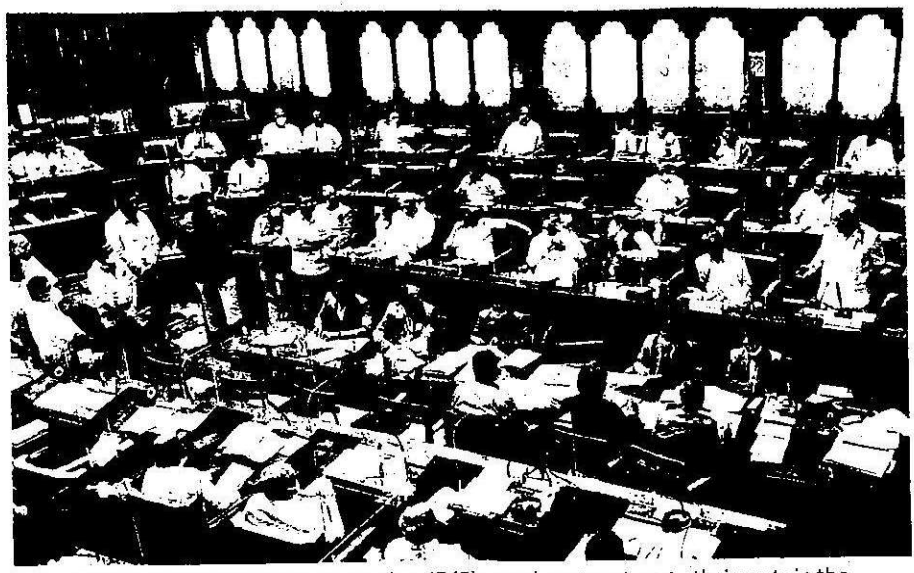


House panel to probe scams in nursing colleges

Opposition alleges corruption in giving approval



Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa requesting JD(S) members to return to their seats in the Legislative Council on Monday. ■ K. MURALI KUMAR

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The State government finally yielded to pressure from the Opposition by announcing a Joint House Committee to probe the condition of nursing and paramedical colleges across the State.

The announcement in the Legislative Council was made by Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa after JD(S) leaders on Monday continued to insist that a House Committee has to be formed to probe colleges offering nursing and allied health sciences courses.

While the Chief Minister initially announced a three-member committee headed by a retired judge that was rejected by the Opposition, he finally announced the formation of the House Committee.

Uproarious scenes

The Council had witnessed uproarious scenes on Thursday and the full session on Friday was washed out after the government refused to accept the demand of the Opposition. Medical Education Minister K. Sudhakar had defended the fresh approval for 47 nursing and 45 allied health sciences colleges given during 2020-2021. On Monday, soon after

JD(S) member K.T. Srikante Gowda said formation of the House Committee was an opportunity to ensure control over nursing and allied health science colleges.

the session commenced, JD (S) member K.T. Srikante Gowda urged the Chief Minister not to remain adamant and said it was an opportunity to ensure control over nursing and allied health science colleges that have mushroomed across the State. Leader of the Opposition S.R. Patil also endorsed this.

However, Dr. Sudhakar asked the Opposition to provide specific details of the loopholes that can be investigated. "Any decision that would affect the functioning of the colleges would harm the interests of students who have been admitted to these colleges," he said. Technical experts can probe over 600 nursing colleges functioning across the State, he said.

However, JD(S) member Marthibbe Gowda said: "Despite three levels of checks, many colleges do not have their own buildings or lease agreement for 30 years. Audit report of three years has not been submit-

ted. As many as four colleges share one hospital, whereas as per rules, 45 students of one college should get a 150-bed hospital."

Files pending

He alleged that a high-power committee that was set up to give approvals had kept files pending for seven months and it was cleared only after money exchanged hands.

"At least half a dozen Syndicate members are from Chickballapur. There have been several reports by retired judges. It will not be surprising if the retired judge is booked as well," he said. Supporting him, JD(S) member Bhoje Gowda said they had lost faith in probes done by retired judges.

As the stalemate continued to affect proceedings, chairman Basavaraj Horatti adjourned the House, and invited Mr. Yediyurappa and Opposition leaders for mediation.

Soon after the House resumed, Mr. Yediyurappa announced the Joint House Committee.

While Mr. Patil urged that the committee be headed by a member from the Council since the matter arose from here, Mr. Horatti said the committee will be established as per rules.