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Former Andhra Pradesh Speaker found dead

Police suspect he committed suicide

STAFF REPORTER
HYDERABAD

Former Speaker of the Andhra Pradesh Assembly Kodela Siva Prasada Rao was found dead under suspicious circumstances at his residence here on Monday.

Joint Commissioner of Police (West Zone) A.R. Srinivas said the 72-year-old politician was suspected to have committed suicide by hanging from a ceiling fan at his residence in Banjara Hills.

He was taken to Basavarakam Indo-American Cancer Hospital, where doctors declared him dead.



“After attending on him for more than an hour, doctors pronounced Rao dead,” Mr. Srinivas said, adding that there was a ligature mark around his neck.

Preliminary inquiries revealed that Mr. Rao’s daughter, Vijaya Lakshmi, found him hanging in his bedroom on the first floor of the house.

Based on her complaint, the Banjara Hills police registered a case under Section 174 (suspicious death) of the Cr. PC.

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“Around 11 a.m., when Vijaya Lakshmi went to the first floor to inform Rao that she was taking her mother, Kodela Sasikala, to hospital, she found the doors bolted from inside. She opened the window to find him hanging,” the Joint Commissioner said.

A senior leader of the Telugu Desam Party, Mr. Rao, who served as Minister in the Cabinets of the late N.T. Rama Rao and N. Chandrababu Naidu, was facing serious allegations of misuse of power. Last month, he was hospitalised in Guntur after he suffered a cardiac arrest.

Family members informed the police that for the last few days he was stressed out due to political and family compulsions and that could have forced him to resort to the extreme step. “We have to wait for the autopsy report to know the cause of death,” the officer said.

Asked with whom he spoke last, Mr. Srinivas said around 8.30 a.m. Mr. Rao spoke to someone over the phone and they are verifying it.

(People with suicidal tendencies in Hyderabad can dial Roshni helpline no. 66202000 for counselling.)