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# Cornered after remarks on Karkare, Antulay resigns

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Union Minister A R Antulay, who is at the centre of a storm triggered by his remarks on the circumstances surrounding Maharashtra ATS chief Hemant Karkare's killing, has sent his resignation to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh,

highly placed sources said on Friday.

79-year-old Antulay, whose remarks created an uproar in Parliament and outside with the opposition parties demanding his removal, had sent his resignation on Wednesday night, they said.

When contacted, Antulay declined to comment, saying "I am neither confirming it nor denying it".

Throughout Thursday Antulay had maintained that he owed explanation to none on his controversial statement and that he had neither met Congress chief Sonia Gandhi nor the Prime Minister, nor had he written to them.

The Union Minister for Minority Affairs had created a furore by his remarks raising doubts on the issue of killing of Karkare and two other senior police officers on November 26 night in Mumbai and sought to link it to the ATS chief's role as a key investigator in the Malegaon blast case in which Sadhvi Pragma Thakur and Lt Col Shrikant Purohit were arrested.

He had said that Karkare could have been a victim of "terrorism or terrorism plus something. I do not know".

Later, Antulay had sought to wriggle out by saying he did not question the fact that Karkare was killed by Pakistani terrorists but had only wanted to know who had sent him "in the wrong direction" towards Cama hospital instead of Taj or Oberoi hotels or Nariman House which were on fire.

Opposition BJP and Shiv Sena have demanded his removal saying that the comments had weakened India's position on the Mumbai terror attacks carried out by Pakistani terrorists.

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