

Congress sources said that since the party does not have numbers in the House, Mr. Shetty was likely to resign after the new Deputy Chairman is elected.

It may be recalled here that an interim report of the House Committee that went into the turn of events on December 15 was submitted to Mr. Shetty last week. It is learnt to have blamed, among others, the then Law Minister J.C. Madhuswamy. The leader, however, has said that the committee itself was "null and void". The committee was headed by se-

Negotiation under way

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As the post of Deputy Chairman lies vacant in the Legislative Council, and the two parties with numerical strength in the 75-member House are confident of unseating the Chairman, both are involved in backdoor negotiations. At present, the BJP is the largest party with 31 seats, followed by the Congress with 28 and JD(S) with 13. This is apart from one Independent and the Chairman. One seat is vacant following the death of S.L. Dharme Gowda.

A senior BJP leader confirmed that there have been discussions over the issue at certain levels, but the question remained on who would compromise over the post of Chairman. "The common understanding is that we both do not want to allow

the Congress member (K. Prathapachandra Shetty) to continue as Chairman," said the leader.

"The BJP is the ruling party and the largest bloc in the House. Why should the party leave the Chairman's post to the JD(S)? Since the Deputy Chairman was from the JD(S), that post can be taken by the party. Ultimately, the discussions are not solely connected with the two posts. They are linked to other key issues, including that of the passage of the anti-cow slaughter Bill in the Upper House," the leader said.

JD(S) spokesman T.A. Saravana confirmed that the talks had been inconclusive and said JD(S) legislators were meeting former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda to discuss the issue and formulate the party's response.

nior member Marithibbe Gowda and included B.K. Hariprasad and R.B. Thimmapur. BJP members A.H. Vishwanth and

S.V. Sankanur had withdrawn from the committee soon after it was constituted by the Chairman.