

## Don't skip session: CM to ministers

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CHIEF Minister B S Yediyurappa on Monday directed all ministers to attend the ongoing Legislative session compulsorily and take part in the proceedings. He told them not to attend any private or other events during session hours.

During his informal meeting with the ministers before the start of the session on Monday, the CM directed them to be present in the House when subjects related to their departments are taken up for discussion. "It is not good to be absent frequently. Opposition is using this to create a ruckus in the House," he reportedly

said. He directed senior ministers to be present and defend the government in the House.

On the bypolls, the CM said that the dates for the by-elections for the Maski, Basavakalyana and Sindagi assembly and Belagavi Lok Sabha seats could be announced soon. "We need to be ready and work hard to win them," he said.

I have presented a good budget and people appreciate it. You are dreaming of returning to power but that is impossible.  
BS Yediyurappa, CM



Welfare schemes have been stopped, existing works have not been given funds. Wasteful expenditure should be reduced, not schemes  
Siddaramaiah, CLP leader

## Will fight again from Badami: Siddaramaiah

ANUSHA RAVI @ Bengaluru

CLP leader Siddaramaiah on Monday declared that he would contest the next Assembly polls. The former chief minister had, on multiple occasions, said that the 2018 Assembly election would be his last. "I will contest. I won't run away. There is no need to have any doubt," Siddaramaiah said, in response to a jibe at him insisting that nothing is permanent in politics.

In a quick retort, Home Minister Basavaraj Bommai said Siddaramaiah had conveyed to the House as well as his rivals, that he still has electoral politics left in him. As if on cue or by sheer coincidence, KPCC President DK Shivakumar walked into the Assembly, leading to Bommai reiterating his statement. Siddaramaiah's open statement on contesting elections is set to fuel more factional wars in the State Congress.

His announcement came after a few ministers took jibes at his criticism of the budget and reminded him that he had said he wouldn't contest any more elections. Former Speaker Ramesh Kumar, vehemently opposing this, insisted that not contesting was not Siddaramaiah's decision, prompting him to say he would contest. Revenue Minister R Ashoka asked which constituency he would contest from, to which Siddaramaiah quipped, "Padmanabhanagar"-- Ashoka's seat -- before adding that as an MLA from Badami, he would contest from Badami again.

## 'Budget will bankrupt Karnataka': Siddu, BSY spar over spend

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THE Assembly on Monday saw Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa and Opposition leader Siddaramaiah engage in a war of words, as the latter made his speech on the State budget for 2021-2022.

Tearing apart the budget, Siddaramaiah questioned the reduced allocation for all departments, increased liabilities and cut in spend in the social welfare sector. "The ₹4,507 crore you have set aside for women is only 1.83% of the total budget, SCSP/TSP grant has been reduced in proportion to the budget size, about ₹9,900 crore have been reduced for welfare and inclusive growth umbrella sector, ₹1,200 crore cut for agriculture and allied services, but borrowings have increased. How is this budget pro-poor, pro-Dalit, pro-backward classes?" asked Siddaramaiah.

An irate Yediyurappa hit back to defend his budget. "I have presented a very good budget and people have appre-

ciated it. You are dreaming of returning to power but that is impossible. Let us go to the people with this budget and see who wins the upcoming bypolls," he said. Siddaramaiah instantly asked the CM to dissolve the assembly and go in for polls, instead of bypolls.

"Welfare schemes have been stopped, existing works have not been given funds. Wasteful expenditure should be reduced, not schemes. In our government, the total borrowing was ₹1,00,600 crore, and liabilities were under 25% of GSDP, but within just two years, you have borrowed ₹1,41,000 crore and put liabilities at 26.9%. This budget will bankrupt the State and push it into a whirlpool of debts," Siddaramaiah said.

Earlier, Siddaramaiah said that committed expenditure had crossed 102% and if this situation continues, the government will not have money even to give pensions. To this, Yediyurappa said the state government is committed to take up all development works announced in the budget.