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Windfall for disqualified MLAs' segments under Chief Minister's discretionary quota

Those represented by Anand Singh and Pratapgouda Patil get highest allocation of ₹11 cr.

KUMAR BURADIKATTI
KALABURAGI

After keeping a few important Cabinet berths reserved, apparently for some of the disqualified MLAs who played a big role in toppling the Congress-Janata Dal (Secular) coalition government, Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa now seems to be also making sure that the constituencies they represented are better taken care of financially in the northern districts.

He has used his discretionary powers to release higher amounts to their constituencies in Hyderabad Karnataka (now renamed Kalyana Karnataka) region, which would be seeing byelections.

As per the government order dated September 5, 2019, a copy of which is with *The Hindu*,

MLA

two constituencies – Vijayanagar in Ballari district and Maski in Raichur district – have got the highest amount of ₹11 crore each from the ₹75 crore that comes under the discretionary powers of the Chief Minister. These constituencies are represented by B.S. Anand Singh and Pratapgouda Patil, respectively, both of whom were Congress MLAs before they turned rebels.

Raichur City constituency represented by Shivaraj Patil of the Bharatiya Janata Party has got ₹4 crore, followed by Gulbarga South and Ballari City, represented by BJP MLAs Dattatreya Patil Revoor and G. Somashekhar Reddy, which got ₹3.5 crore each. Rest of them got only ₹3 crore each.

A special grant of ₹1,500

crore was allocated in the 2019-20 budget to Hyderabad Karnataka Region Development Board (HKRDB) established under Article 371(J) of the Constitution and the constituency-wise distribution of funds within Hyderabad Karnataka region was approved by the previous H.D. Kumaraswamy government. However, the Yediyurappa government withdrew this order and issued a fresh one on September 5 to alter the previous amounts allocated to each taluk. Of the ₹1,500 crore special grants, the Chief Minister has discretionary powers to allocate ₹75 crore.

There are 41 Assembly constituencies in the region and Congress represents 20, followed by the BJP (17) and the JD (S) (4). Of the 41 segments, only

19 constituencies have got funds from the Chief Minister's discretionary category. The glaring fact is that all constituencies held by the BJP have got some amount and none of those held by the Congress – except Maski and Vijayanagar – and JD(S) got any money.

Taking exception to the Chief Minister's decision, former Minister and Congress leader Priyank Kharge said giving more money to constituencies represented by disgruntled Congress MLAs, who sided with the BJP, must have been a part of the deal when the MLAs were poached. "Mr. Yediyurappa's distribution of funds from his discretionary quota is not development-oriented, but politically motivated," Mr. Kharge told *The Hindu*.