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D.K. Shivakumar

around 45 minutes for lunch," Mr. Shivakumar told reporters in New Delhi after the questioning process ended on Saturday night.

He said he had been asked to come back again to the ED office for questioning on Monday, which also happens to be Gowri-Ganesha festival day. "I accepted it after they rejected my plea to put off the questioning process to some other day as Monday happens to be a festival day," he said, and maintained that he had

answered all the questions posed by the ED officials.

The ED probe started in September 2018 on the basis of a chargesheet filed by the Income Tax Department alleging tax evasion and hawala transactions. The Income Tax Department had conducted searches on the premises linked to Mr. Shivakumar in August 2017. It is alleged that unaccounted cash of about ₹20 crore was seized during searches.

Karnataka Pradesh Youth Congress members staged a protest in Bengaluru on Saturday against what they called misuse of the ED by the Centre to settle political scores against Mr. Shivakumar.

Protest

The protesting members also blocked the movement of vehicles on Racecourse Road for some time. They warned of launching a campaign if Mr. Shivakumar was arrested. When they tried to march towards Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa's residence to lay a siege, the police stopped them and also took some of them into custody.

'We're not misusing ED'

Mandya Special Correspondent writes:

Union Minister for Chemicals and Fertilizers D.V. Sadananda Gowda has rubbished allegations that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance at the Centre was indulging in "vendetta politics". The veteran BJP, who was in Mandya to attend a private programme on Saturday, told reporters that the Centre was neither targeting Opposition party leaders nor misusing the ED and other agencies for political gains. There was no need for politicising Mr. Shivakumar's issue, he said.

ess defends minister in ED case

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The Congress said that Mr. Shivakumar had been summoned in an alleged money laundering case in spite the fact that he had been regularly working with a agencies and had appeared whenever required.

Condemning the recent summons, Mr. Surjewala said, "It is reiterated that for all these acts of mindless vendetta on part of the government and its puppet agencies, the Congress Party will continue to point out, oppose and protest against the blunders being deliberately committed by the government on various fronts, the gravest being that of annihilation of the Indian economy and pauperisation of its people."