

Yediyurappa, Yatnal face off at MLAs' meeting

Vijayapura MLA has been vocal about his disapproval of the govt

BENGALURU, DHNS

Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa is said to have had a face-off with Vijayapura legislator Basanagouda Patil Yatnal on Monday.

The altercation took place during Yediyurappa's day-long meeting with BJP legislators.

Yatnal, a former union minister, raised an objection to the "stepmotherly" treatment meted out to some Assembly constituencies and the "parallel government" run by BJP vice-president B Y Vijayendra, who is also Yediyurappa's son.

Yatnal has been vocal about his disapproval of the way the government is being run, which he reiterated when he

got an audience with Yediyurappa.

"I am an MLA. I should directly speak to you. Why should I talk to Vijayendra," Yatnal asked Yediyurappa, according to sources. This attracted the wrath of the CM, who asked Yatnal to refrain from talking about those not present in the meeting.

At this point, CM's political secretary MP Renukacharya tried to defend Yediyurappa, but he was sat down by Yatnal and other MLAs. Apparently, eight-time MLA Umesh Katti is said to have backed Yatnal during the duel.

The war of words between Yediyurappa and Yatnal continued during the meeting. "You can come directly to me



Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa, BJP state president Nalin Kumar Kateel, Ministers Dr K Sudhakar, Shashikala Jolle and Prabhu Chauhan at the party MLAs' meeting in Bengaluru on Monday. DH PHOTO/JANARDHAN B K

if you have any concerns," Yediyurappa told Yatnal. However, the image of the government and the party should not be hurt "due to your remarks in Vijayapura and Bengaluru," Yatnal was told.

Yatnal is said to have retaliated saying that "it was very clear who was damaging the party image by compromising with

its ideals".

Katti complained that senior MLAs like him cannot travel to Bengaluru all the time. "The CM should make sure that our grievances are addressed over phone, too," Katti said, in an attempt to calm Yatnal down, sources said.

According to one senior MLA from the Mumbai-Karnataka

region who was in the meeting, Yatnal raised his demands and complaints in a loud voice. "At one point, the CM asked him to lower his voice, saying he was not deaf," he said.

Some ministers had to intervene to calm the situation while BJP state president Nalin Kumar Kateel looked on, sources added.

Outside, Yatnal cast a furious figure and drove away without responding to any media queries. A senior minister had told reporters to expect "fireworks" during Yatnal's meeting.

Earlier in the day, Kateel dismissed claims that the party was dragging its feet on acting against Yatnal who has been attacking the government. Kateel said the party had internally discussed Yatnal's statements. "Since complaints against 'B' form holders are dealt with by the Central Disciplinary Committee, we have recommended the issue to them," he said, adding that Yatnal would be summoned.