

E. Ahamed defends NIA probe in bus-burning case

Staff Reporter

PALAKKAD: Union Minister of State for Railways E. Ahamed said here on Monday that there was nothing "illegal in the Union government investigating terrorism-related cases in States through the National Investigation Agency (NIA)" as alleged by Kerala Home Minister Kodyeri Balakrishnan regarding the probe in the Kalamassery bus-burning case.

Talking to reporters, the Minister said, "terrorism-related cases had national and international ramifications and the State governments may not be able to investigate these on their own.

"The NIA was formed with the intention of conducting a thorough investigation into such cases.

"There is no need to oppose it. Whether the Centre should consult the States is another matter. The Centre can take up such cases with or without consultation with the States," he said.

No interference

Mr. Ahamed said an NIA inquiry could not be described as "interference in the federal system" as alleged by Mr. Balakrishnan.

If it was against the federal system, why did the CPI(M) not oppose the law to create the NIA in Parliament? he asked.

He questioned the Home Minister's contention that the NIA should only investigate cases from June 2009. All terrorism-related cases could be investigated by the Central agency, if needed.