

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

ಪತ್ರಿಕಾ ತುಣುಕುಗಳು
PAPER CLIPPINGS

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ಇಲಾಖೆ / ವಿಷಯ : DEPARTMENT / SUBJECT: Chief Minister

ಪತ್ರಿಕೆಯ ಹೆಸರು : NAME OF THE NEWS PAPER: The Hindu ದಿನಾಂಕ : DATE: 11/11/2021

Cabinet
expansion on
Jan. 13: CM

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The much-awaited expansion of the Karnataka Cabinet would take place on January 13, and the list of seven legislators to be inducted would be released on Monday, Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa said late on Sunday night.

As soon as he landed at Kempegowda International Airport from Delhi, where he met top BJP leaders, including Home Minister Amit Shah, earlier in the day, the Chief Minister said he received a call from a senior BJP leader, who informed him about the approval for the Cabinet expansion.

"Soon after I landed here, I got a call asking me to go ahead with the Cabinet expansion. By Monday evening the names will be known," Mr. Yediyurappa said.

Earlier before leaving Delhi, the Chief Minister had said that the central leaders would give "good news" on Cabinet expansion soon.

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Back from Delhi, Yediyurappa gives 'good news' on expansion

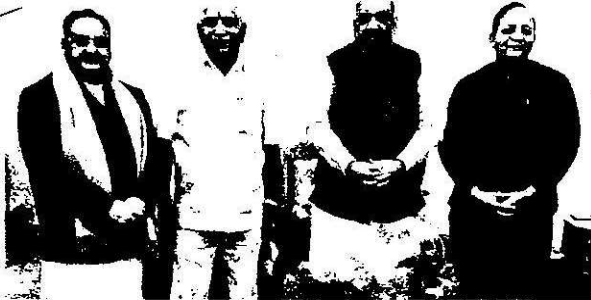
Speculation is that leadership change was also discussed during CM's trip

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The much-speculated Cabinet expansion is in sight, with Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa saying that the Central leaders would give "good news" on the issue. Within minutes of landing in Bengaluru, he announced that the leaders had called him and given the go ahead.

His statement came after a meeting with Union Home Minister Amit Shah at the latter's residence in Delhi on Sunday, in which BJP president J.P. Nadda and BJP general secretary in charge of Karnataka Arun Singh also participated.

The sudden visit of Mr. Yediyurappa, accompanied by his son B.Y. Vijayendra, to Delhi on Sunday, had raised eyebrows in the political circles as it had come close on the heels of the Karnataka High Court not providing relief to Mr. Yediyurappa in denotification cases, and an increasing unhappiness over



Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa with BJP national president J.P. Nadda, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, and party general secretary Arun Singh in New Delhi on Sunday.

his style of leadership among legislators. There was speculation that the issue of leadership change could be broached in the meeting.

Indeed, BJP leaders, who are identified with the anti-Yediyurappa camp, continued to claim that change of leadership was also discussed during the Delhi meeting. They claimed that Central leaders had discussed leadership change by giving him multiple offers, including Union Cabinet berth for Mr.

Raghavendra, who is Shivamogga MP. However, Mr. Yediyurappa told reporters at Karnataka Bhavan: "I am happy and satisfied with the meeting. The leaders have promised to give good news on Cabinet expansion."

He claimed that leaders expressed happiness about the party's performance in the recently-held gram panchayat elections. The Chief Minister also said that the meeting discussed the ensuing byelections to Belagavi

Lok Sabha, and Maski and Basavakalyan Assembly constituencies. "The leaders have asked for a list of probable candidates in these three constituencies, and we will send it to them," he said. Details of Mr. Shah's visit to Karnataka was also discussed, he added.

When asked if he would stay firm in his seat till end of term, he told a reporter: "I will leave it to you to decide."

Sources close to the Chief Minister said: "In all probability, the Cabinet expansion could happen before the announcement of the bypolls. Central leaders were told that the legislators who migrated to the BJP after offers to make them Ministers, are not willing to wait any longer," said one leader.

Contradicting this, a leader in the anti-Yediyurappa camp asked: "If it was just Cabinet expansion, why would Mr. Shah call party leaders Mr. Nadda and Mr. Singh to the meeting?"