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MLA Somashekara Reddy booked for hate speech

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Ballari: G Somashekara Reddy, Ballari City BJP MLA and younger brother of tainted mining baron G Janardhana Reddy, was booked on Saturday for making an inflammatory speech and allegedly promoting enmity between two groups.

His comments at a protest organised by BJP and ABVP in support of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act on Friday in Ballari drew flak from political parties and people alike.

Police booked him under Section 153-A (promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, etc., and doing

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- BJP MLA G Somashekara Reddy on his controversial speech



acts prejudicial to maintenance of harmony of the Indian Penal Code after P Vivelok, president, Cantonment Block of the Congress, lodged a police complaint.

Earlier on Saturday thousands of Muslims led by Congress and JD(S) leaders assembled near Shaadimal and took out a rally on the main roads of Ballari, de-

manding action against Reddy. They also burnt his effigy over his remarks, particularly 'We are 60 per cent, you are 17 per cent'.

Ballari superintendent of police CM Baba asked protesters to maintain peace and assured them a case would be booked against Reddy.

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No secular-minded person will think like this: Zameer

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However, they continued raising slogans. They relented only after the SP showed them a copy of the FIR registered at Gandhinagar police station and promised to initiate action against the MLA.

At a road work bhoomi puja on Saturday, Reddy told mediapersons: "I addressed those who are disturbing the law and order, peace and harmony of the land, not everyone. Those who respect the law of the land need not be afraid. I request all minorities to live in the country peacefully and happily with everyone."

Congress MLA from Chamarajpet B Z Zameer Ahmed Khan on Saturday

slammed Reddy for his remark, saying, "No secular-minded person will think like that. He's just trying to destroy peace in the country. India is a secular country where Hindu, Muslims, Christians and Sikhs live peacefully."

On Friday, Reddy had warned the Muslim community against participating in anti-CAA protests, saying the CAA will not be good for them and they will have to face serious repercussions. "Let me caution those who are protesting against the CAA. Imagine what will happen if we (Hindus) take charge," Reddy had said.

Police extended security to Reddy at his residence in Ashok Nagar in Ballari Rural limits. A team of 25 police constables has been deployed there.