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CONG OBJECTS, BUT HORATTI IS CHAIRMAN

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

JDS MLC Basavaraj Horatti was on Tuesday elected chairman of the 75-member Upper House of the Karnataka legislature. The election lasted minutes, with Congress candidate MLC Naseer Ahmed pulling out at the last minute as he did not have the numbers.

When Deputy Chairman M K Pranesh called for an election, Congress members protested loudly. MLCs M Narayanswamy, B K Hariprasad and Naseer Ahmed claimed that the House was not in order and the election should not be allowed. They also rushed into the well of the House to object to the passing of the Anti-Cow Slaughter Bill without division. But the chair overruled their objection, and said the election was listed on the agenda.

As the Congress kept up loud protestations, K V Narayana Swamy proposed the candidature of Horatti for chairman, while K T Srikante Gowda approved it. N Appaji Gowda was the second proposer, and K A Thippe Swamy approved it. Horatti was escorted to the Chairman's seat, as Pranesh and BJP House leader K Srinivas Poojary welcomed him.

Later, Home and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Basavaraj Bommai lauded Horatti.

Congress candidate Naseer Ahmed's name was proposed by M Narayanswamy and approved by R Prasanna Kumar, while Hariprasad seconded his candidature and Aravind Kumar Arali approved it.



Newly-elected Council Chairman Basavaraj Horatti addresses a session at Vidhana Soudha, on Tuesday
J NAGARAJA GADEKAL



My aim is to restore the dignity of the House that was compromised after the December 15 incident. I will seek the advice of my seniors and talk to all concerned

Basavaraj Horatti, JDS MLC

'Council has become refuge of those who lost elections'

BANSY KALAPPA @ Bengaluru

"THE quality of debate in the Upper House has steadily declined. There was a time when it had achievers from different fields, like art, literature and culture. Writer Gorur Ramaswami Iyengar, singer Gangubai Hangal, journalist Kadri Shanman, lyricist Doddarange Gowda, poet Akbar Ali and many others were members. But now, it feels that the House has turned into a refuge for those who lost elections," said JDS MLC Basavaraj Horatti, who was elected unopposed as the Council Chairman on Tuesday.

He told *TNIE*, "My aim is to restore the dignity of the House that was compromised after the December 15 incident. I will seek the advice of my seniors and talk to all concerned."

On December 15, Deputy Chairman Dharmu Gowda was pulled down from the chairman's chair, while chairman Prathap Chandra Shetty was not allowed to come out of his chambers, leading to unprecedented chaos on the floor of the House.

Asked about his most memorable moment in the Council, which he has served for the last

41 years, Horatti said that in 1980 as a new member of the House, he delivered a speech on aided and unaided institutions and the then chief minister R Gundu Rao had acted immediately. "That was the most memorable 40 minutes of my life," he said.

Known for his frugality, Horatti has occupied the same room at the Legislator's Home for the last four decades and holds the record for being the longest occupant of any quarter at LH. He did not surrender the room even when he became a minister and continued to pay a rent of Rs 10,000 for two years.

Horatti said, "I'm a teacher and started my career at Lamington School in Hubli. I am happy that around 100 teachers, who are my personal friends, were present when I took charge."

He said, "I have been the longest-serving MLC from the Western Teacher's constituency. I have seen and personally known at least 16 chief ministers and worked with around 2,000 legislators."

In parting, he said that the then chief minister Ramakrishna Hegde once saw his casual attire and gifted him six pairs of kurtas and pyjamas.