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ಇಲಾಖೆ / ವಿಷಯ : DEPARTMENT / SUBJECT: Hon'ble Speaker

ಪತ್ರಿಕೆಯ ಹೆಸರು : NAME OF THE NEWS PAPER: Deccan Herald ದಿನಾಂಕ : DATE : 24/9/20

Speaker expunges 'unparliamentary' Kannada word

BENGALURU, DHNS
24/9/20

Pandemonium prevailed in the Legislative Assembly on Wednesday after senior Congress leader K R Ramesh Kumar hurled a Kannada word that Speaker Vishweshwar Hegde Kageri expunged for being "unparliamentary."

Kumar, a former speaker, uttered the word when he grew impatient during Medical Education Minister K Sudhakar's reply on the Covid-19 debate. Sudhakar was explaining the process that was involved in procurement of PPE kits during the pandemic amid allegations that the government paid more than necessary for them.

"He is justifying the variation in prices at which (PPE kits) were procured. He is saying they were first procured for about Rs 300 and then the cost went up and there were various committees. These committees had great people. Just because great people did xxxxxx work, is that great work?" Kumar said, enraging Sudhakar and other BJP members.

Objecting to the word, RDPR Minister K S Eshwarappa asked Kumar to apologise. "Is it okay if I say Ramesh Kumar is xxxxxx?" he said. "That's a word used by rowdy elements. We beat our kids if they use that word at home."

Kumar said it was up to Kageri to decide if the word he used was unparliamentary. "I will apologise if it was unparliamentary. I'm not justifying it. I said that emotionally," he said. "What I was saying was that (Sudhakar) is going on justifying the price variation. All we want to know is, did the government pay more during procurement? Instead, our patience is being put to test," he said, urging the BJP members to give him a more suitable word that he can use.

Finally, Kageri ruled that the word was 'unparliamentary'. "We have a book of words, but I'm unable to immediately find this word in it. Earlier, the term 'halk-at nan maga' was used here that was expunged. The word used now will henceforth be unparliamentary and will be expunged," Kageri said, after which Kumar apologised.