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SUBJECT: Central

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NEWSPAPER: The hindu

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## FIR in phone-tapping case

Several public servants and unidentified private persons as accused

Several rebels had alleged their phones were tapped.

A.H. Vishwanath, disqualified MLA, had even alleged that Mr. Kumaraswamy misused the audio tapes to blackmail the rebels to switch back to supporting the coalition government, an allegation Mr. Kumaraswamy has denied.

The issue came to light when a conversation between the incumbent Bengaluru Police Commissioner Bhaskar Rao and one Faraz Ahmed was leaked, where Mr. Rao is heard lobbying for the top post.

A preliminary inquiry on

the particular audio tape led to an FIR, which has been transferred to the CBI now.

The preliminary inquiry report, now part of the CBI FIR, that has for the first time become public, indicts the then Police Commissioner, Bengaluru, Alok Kumar, though not by name.

Police inspector, in charge of Technical Support Team of CCB, who intercepted the call, has said in his statement that he downloaded the conversation from the server, put it in a pen drive and handed it over to

then Commissioner [Alok Kumar] in his office on his instructions, at 2 p.m. on August 2. Interestingly, this was just hours before the Commissioner was transferred out and Mr. Rao took charge. The audio tape was leaked to the media a day later.

However, despite the preliminary inquiry indicting the then Bengaluru Police Commissioner, neither the FIR registered by Cyber-crime Police, Bengaluru, nor the fresh FIR registered by CBI names anyone as accused.

The FIR by the CBI, a copy of which is with *The Hindu*, names unidentified public servants and unidentified private persons, as accused.

The FIR is registered under Section 72 of Information Technology Act, 2000 and Section 26 of Indian Telegraph Act, 1885.

