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ARNATAKA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, RESEARCH AND REFERENCE BRANCH

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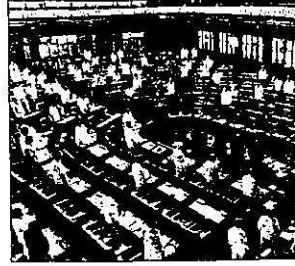
Plans for legislators' club in B'luru face further delays

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Bengaluru: The Covid-19 crisis and budget session's abrupt end have delayed long-pending plans to build a recreational club for legislators. A quiet location for the Karnataka Legislators' Club has been identified — PWD quarters next to the chief minister's residence, Anugraha — but there has been no other development.

The secretariat staff was supposed to start project formalities this month, and the date for the proposed club's first annual general body meeting (AGM) was scheduled last week. The meeting could not take place as both houses of the legislature were adjourned sine die following the Congress protest over the sex CD case, which allegedly involves ex-minister Ramesh Jarkiholi.

"We had decided to hold the first AGM in the last week of the budget session as many members were present in Ben-



EXCLUSIVE SPACE: A site near CM's home has been chosen

galuru. We deferred the plan after the session was curtailed," said a government official. Another official said that the pandemic had delayed site inspections and the completion of construction plans.

The slow progress has prolonged legislators' seven-year wait for an exclusive space to relax. Their efforts to gain access to tony private clubs in Bengaluru have also not moved far as their tug of war with the establishments continues.

The proposed club will be modelled on the lines of the

Constitutional Club in Delhi. The project got a minor boost after Vishweshwar Hegde Kageri was elected as the assembly speaker in 2019. According to a government official, 224 legislators elected in 2018 and many former MLAs have paid Rs 10,000 each as the membership fee. The money is parked in a fixed deposit. Overall, 350 to 400 people — current and former MLAs, MLCs and MPs — will become club members.

Shanthinagar MLA NA Haris of Congress lamented the project delays. "The site has been identified and the detailed project report, which emphasises minimum damage to trees, has been prepared," he said. "We have been waiting for a long time and have even paid the membership fee. As the speaker is the committee chairman, it is his prerogative to call the AGM."

Kageri has reportedly asked his staff to set a new date for the AGM and secure project funding from the government.