

ಪತ್ರಿಕಾ ತುಣುಕುಗಳು
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KARNATAKA	
224	Where They Stand (if resignations accepted)
Total assembly strength	Cong: 66 (including Speaker)
16	JDS: 34
MLAs who have quit	BSP: 1
208	Coalition Total: 101
House strength if resignations accepted	BJP: 105
104	Ind: 2
Halfway mark in that event	Total: 107

Minister Priyank Kharge dragging away MLA Sudhakar at Vidhana Soudha on Wednesday | EXPRESS

PUNCHES IN POWER CORRIDOR AS COALITION LOSES 2 MORE

Crisis hits new low as parties physically fight over MLAs; resignation spree continues

ANUSHA RAVI @Bengaluru

POLITICS in Karnataka hit a new low on Wednesday when leaders stooped to indulging in physical fights over MLAs.

The power corridor of Karnataka, Vidhana Soudha, on whose grand steps H D Kumaraswamy took oath as Chief Minister with a grand display of opposition unity 13 months ago, was reduced to a venue of petty street fight-like scenario. All hell broke loose after two more MLAs — M T B Nagaraj and Dr K Sudhakar — submitted their resignations to Speaker K R Ramesh Kumar, taking the total number to 18. With this, the coalition strength has reduced to a mere 100 seats.

Sudhakar was heckled and manhandled by a some Congress and BJP workers before being dragged away forcefully by a group of leaders including KPCC president Dinesh Gundu Rao and Priyank Kharge to Minister K J George's office. Utter chaos broke out

as a group of BJP leaders and workers physically fought over Sudhakar, pulling him in a tug-of-war.

"Whatever happened was shameful. There is a proper way to speak, but they misbehaved. My family is shaken by what happened to me," Sudhakar, visibly miffed with his party members and their behaviour, told the media later.

The Congress, however, denied any manhandling despite the entire melee being caught on camera. "There was no manhandling of @m_sudhakar by our leaders. He is our colleague and we had a long cordial conversation with him. But why were BJP leaders agitating & indulging in goondaism. It clearly shows their hand behind these defections (sic)" tweeted Dinesh Gundu Rao.

Congress legislature party chief Siddaramaiah and Social Welfare minister Priyank Kharge reiterated the charges against the BJP, questioning their presence.

"We saw an MLA being manhandled

and intervened to protect him. If this is the state of an elected representative in this government, how can the common man expect to be safe?" asked Balaji Srinivas, social media convener of the state BJP, who was in the melee defending his party and its leaders.

Even after hours of discussions with Siddaramaiah, Sudhakar refused to withdraw his resignation and was finally taken to Raj Bhavan as requested. Meanwhile, tensions rose between the police and media personnel inside and outside Vidhana Soudha with the secretariat's gates being sealed to block the media from entering. Policemen manhandled journalists even though City Police Commissioner Alok Kumar was present at the spot.

Earlier in the day, workers and supporters of both the BJP as well as the Congress-JDS coalition staged protests barely 300 metres away from each other shouting slogans against each other.

Coalition leaders accuse BJP of destabilising gov

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With the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) demanding Kumaraswamy's resignation and staged a sit-in protest near Gandhi statue on the Vidhana Soudha premises, the coalition leaders, including JDS supremo and former prime minister H D Deve Gowda, who, for the very first time stepped out in protest ever since the resignation drama commenced, took out a protest march to Raj Bhavan accusing the BJP of blatantly destabilising a democratically elected government.



Former CM Siddaramaiah sits on Raj Bhavan Road in a mark of protest, in Bangalore on Wednesday [PANDARINATH S]