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Mangaluru anti-CAA protest: Research Bommai sees 'larger conspiracy'

'Threats calls for Chief Minister had come on my phone'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT BENGALURU

Terming the violence in Mangaluru during an anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) protest, which resulted in the death of two persons in police firing, a "largconspiracy", Home Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Wednesday said support to organisations behind the violence had "international ramifications" and that threat calls for Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa had come to the Home Minister's phone.

'Finance from outside'

"It is not restricted to one State. It is felt in Uttar Pradesh and Kerala, among others. Kerala Chief Minister



Home Minister Basavaraj Bommai speaking in the Legislative Assembly.

has aired his concern already. If we support them, everyone has to pay the price tomorrow," Mr. Bommai told the Legislative Assembly.

"They are getting finances from outside and we have information on this," he said, without referring to any specific organisation. "Action will be taken against organisations that are support-

ing rioters." Earlier, Opposition leaders urged the government to take legal action against organisations such as PFI and SDPI if they were found to be violating laws.

"I have received threat calls from abroad. Threats were made to the Chief Minister on my phone. Our legislators and members of Parliament have also received threat calls after the incident. Calls have been traced to Saudi Arabia and Dubai. The *qazi* of Kasaragod, who successfully prevented a protest by convincing a organisation, also received threatening calls," Mr. Bommai said.

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Home Minister sees 'larger conspiracy'

Mr. Bommai was replying to a discussion on post-CAA developments in the State, including Mangaluru violence and a series of sedition cases, moved by the Opposition. "I have concern and I have shared some information that we have received with [the former Minister] U.T. Khader. I have advised him to be careful," he said, while pointing at the attack on Congress legislator from Narasimharaja constituency Tanveer Sait recently.

He termed those who indulged in violence in Mangaluru on December 19 as "motivated crowd", and added that they were prepared to do "whatever possible" on that day. "Only those motivated to create trouble were in the protest. We have information about a PFI office-bearer who had not

only incited the crowd but had also urged people from West Bengal and Bihar to come and participate in the protest rally," Mr. Bommai said.

Defending the police move to impose prohibitory orders on the eve of December 19, 2019, he said we have to leave certain discretion to officers on the ground. "Firing was resorted to after all other options of convincing people to disperse lathi-charge, bursting tear gas, firing rubber bullets, and firing in the air - were exhausted. Motivated crowd swelled by afternoon and started attacking stations. Police firing became a necessity to prevent arms and ammunitions falling into their hands," he said, and added that the government was also unabout happy incident.