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## WITH HELP FROM JDS, BJP BAGS Dy CHAIRMAN POST IN COUNCIL

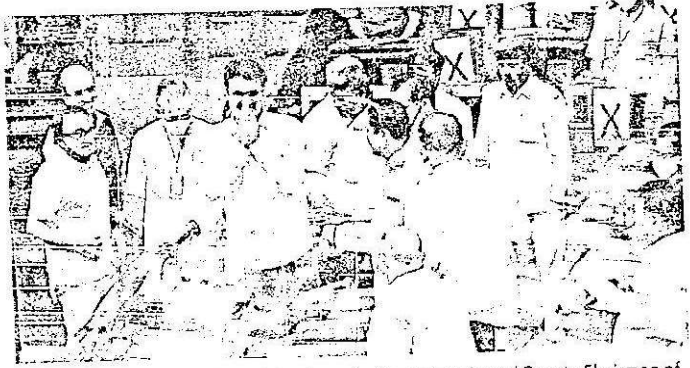
EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
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1E 20/11/2011  
BJP MLC Pranesh MK from Mudigere, Chikkamagaluru, was elected Deputy Chairman of the Legislative Council on Friday morning in a one-sided contest against Congress nominee, MLC K C Kondaiah.

Pranesh was elected after a division of votes, with the BJP and JDS supporting his candidature — BJP has 31, plus one independent vote, and the JDS has 13 seats. The Congress had four absentees, and since the chairman did not vote, the party could muster only 24 out of 29 votes. The BJP and JDS together had four absentees, and could muster 41 votes.

Kondaiah's show of strength proved to be a non-starter, after the Congress failed to put up a fight by getting more support. Kondaiah said, "I only contested to send a message that we will not give them a walkover."

"The Congress put up a candidate to show the world that the JDS is supporting the BJP, and to question our secular creden-



M K Pranesh greets members of the Council after being elected Deputy Chairman of the Legislative Council in Bengaluru on Friday | NAGARAJA GADEKAL

tials," a JDS MLC said after the election. The election was held to fill the post of Deputy Chairman, left vacant after the recent demise of Dharme Gowda.

In the past, the Congress had an understanding with the JDS, and Dharme Gowda (JDS) was elected Deputy Chairman, while PC Shetty (Congress) was elected Chairman. Earlier too, the Congress had an understanding with JDS in the Council, which had helped Veeranna Mathikatti (Congress) become Chairman, and when VS Ugrappa was

elected Opposition leader in the Council. But that understanding between the Congress and JDS lies shattered over egos, lamented a senior MLC.

The BJP, meanwhile, moved a notice of no-confidence against Chairman PC Shetty, and is waiting to unseat him for February 2, which will mark the end of the stipulated 14-day period after the notice was served. After the election of the Deputy Chairman, the result of the Chairman's election is a foregone conclusion.