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15

ಇಲಾಖೆ / ವಿಷಯ : DEPARTMENT / SUBJECT: Border Dispute - Belagavi

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Won't give an inch of land to M'rasht'ra: Kannada activists' retort to Thackeray

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
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KANNADA activists and Water Resources Minister Ramesh Jarkiholi slammed Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray's remarks on Sunday on "incorporating Marathi-speaking areas" in Karnataka into Maharashtra.

Jarkiholi said Maharashtra is trying to create unnecessary confusion over the issue. "Belagavi is an integral part of Karnataka. The Mahajan

Commission report has already been accepted and there is no question of giving even an inch of land." He accused the Maharashtra government of raising the issue to cover up its failures. Rajya Sabha member from BJP Iranna Kadadi termed Thackeray's statement "foolish", saying, "Politicians in Maharashtra are trying to gain political mileage out of a closed chapter. Marathi people born in this part of Karnataka are living happily for so many years. A pro-Maharashtra out-

fit like Maharashtra Ekikaran Samiti (MES) which once had about six to seven MLAs in Belagavi region now has none."

Well-known Kannada leader from Belagavi Ashok Chandargis said, "The Maharashtra government has already filed a case before the Supreme Court over the boundary row. Any statement on the dispute amounts to contempt of court. If Thackeray is not worried about the case in the court, he should withdraw it and launch his fight outside the court." P4

'Give Solapur to K'taka'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

KANNADA Development Authority (KDA) chairman T S Nagabharana too said that Thackeray has made the statement despite knowing that they will not be able to take even an inch of land from Karnataka.

Thackeray on Sunday tweeted, "Bringing Karnataka-occupied Marathi-speaking areas into Maharashtra will be a true tribute to those who accepted martyrdom in the boundary battle. We are united and committed towards it."

T A Narayana Gowda, president, Karnataka Rakshna Vedike, said that all these areas are integral part of Karnataka. "There is no need to discuss this issue," he added. Kananda activist Vatal Nagaraj and Gowda said instead of talking about Marathi-speaking areas, Maharashtra should give Solapur to Karnataka. "Around 120 villages in the border district, where Kannada-speaking people are in majority, have been denied basic facilities. They want to be part of Karnataka," Gowda added.