Karnataka CM HD Kumaraswamy non-committal on disbanding Anti-Corruption Bureau, cites coalition

Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy on Thursday said that he was not able to take a decision on disbanding the Anti-Corruption Bureau since a coalition government was in place.

By Express News Service

BENGALURU: Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy on Thursday said that he was not able to take a decision on disbanding the Anti-Corruption Bureau since a coalition government was in place. After promising to disband the ACB in his party's manifesto, Kumaraswamy is now non-committal on abolishing the bureau that was established by the previous Congress government.
The Chief minister’s reluctance on not fulfilling his promise has angered anti-corruption activists like former Lokayukta Justice Santosh Hegde. “I could have taken a decision on this independently had this been a majority government. This is a coalition government and I cannot take any decisions without consulting everybody,” Kumaraswamy told reporters.

Kumaraswamy who had assured to disband the ACB and strengthen the Lokayukta before the assembly elections, had claimed that Lokayukta in Karnataka was more powerful in comparison to any other state.

Anti-corruption activists are not too happy with the Chief Minister’s excuses. Former Lokayukta Justice Santosh Hegde accused the CM of taking the electorate for granted. “Why make promises if you can’t take decisions?” Justice Hegde asked.

“Governments - not just this, but also at the centre - don’t want to empower institutions like Lokayukta and Lokpal because it exposes what they are doing,” Justice Hegde said. He doesn’t believe that the Congress - which, when in power, axed the grievance redressal powers of the Lokayukta - will allow the dismantling of the ACB.

“The ACB has to seek permission to even lay a trap for top officials and politicians. This permission needs to be sought from the same political class in the cabinet. How is it independent?” Justice Hegde wondered.

After farm loan waiver, this is the second promise that the JD(S) has put off citing coalition government as a reason.

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Kumaraswamy also met renowned scientist Dr K Kasturirangan and assured to implement key recommendations made by Karnataka Knowledge Commission, the commission he heads, in the next budget. The commission has prepared a report after scientific research on 16 topics including Education, Health, Science and Technology, Art and culture, Biology and others.

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