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ಇಲಾಖೆ / ವಿಷಯ : DEPARTMENT / SUBJECT: Other state matters

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Mamata refuses to allow 3 IPS officers to go to Centre

Order is blatant misuse of emergency provision, she says

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KOLKATA

A fresh political row erupted in poll-bound West Bengal with the Union government on Thursday again demanding that the State relieve three serving IPS officers for Central deputation despite its strong reservations against the move.

Describing the Centre's order as a "colourable exercise of power and a blatant misuse of emergency provision of the IPS Cadre Rule, 1954," Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said West Bengal was "not going to cow down in front of an expansionist and undemocratic force".

State's objection

Despite the objection of the State government, the Union government called the three IPS officers on central deputation. The officers were deployed for the security of BJP president J.P. Nadda when his convoy was attacked on December 10.

Mr. Nadda was visiting Diamond Harbour in the South 24 Parganas, the Lok Sabha constituency of Ms. Banerjee's nephew and MP Abhishek Banerjee. Several leaders were injured and many vehicles in the convoy of the BJP president were damaged in the attack after stones were hurled at them. Stones came flying from all

Rising tensions



A vehicle in J.P. Nadda's convoy which was damaged during the attack on Dec. 10. • FILE PHOTO

December 10: BJP chief J.P. Nadda's convoy attacked on way to Diamond Harbour. Party leaders hurt; several vehicles damaged. Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee says BJP provoked the attack

December 11: Union Home Ministry summons State Chief Secretary and DGP for a meeting in New Delhi. Chief Secretary asks Centre to dispense with officers' presence in Delhi. Home Ministry calls for central deputation of three IPS officers responsi-

ble for security to Mr. Nadda. Three FIRs registered; seven persons arrested

December 12: Kalyan Banerjee writes to Union Home Secretary, says order of central deputation for IPS officers was a tool to "coerce and terrorise" IPS and IAS officers in the State

December 17: Home Ministry allots central deputation to three IPS officers. Ms. Banerjee says she refuses to "cow down in front of expansionist and undemocratic forces"

sides at the convoy as people holding flags of the Trinamool Congress lined up on the road at several places.

Mr. Nadda said he escaped unhurt because he was in a bullet-proof car. BJP national general secretary Kailash Vijayvargiya and vice-president Mukul Roy were among those who suffered injuries in the attack.

The Trinamool Congress leadership, including Ms. Banerjee, blamed the BJP for the provocation which led to the attack. Three FIRs were

registered and seven persons arrested.

The officers caught in the Central deputation row are Inspector General (South Bengal) Rajeev Mishra, Deputy Inspector General (Presidency Range) Praveen Kumar Tripathi, and Diamond Harbour Superintendent of Police Bholanath Pandey.

Ms. Banerjee said such a move before the elections was against "the basic tenets of the federal structure".

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+ Mamata refuses to allow officers to go to Centre

"This act is nothing but a deliberate attempt to encroach upon the State's jurisdiction and demoralise the serving officers in WB. This move, particularly before the elections is against the basic tenets of the federal structure," Ms. Banerjee tweeted.

"We wouldn't allow this brazen attempt by the Centre to control the State machinery by proxy! West Bengal is not going to cower down in front of expansionist & undemocratic force," the Chief Minister tweeted.

The Union Home Ministry had summoned the West Bengal Chief Secretary and the Director General of Police (DGP) to participate in a meeting on the law and order situation in the State in

New Delhi on December 14. The Chief Secretary wrote back to the Centre seeking an exemption from attending the meeting. Political parties in the Opposition, particularly the BJP, have been raising the issue of political violence, including killing of party workers regularly.

The Union Home Ministry had on December 11 asked for the central deputation of the three IPS officers who were responsible for Mr. Nadda's security on December 10. The State government refused to give its consent, following which the Union Home Ministry came out with an order sending the three officers on central deployment.