

CD scandal: Shivakumar faces protest as he arrives in Belagavi

Ramesh Jarkiholi's supporters raise 'go back' slogans at airport

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The episode of CD scandal involving the former Minister Ramesh Jarkiholi triggered a political tussle on Sunday as Congress State president D.K. Shivakumar, who arrived in Belagavi to chair meetings in connection with the bypoll to the Lok Sabha constituency, faced protests by the BJP leader's followers. A few of them reportedly threw footwear over the escort vehicles accompanying the car in which the Congress leader was travelling.

Deputy Commissioner of Police Vikram Amte maintained that no such incident like throwing footwear or stones over the vehicle happened. He, however, said further action would be taken in case anything of that sort had happened based on detailed verification of the video footage.

As Mr. Shivakumar was scheduled to visit Belagavi, the home district of Mr. Ramesh Jarkiholi, to hold series of meetings and to take part in the nomination filing by Congress candidate Satish Jarkiholi, a large number of Congress workers had gathered near Sambra Airport on Sunday. However, several supporters of Mr. Ramesh Jarkiholi too had gathered to stage a black flag protest against Mr. Shivakumar.

Trouble started after some of the protesters, who raised "go back" slogans, managed to come on the road to block Mr. Shivakumar's vehicle. Although the police thwarted their attempt, a gunman who tried to disperse the crowd was manhandled by them, subsequently forcing him to flee the scene on a motorcycle. As the vehicles passed by, some protesters reportedly threw stones and footwear over them. The police then



Supporters of the former Minister Ramesh Jarkiholi staging a protest against KPCC president D.K. Shivakumar outside Sambra Airport in Belagavi on Sunday. *P.K. BADIGER

Arrest former Minister, demands Youth Congress

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Members of the Youth Congress staged a protest outside the Cubbon Park police station here on Sunday demanding the arrest of the former Minister Ramesh Jarkiholi in connection with the case filed against him related to the CD scandal. The protest was staged soon after Mr. Jarkiholi's supporters protested against Congress State president D.K. Shivakumar in Belagavi.

The protesters shouted slogans accusing the government of protecting Mr. Jarkiholi despite being booked in a rape case.

"The rules in the State are

resorted to caning to disperse the crowd and restore normality.

Earlier at the airport, Mr. Shivakumar welcomed the protest and said such a grand welcome would further boost the party's strength. He even ridiculed that the welcome was being accord-

ed so strong that even anyone involved in eve-teasing or misbehaving with a woman will be arrested. Then why there is different treatment for Mr. Jarkiholi," the protesters wondered.

As soon as the FIR was filed against Mr. Jarkiholi with serious charges, he held a press conference to clarify. Instead of arresting him, the police gave protection to him for the press conference, they ridiculed.

Meanwhile, Congress women's wing protested outside Mr. Jarkiholi's residence demanding that he be arrested. The police detained over 30 members later.

ed for the great work done, without naming anyone.

'BJP's failure'

Mr. Shivakumar told presspersons that people would consider the BJP's alleged failure to respond to their problems while choosing their representative. Despite the BJP

having 25 MPs, they had failed to raise issues concerning the State, he alleged. "Mr. Satish Jarkiholi is a humble politician. We all should together send him to Parliament and we will work towards ensuring his victory," he said.

He said the election was unwarranted, but the demise of Suresh Angadi had necessitated it. The Congress would showcase its unity and strength in the byelection and all would together work to ensure Mr. Satish Jarkiholi's victory, he said.

Meanwhile, the former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah condemned the attack on the convoy of Mr. Shivakumar.

"I condemn the act of stone pelting by followers of Mr. Ramesh Jarkiholi on the vehicles of Mr. Shivakumar. This is a BJP-sponsored act. People of Karnataka will not let this go," he said in a tweet. "If there is no security to the State president of the Opposition party in the BJP-ruled State, then what is the fate of the common man? The failure of the Belagavi police seems to be a reflection of the aspersion cast on the Karnataka police by the lady in the alleged sex CD of Mr. Jarkiholi," he added.