

Tamil Nadu governor dismisses Senthil Balaji from council of ministers; Stalin says governor has no power to do so

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CHENNAI: Tamil Nadu governor R N Ravi dismissed minister V Senthil Balaji from the council of ministers “with immediate effect.” Chief minister M K Stalin said the governor has no power to dismiss the minister and his government would face it legally. An official statement dated from Raj Bhavan June 29 said that Senthil Balaji was facing serious criminal proceedings in several cases of corruption, including cash-for-job scam and money laundering.

“Abusing his position as a minister, he has been influencing the investigation and obstructing the due process of law and justice,” the statement said.

The minister is currently in judicial custody in a criminal case being investigated by the Enforcement Directorate. There are some more criminal cases against him under the Prevention of Corruption Act and Indian Penal Code and are being investigated by the state police.

The statement said that there were reasonable apprehensions that continuation of Senthil Balaji in the council of ministers would adversely impact the due process of law including fair investigation that may eventually lead to

breakdown of the Constitutional machinery in the state. “Under these circumstances, the governor has dismissed Senthil Balaji from the council of ministers with immediate effect.