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BJP MLC wins post with JD(S) backing

MK Pranesh Is New Deputy Council Chair

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: BJP member MK Pranesh was elected as the new deputy chairman of the legislative council on Friday, seeing off a challenge from Congress MLC KC Kondaiah. In a process involving a headcount and overseen by council chairman K Pratapchandra Shetty.

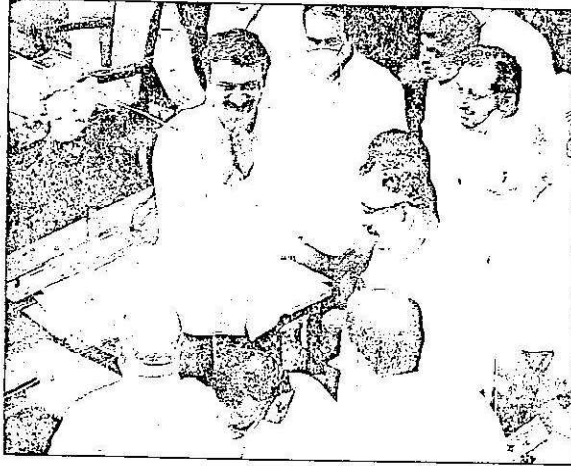


Pranesh polled 41 votes with the support of all 13 JD(S) members, while Kondaiah got 24 votes. The

council has a total of 75 members.

Friday's election was necessitated by the death of deputy chairman SL Dharmegowda. Pranesh's victory puts a stamp on the new political understanding between BJP and JD(S) in the house. After bagging the deputy chairman's position, BJP is expected to back a JD(S) member for the post of chairman. BJP

Syed Asif



SMCOYI SAILING: Pranesh, a first-time MLC, polled 41 votes, seeing off a challenge from Congress MLC KC Kondaiah, who got 24 votes

is in the middle of a bid to oust Shetty, a Congress member. Senior JD(S) MLC Basavaraj Horatti is likely to be the chairman if the plan works.

Pranesh, who hails from Mudigere in Chikkamagaluru district, is a first-time MLC representing the local bodies' constituency. He said that he would discharge the duties of his new post without bias towards any member. "I was surprised when the party chose me, a first-time MLC, as the candidate for this election," he added.

With 31 seats, BJP is the single largest party in the council. Congress has 29 members, including the chairman, and JD(S) 13. One member is an independent and one seat is vacant. Congress functionaries said on Thursday that despite slim chances of victory, the party decided to field Kondaiah to expose JD(S) and its 'secular' credentials. Earlier, Congress had an understanding with JD(S) in the house, but their longstanding equation has soured because of ego battles and differences.