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# CD scandal lands Minister Ramesh Jarkiholi in trouble

## BJP to discuss issue with Centre: Cong. demands his resignation

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
BENGALURU

In an embarrassment to the ruling BJP just ahead of the budget session, an activist approached Bengaluru police on Tuesday seeking an investigation against Minister for Major and Medium Irrigation Ramesh Jarkiholi (in picture) for allegedly abusing a woman and seeking sexual favours from her in return for a government job.

While clips of intimate moments purportedly between the woman and the Minister and some telephone conversations went viral on social media, Opposition Congress demanded his resignation. BJP sources said the issue would be discussed with the Central leaders on

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Minister Ramesh Jarkiholi on Tuesday demanded a comprehensive inquiry into the controversial CD to unearth the truth.

"I am myself very shocked by the allegation. Let the truth come out through an inquiry," he told a private TV channel. He

Wednesday. Bengaluru-based activist Dinesh Kallahalli has alleged that the Minister threatened the woman after he was made aware of the existence of these clips, following which her family, fearing for her life, approached him for help.

Based on his complaint, the Cubbon Park police have registered a non-cognisable

said if there was any truth in the allegations he would "not just quit the ministry, but retire from politics".

He would leave for Delhi to meet party central leaders. Mr. Jarkiholi said, "I don't even know who that girl [in the video] is. I don't know who is Dinesh Kallahalli who filed the complaint."

report and are probing the allegations. "We have received a petition about the alleged incident and are probing the matter," said M.N. Annabath, DCP, Central Division. The complaint has not revealed either the identity of the woman or source of the video, said an officer.

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*revised*  
"We will serve him a notice asking him to furnish us details of the woman, of her relatives so that we can approach the woman and investigate the claims of harassment further," a senior police officer said.

Mr. Kallahalli also submitted a CD of all the video and audio clips to the police. In his complaint, he said the woman had approached the Minister seeking permission to use drone cameras to shoot a dam for a documentary. They met multiple times as Mr. Jarkiholi report-

edly sought to learn more about the woman. In his complaint, Mr. Kallahalli said that during one of their meetings, Mr. Jarkiholi promised to get her a job at Karnataka Power Transmission Corporation Ltd. in return for sexual favours.

According to sources, the victim not only recorded their private moments but also every meeting and phone conversation she had with Mr. Jarkiholi. "The reason behind these records is also part of the probe," a senior police officer said.

Meanwhile BJP senior leader and Union Minister Pralhad Joshi said he would discuss the issue with party central leaders in New Delhi besides with Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa and party State president Nalin Kumar Kateel. "Being a disciplined party, the BJP would not tolerate such things. Leaders should be clean in public and private life," he said.

Stating that the episode was an embarrassment for the party, he, however, noted that the veracity of the CD was yet to be verified.

"If it is found that the Minister is guilty, action will be taken by the Chief Minister," he said.

Mr. Jarkiholi led the team of 17 MLAs from the Opposition parties who switched to the BJP from the Congress, which eventually led to the fall of the Congress-JD(S) coalition government and formation of the BJP government. If the video episode takes a serious turn, it could weaken the new Ministers who came from other parties, said a section of insiders.