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ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ವಿಧಾನ ಸಭೆ, ಸಂಶೋಧನಾ ಹಾಗೂ ಉಲ್ಲೇಖನಾ ಶಾಖೆ
KARNATAKA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY RESEARCH AND REFERENCE BRANCH

ಪತ್ರಿಕಾ ತುಣುಕುಗಳು
PAPER CLIPPINGS

ಇಲಾಖೆ / ವಿಷಯ : DEPARTMENT / SUBJECT: *politics*

ಪತ್ರಿಕೆಯ ಹೆಸರು : NAME OF THE NEWS PAPER: *Deccan Herald* ದಿನಾಂಕ : DATE *8/6/2020*

PM 16
**RS polls: Gowda to
announce decision today**

BENGALURU, DHNS: Former prime minister H D Deve Gowda will announce his decision on whether he will contest the Rajya Sabha elections from Karnataka, scheduled to be held on June 19, on Monday. The senior leader is yet to announce his decision, even though JD(S) leaders were keen on his candidature at a recent meeting of the party.

State Congress president D K Shivakumar has hinted at backing Deve Gowda's candidature. "There is no question of supporting BJP (for Rajya Sabha polls) as we are a secular party. We have fielded only one candidate and high command will decide (whether to back JD-S) on

another seat," he said.

Numbers in the Legislative Assembly ensure two seats for the BJP and one for Congress. JD(S) is short of a few seats in the Assembly to win a Rajya Sabha seat. According to JD(S) sources, Gowda is likely to contest the election. He had lost the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, contesting from Tumkur.

While BJP is yet to announce its candidates, it is learnt that they aren't against the former PM's candidature. But the party is wary of the message this would send to its voters. Veteran Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge will file his nomination for Rajya Sabha on Monday.