

'Hijab ban will continue in Karnataka schools, colleges'

Welcoming the order, State Minister said for now there is no provision for religious practices inside classrooms and students must abide by rules; petitioners remain hopeful of victory in court

The Hindu Bureau

BENGALURU/MANGALURU

Following a split verdict in the Supreme Court on the issue of hijab in classrooms, Karnataka's Minister for School Education and Literacy B.C. Nagesh said the ban on headscarf in government schools and pre-university colleges will continue for now, as the apex court had not stayed the Karnataka High Court order that had earlier upheld the State government's decision.

Meanwhile, the girl students whose demand that they be allowed to wear hijab inside classrooms at a college in Udupi sparked the row and are petitioners before the court, are hopeful that they will win the legal fight eventually.

Speaking in Bengaluru, Mr. Nagesh said they had hoped that the apex court would rule unanimously in their favour, but he wel-



Voicing dissent: Women protesting against the hijab ban in Bengaluru on February 26. K. MURALI KUMAR

comed the order. "Women have been raising their voice against hijab across the globe and I hope that the student community here too will. For now, under Karnataka Education Act, 1983, there is no provision for religious practices inside classrooms and the students should abide by the rules," he said.

Following the row, the State government had authorised the College Development Committees to

impose a ban on hijab and the girl students had challenged this order in the Karnataka High Court, which dismissed their pleas on March 15.

Speaking on behalf of student-petitioners from Udupi, Hussain Kodibengre, District President of Association for Protection of Civil Rights, said the split verdict by the Bench has "given optimism of a positive order" from a larger Bench.