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BJP sticks to 2014 pattern in choosing Ministers from State

Then too, four MPs from State, including an RS member, were inducted first

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Bharatiya Janata Party central leadership has stuck to the same formula adopted in 2014 in choosing candidates from Karnataka for the Union Ministry, despite the party making almost a clean sweep of the Lok Sabha seats in the State this time.

When Narendra Modi took oath as Prime Minister for the first time in 2014, four MPs from the State (including a Rajya Sabha member) were chosen for the ministerial posts.

Same caste pattern

Then, political representation was given to dominant communities of Vokkaliga and Lingayats by accommodating D.V. Sadananda Gowda and G.M. Siddeshwara, respectively. Representation to Brahmin community had been given by choosing the late Ananth Kumar, while the then Rajya Sabha member M. Venkaiah Naidu too had been accommodated.

The same pattern has been repeated this time by including Mr. Gowda and Suresh C. Angadi, who represent dominant communities, and Pralhad Joshi, who is from the Brahmin community. Similarly, Rajya Sabha member from the State Nirmala Sitharaman has been inducted. Mr. Angadi and Mr. Joshi are first-time Ministers.

Explaining the rationale behind selection of candidates, BJP sources said Mr.

Gowda, an MP for Bengaluru North, would not only represent Bengaluru city, but also Old Mysore region, covering the southern areas. Also, he would be a link for the party's strong bastion of coastal region as he hails from Dakshina Kannada and represented it both in the Assembly as well as the Lok Sabha earlier.

Mr. Gowda would be the main pointsman for the BJP in the State, considering his administrative experience as Chief Minister, in the wake of the death of Ananth Kumar who was seen as "Karnataka's Delhi face", sources said.

Providing ministerial berths to two north Karnataka leaders was on expected lines as the BJP made a clean sweep of the seats in the entire region in the polls.

More were expected

The BJP State unit, however, was expecting a few more ministerial berths for the State this time as 25 MPs have been elected now as against 17 in 2014. This was articulated by senior leader K.S. Eshwarappa who said he would talk to BJP central leaders to request more ministerial berths to the State.

Sources in the party maintained that the State was bound to get more representation when the ministry is expanded. They pointed out that even in the previous Lok Sabha, the ministerial representation to Karnataka was increased to five only during the expansion.

Profiles of four Union Ministers from Karnataka

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Here are the thumbnail sketches of Ministers from Karnataka in the Narendra Modi government.

D.V. Sadananda Gowda:

The 66-year-old is the senior most politician among all the MPs from Karnataka in terms of administrative experience

and positions held. He has served as Chief Minister as well as State president of the BJP. It was during his tenure as party president that the BJP came to power in Karnataka, a first in the southern region. He has served as an MLA twice and as an MLC once besides being elected to the Lok Sabha for the fourth time. He has held the portfolios of Railways, Law and Social Justice, and Statistics and Programme Implementation in the previous Cabinet.

Nirmala Sitharaman:

The 59-year-old is a native of Tamil Nadu who has been elected to the Rajya Sabha from Karnataka. She has been elected to

the RS for the second time. She had been the second woman to hold the Defence portfolio after Indira Gandhi. Before becoming the Defence Minister, she had served as Minister of State for Finance and Corporate Affairs and Minister for Commerce and Industry with an independent charge.

Pralhad Joshi:

The 56-year-old is a four-time MP for Dharwad. He has also served as the BJP State president. He was part of several

House committees of the Lok Sabha. He came to prominence in public life when he took part in a campaign by the party to hoist the national flag at Idgah maidan in Hubballi.

Suresh C. Angadi:

The 64-year-old has been elected to the Lok Sabha for four consecutive times from Belagavi. He has been credited with turning this one-time Congress bastion into a BJP base. His name had done the rounds for a ministerial post during the previous term.

