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Column 20th July, 2006

When the new coalition was forged to form the Karnataka Government, many MLCs and MLAs who wanted to convert their positions into gold mines in the new dispensation were certainly taken aback by the controversy about iron ore mining in Bellary.

Nobody exactly knows what prompted, Janardhan Reddy, to accuse chief Minister Kumaaraswamy and forest Minister Channigappa of having collected anything between 100 to 150 crores in bribe from the supposed to be innocent mine owners who were till recently (as Reddy portrayed) helplessly reeling under the blazing threat from the government about detection and correction of illegal mining in Bellary area. Now, even very few know who exactly could have found the medicine for the temporary cure for Reddy's verbal disorder within a week of it setting in. Now, after the play out of the new episode of the bribery tale in Vidhana Parishat, it is nobody's guess, finally.

It is a well known practise in Karnataka of regularizing any irregularity after necessary interventions at suitable levels of the government. Those miners who considered Channigappa's rage over his discovery of illegal mining as nothing more than an empty threat, seem to be suddenly, though invisibly, behind Janardhana Reddy who appears to have crowned himself as the lord of the mines and the unofficial leader of the mine owners.

While to many it may look like the clichéd example of the man living in a glass house throwing stones at passers by, some BJP MLAs who don't consider themselves as friends of Yediyurappa are not surprised at all. In fact the speculation that Reddy has indeed found his support within that maverick group could not be a fact as from from truth as Bellary is from Bangalore.

Political and no political reasons apart, why a businessman of Janardhana Reddy's stature in Bellary, with both politics and business apparently at stake, could risk falling out with his own party as well as with the government is something that had baffled many political observers.

It is no secret that Reddy is not in Yediyurappa camp and it is also not a confidential information that Reddy listens to Ananth Kumar, senior leader of Karnataka BJP who is an 'enemy' of Yediyurappa's as projected by some sections of the media. Whatever PR activities and photo sessions Ananth Kumar may have subjected himself to, still, the voters in Karnataka seem to have decided about what his role is in any political drama in the State. Meanwhile Reddy's close family ties with Congressmen in Andhra have untied many sack fulls of answers for some BJP baiting JDS men in Karnataka.

Considering the fact that the State BJP president Sadananda Gowda did not chide Reddy, nor had issued an even an eye wash of a show cause notice, at the least, before arranging for a hurried press conference for a tutored Reddy, makes the whole issue look even murkier.

Now, how a Chief Minister could only get angry about the allegation of bribery (150 crores at that) and brush the charge aside as carelessly as one would fan a fly away from the face, looks strange to even an unsuspecting voter in the State.

In the times of Vendetta politics, a charge of bribery, of 150 crores, being taken lightly, either makes the 150 crores negligible or the charge of bribery as nothing louder than a rumour. First of all whether the bribery charge was intended as an embarrassment or as a weapon still needs to be ascertained.

There can be only two estimates out of this, either it is suicidal for Reddy or the invitation from Congress in Andhra is waiting for him across the border from his home in Bellary. What role the State Congress in Karnataka maybe playing in all this with its hands in the Centre, is something that is waiting to reveal itself very soon.

After watching Ramesh Kumar's attempt to display his physical strength, Siddaramaiah's stubbornness, Janardhan Reddy's chest beating confession, Dharam Singh's boring speeches and Kumaraswamy's filmy threats, how amused Kannadigas should feel in

a dispensation like this, is quite a question that Kumaaraswamy and Yediyurappa may not be interested to answer as a priority, at least for the time being.

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