

ವರದಿ / ವರದಿ : DEPARTMENT / SUBJECT: *ಆರೋಪಣೆಗಳ ವಿಚಾರಣೆ*

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CM rejects CD charge, Cong seeks probe

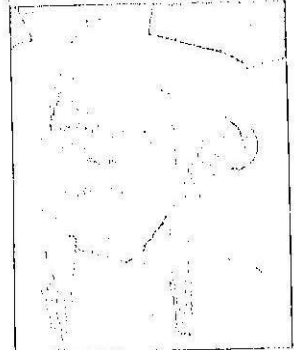
TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru/Bagalkot/Mysuru: Chief minister BS Yediyurappa on Thursday rejected the allegation that blackmail over a mystery CD forced him to make certain cabinet appointments.

After seven new ministers took oath on Wednesday, senior BJP MLA Basanagouda Patil Yatnal and MLC AH Vishwanath alleged that Yediyurappa had been blackmailed into handing out some berths.

Responding to the controversy, Yediyurappa said: "If there is any proof of the allegation or complaint, let them go to Delhi and present it to the national leadership."

In Mysuru, opposition



leader **Siddaramaiah** asked Yediyurappa to file a criminal case against BJP members making the CD claims. "It is a charge made by his own party men, and not by the opposition. There must be truth in it, right?" If he is

not a weak chief minister, he should lodge a case," said Siddaramaiah.

In Bengaluru, state Congress president DK Shivakumar alleged that BJP was a party of blackmailers. "BJP legislators have come out with certain charges. They are mentioning a CD. The government should commission an inquiry by a sitting judge of the high court," he said. Shivakumar claimed the CD allegation pointed to concealment and graft and wondered what was stopping central agencies from registering a case suo moto.

Yatnal, meanwhile, continued his attack on the chief minister, mentioning the CD again and alleging that Yediyurappa pressured the BJP

high command to give nod for cabinet expansion. Yatnal claimed that some photographs of BJP members with the prime suspect in a scam were used as a tactic. He provided no material to support the charge.

"How did these photos come out when CCB [Central Crime Branch of Bengaluru police] is still investigating the matter?" he said.

BJP's RR Nagar legislator N Munirathna, defended Yediyurappa, saying people should not level baseless allegations. "Do you have a CD? Then show it. Don't create confusion. We are not kids, but responsible politicians. Such baseless allegations bring disrepute to the party," he added.

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TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: RR Nagar legislator N Munirathna, who didn't receive a cabinet call-up on Wednesday, said that he was disappointed about the lack of support from other MLAs who joined BJP after quitting Congress and JD(S). But he remains hopeful of being inducted.

"My friends, who came along with me, are now busy. They are busy in Hubballi-Dharwad and other areas. They don't have time to even talk to me," he said.

In the group of Congress and JD(S) rebels, ST Somashekhar, Byrathi Basavaraj and Munirathna were called 'SBM'. Somashekhar and Basavaraj became ministers in the first round of cabinet ex-

pansion in February last year when chief minister BS Yediyurappa inducted 10 defectors into his cabinet. Munirathna waited for the RR Nagar by-poll. He eventually won the November contest by a huge margin.

On his allies keeping a distance, he said: "SBM founded by Sir M Visvesvaraya no longer exists. It has become SBI. We have to accept the fact." He referred to State Bank of Mysore that has been merged with State Bank of India. He refused to criticise Yediyurappa over the cabinet snub. "He will never go back on his words. My case is getting delayed, probably because the high command is taking time," he added. Basavaraj said that it was unfair to ignore Munirathna.