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## Rebel MLAs call off Bhopal trip

High drama at Bengaluru airport as plans change

STAFF REPORTER  
BENGALURU

There was high drama on Friday as 13 rebel Congress MLAs from Madhya Pradesh reached the Kempegowda International Airport here to fly to Bhopal but cancelled the trip at the last minute and returned to the resort on the outskirts of the city where they had been staying in the past few days.

Madhya Pradesh Assembly Speaker N.P. Prajapati had served notices on the MLAs on Thursday to appear before him immediately. Two chartered flights were scheduled to take them to Bhopal. Copies of the flight manifest available with *The Hindu* showed that they were to be accompanied by Ramakant Bhargava, Vidisha MP, Arvind Singh Bhadoria, MLA and BJP State vice-president, and former Minister Umashankar Gupta.

The MLAs reached the airport and went past the se-



**Troubleshooting:** KPCC chief D.K. Shivakumar after meeting Karnataka police officials on Friday. ■ V. SREENIVASA MURTHY

curity check as well. However, the flights did not take off. While the MLAs claimed the aircraft were yet to get clearance from the Air Traffic Control, there was a change of plan at the last minute and BJP strategists decided not to take them to Bhopal, multiple sources said.

### Back to resort

After waiting at the airport for over four hours, the MLAs were herded back in two buses to the resort at night.

Earlier in the day, a Congress delegation led by Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee chief D.K. Shivakumar and two Madhya Pradesh Ministers Jitu Patwari and Lakhan Singh Yadav met Additional Director-General of Police (Law and Order) Amar Kumar Pandey.

Narayan Chowdhary, father of Madhya Pradesh MLA Manoj Chowdhary, submitted a letter to police officials alleging that his son was forcibly brought to Bengaluru and kept in a resort.

Cases against Scindia reopened

STAFF REPORTER  
BHOPAL

A day after Jyotiraditya Scindia joined the BJP, the Congress government in Madhya Pradesh on Thursday reopened two cases against him and his family relating to falsifying information and forgery of land documents.

The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) had admitted an appeal by Surendra Shrivastav, who filed two complaints in 2014, to reopen and verify the merits of the cases as he was "unsatisfied" with their closure after investigation, said a note by the wing.

Pankaj Chaturvedi, Mr. Scindia's spokesperson, said the action by the EOW was being taken with a feeling of vengeance. "These cases were closed earlier owing to lack of evidence," he said.