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'Nirbhaya guidelines were violated in Jarkiholi probe'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU/BELAGAVI

A Bengaluru-based lawyer has alleged that the guidelines issued after the Nirbhaya rape case have been violated in the sex CD scandal involving former Karnataka Minister Ramesh Jarkiholi.

The lawyer, K.N. Jagadish Kumar, approached the City Police Commissioner on Wednesday demanding that protection be accorded to the woman in the CD. In his petition, he said the police and the government were bound to provide security to the woman, who in her recent video accused Mr. Jarkiholi of cheating and sexual harassment. "Instead of considering her statement as evidence and registering a case against Jarkiholi, the government is providing security

and treating others who are supporting her as suspects," stated the petition.

He also questioned the police's "failure" to register an FIR when the scandal came to light and when the CD containing audio and video clips of Mr. Jarkiholi's interaction with the woman was submitted by Dinesh Kallahalli. "When Jarkiholi filed a complaint, the police registered an FIR but why aren't they doing due diligence when Dinesh Kallahalli filed a complaint seeking a detailed investigation or when the woman requested security," Mr. Kumar asked.

The victim in a recent video requested the Home Minister for security. Based on this, police should take cognisance and register a *suo motu* case, instead of launch-

ing a witch hunt and treating the woman as accused, said the petition.

The SIT issued a notice to the woman in CD to appear before them. This is the third notice issued to her. The officials say that her statement is crucial for the ongoing investigation. Though the woman issued a statement recently accusing that she has been cheated and harassed, her statement before the competent authority is considered more reliable and admissible in the court of law, say officials. The SIT officials picked up three more persons into questioning who are linked to Tumakuru-based journalist, the prime suspect in the case. In Belagavi, the city police formed a team to investigate into the alleged disappearance of the woman.