

No cash for campaigning

Says India's opposition as govt freezes its bank accounts ahead of polls

AFP, New Delhi

India's opposition said yesterday that the government's freezing of its bank accounts has left it with no money to fight the heavily funded ruling party in marathon general elections that begin next month.

"Our entire financial identity has been erased," said Congress Party leader Rahul Gandhi, 53.

"We have no money to campaign, we cannot support our candidates. Our ability to fight elections has been damaged."

Several of the party's bank accounts were frozen in February because of the alleged late filing of tax returns.

Congress claim the tax department's sanctions are politically motivated, to hobble it from mounting a challenge to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ruling BJP.

"Last week, we received another notice from the tax authorities that dates back to our filings from 1995-96," Gandhi told reporters in New Delhi.



This picture taken from Rafah shows smoke billowing after Israeli bombardment on Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday. Five months of Israeli offensive have created critical food shortages among Gaza's 2.3 million Palestinians that in some areas now exceed famine levels, according to the UN.

PHOTO: AFP

Arunachal Pradesh state part of India

Says US amid Indo-China tensions; Beijing firmly opposes US remarks

REUTERS, Washington

The US government recognises Arunachal Pradesh as part of India and "strongly opposes" any unilateral attempts to advance territorial claims in the northeastern Indian state that shares a border with China, the US State Department said on Wednesday. However, a spokesperson for the Chinese foreign ministry said yesterday that China strongly opposes the United States saying Arunachal Pradesh is part of India.

Pakistan ex-PM Imran predicts govt's fall in 4 to 5 months

AGENCIES

Former Pakistan prime minister Imran Khan does not see the incumbent government lasting more than four to five months, and believes that its fall will pave the way for his release from Adiala Jail.

Talking to reporters after the hearing of a \$190 million corruption reference at Adiala Jail, Khan said this was the reason why the PPP did not join the cabinet. He claimed that a decision in his case had already been made and termed the proceedings a mere formality, reports Dawn online.

Khan said the case against him was baseless, claiming that the exchequer did not suffer any loss as the amount transferred from UK was held by government, and there was no element of criminality.

Meanwhile, Pakistan's government yesterday dismissed a warning from the US that relations between two countries would suffer if it did not probe irregularities in last month's election, reports AFP.

Mumtaz Zahra Baloch, spokeswoman for Pakistan's Foreign Ministry, said the warning from Donald Lu, the top US diplomat for South Asia, "reflects a misunderstanding of Pakistan's political situation and electoral laws".

35pc of Gaza's buildings destroyed or damaged

Says UN citing high-resolution satellite images

REUTERS, Geneva

Satellite images analysed by the United Nations Satellite Centre show that 35 percent of the Gaza Strip's buildings have been destroyed or damaged in the Israel offensive in the Palestinian enclave.

In its assessment, the United Nations Satellite Centre, UNOSAT, used high-resolution satellite images collected on February 29 and compared them with images taken before and after the start of the latest conflict.

It found that 35 percent of all buildings in the Gaza Strip - 88,868 structures - had been damaged or destroyed.

Among these, it identified 31,198 structures as destroyed, 16,908 as severely damaged, and 40,762 as moderately damaged.

This represents an increase of nearly 20,000 damaged structures compared to the previous assessment it did based on images taken in January that showed 30 percent of all buildings had been damaged or destroyed, UNOSAT said.

"The governorates of Khan Younis and Gaza have experienced the most significant rise in damage, with Khan Younis seeing 12,279 additional damaged structures and Gaza experiencing 2,010," UNOSAT said.

"Khan Younis City has been hit particularly hard, with 6,663 newly destroyed structures."

Meanwhile, Canada will halt all arms shipments to Israel, Foreign Minister Melanie Joly's office confirmed Wednesday, a decision that has drawn the ire of Israeli leaders facing growing international scrutiny over the offensive in the Gaza Strip.

The besieged Palestinian territory is facing a mounting humanitarian crisis, and months of offensive have pushed hundreds of thousands of Gazans to the brink of famine.

Quote: "The Election Commission of Pakistan, should it find that these irregularities are substantiated, should re-run elections (in constituencies) where there has been interference... We have never used the term 'free and fair' in the characterization of this election." - Donald Lu, US State Department's top official for South and Central Asia.

Government of Bangladesh tender notice for Central Police Hospital. Includes details on tender items, eligibility, and submission procedures.

Russia targets Kyiv with missiles

17 hurt; schools, residential buildings damaged

REUTERS, Kyiv

Russia staged its largest missile attack in weeks on Kyiv and the surrounding region yesterday, injuring at least 17 people and damaging schools, residential buildings and industrial facilities, officials said.

The air force said its defences shot down all the inbound missiles that were fired after a 44-day pause in such attacks on the Ukrainian capital. The damage appeared to have been caused by falling debris.



Kejriwal held over liquor policy scam

FROM PAGE 1 Kejriwal had earlier skipped nine summonses issued by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) for questioning in the case. He has called these summonses "illegal".

The arrest of Kejriwal came days after the arrest of another opposition leader and Telangana's leader Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) K Kavitha who is now in ED custody in connection with the same case.

The case pertains to alleged corruption and money laundering in formulating and executing the Delhi government's excise policy for 2021-22, which was later scrapped. Two more AAP leaders Manish Sisodia and Sanjay Singh have already been arrested by ED in the case. ED had recently alleged in a statement that K Kavitha and some others "conspired" with Kejriwal and Sisodia to get favours in the Delhi excise policy by paying Rs 100 crore to the political party that rules Delhi.

Detailed tender notice from Bangladesh Police, Rajarbag, Dhaka. Includes a table of tender items, eligibility criteria, and contact information for the procuring entity.