

On Rahul Gandhi's Modi-Adani charge, BJP namedrops George Soros

NEW DELHI: Bharatiya Janata Party on Thursday countered Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi after US prosecutors charged industrialist Gautam Adani with bribery and fraud. In the counter-attack, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) also namedrops George Soros to target the Congress leader.

BJP IT cell head Amit Malviya slammed Gandhi for speaking the same language as George Soros and accused the Congress leader of launching an assault on India Inc on behalf of the investor.

Taking to X, Malviya said, "Isn't it a coincidence that Rahul Gandhi and George Soros (Feb 16, 2023) are speaking the same language? It can't be a mere coincidence that the Hindenburg report emerged just when Adani was raising 20,000 crore through a FPO in Feb 2023."

Malviya also posted an old video of George Soros in which he was accusing PM Modi and Adani of being "close allies" with intertwined fate.

"Modi and business tycoon Adani are close allies. Their fate is intertwined. Adani Enterprises tried to raise funds in the stock market, but failed. Adani is accused of stock manipulation and his stock collapsed



like a house of cards. Modi is silent on the subject, but he will have to answer questions from foreign investors and in parliament," Soros said in the video.

Using the video, Malviya further questioned the timing of the US Justice Department's observation amid Donald Trump's impending presidency and Adani planning a US \$600 million denominated bond offering.

"And it can't be a coincidence again that the US Justice Department's observation comes, amidst US President-elect Donald Trump's charge of the outgoing regime stacking/misusing the Department of Justice, and Adani plan-

ning a US \$600 million denominated bond offering?" Malviya said.

"In both the instances, Congress and Rahul Gandhi led the charge, like subservient slaves of George Soros. What is Rahul Gandhi's interest in launching an assault on India Inc on behalf of a geriatric investor?" he added.

Earlier, BJP national spokesperson Sambit Patra also came down heavily on Gandhi and said that it is his tactic to attack India and structures that defend the country as he did in the Rafale issue.

While addressing a presser, BJP national spokesperson Sambit Patra said that the Congress lead-

er mentioned that they are doing the work of judiciary while talking about the charges against Adani and added, "Where the mother-son duo (Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi) is out on bail they are doing the work of judiciary! Half of them are out on bail and they are doing the work of judiciary!"

The remarks came after Gandhi addressed the US prosecutors' allegations that Adani and associates paid \$250 million in bribes to Indian officials. He said that the businessman had violated both Indian and American laws.

Taking a jibe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi's poll rhetoric of 'ek hain,

safe hain,' the leader of opposition in Lok Sabha said that PM Modi lacked the "ability to arrest Adani" as the whole "BJP structure was funded by Adani."

Meanwhile, the Adani Group has rejected the charges made by US prosecutors.

"The allegations made by the US Department of Justice and the US Securities and Exchange Commission against directors of Adani Green are baseless and denied," the conglomerate said in a statement, adding that "all possible legal recourse will be sought," the statement read.

The indictment accuses Adani and multiple subordinates of paying huge sums of more than \$250 million in bribes to government officials for lucrative solar energy supply contracts. The deals were projected to generate more than \$2 billion in profits after tax over roughly 20 years.

The Adani Group has always upheld and is steadfastly committed to maintaining the highest standards of governance, transparency and regulatory compliance across all jurisdictions of its operations," the statement added. "We assure our stakeholders, partners and employees that we are a law-abiding organisation, fully compliant with all laws," it added.

SC asks Manipur Govt to respond to plea challenging ILP system

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court granted an eight-week extension to Manipur government to file its response to a plea challenging the constitutionality of the state's Inner Line Permit (ILP) System.

The petition, filed by the organization Amra Bangalore, contended that the ILP system, introduced through the Adaptation of Laws (Amendment) Order 2019, restricts the movement and activities of non-residents in Manipur, including their ability to enter or conduct business without obtaining a permit.

A bench comprising Justice Hrishikesh Roy and Justice SVN Bhatti on Wednesday granted the extension at the request of the state's counsel.

The plea sought a declaration that applying the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulations (BEFR), 1873, to Manipur, is unconstitutional, alleging violations of Articles 14, 15, 19, and 21 of the Constitution.

The petition highlights that the ILP system was extended to Manipur in 2019 following the enactment of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), which exempted ILP areas from its purview. It claims that the BEFR, original-



ly enacted during British rule to protect colonial commercial interests, was inappropriately adapted for modern-day governance.

The petitioner argued that the ILP system imposes "unbridled and unqualified" restrictions on the fundamental rights of non-indigenous individuals and residents, hindering social integration, economic development, and tourism which is a significant revenue source for the state.

A separate bench comprising Justice Abdul Nazeer and Justice Krishna Murari had issued notice on the petition in Janu-

ary 2022, with the Union Government subsequently filed a counter affidavit.

The plea challenged the use of colonial-era laws, stating that the BEFR 1873, enacted to monopolize British interests and restrict Indian traders, now unjustly curtails constitutional freedoms under the guise of protecting tribal areas.

The petitioner labelled the ILP system as "draconian" and argued that it obstructs technological advancement and national unity in the region.

The matter will be taken up after eight weeks after the Manipur Government submits its response.

AAP releases first list of 11 candidates for 2025 Delhi Assembly election

NEW DELHI: Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Thursday released its first list of 11 candidates for the Delhi Assembly election 2025.

The list includes the names of former BJP and Congress leaders who recently joined AAP.

Former BJP leaders

Brahm Singh Tanwar, Anil Jha and BB Tyagi and former Congress leaders Chaudhry Zubair Ahmad, Veer Dheenan and Sumesh Shokeen are included.

AAP leaders Ram Singh Netaji, Sarita Singh, Gaurav Sharma, Deepak Singla and Manoj Tyagi

are also part of the list.

The five-year term of the current Delhi Assembly will conclude in 2025, with elections for all 70 seats are expected to take place in February. The seventh Assembly was formed on February 24, 2020, when the AAP secured a landslide victory.

Heroin, banned 'Meth' tablets worth over Rs 86 cr seized in Mizoram, two held

AIZAWL: Assam Rifles in collaboration with Mizoram Police seized banned Methamphetamine tablets and heroin worth over Rs 86 crore in two separate operations in Champhai district and two Myanmar nationals were arrested in one of these connections, an official statement said on Thursday. A joint team of Assam Rifles and state police launched an operation in a village on Wednesday after security forces received information about the movement of a suspicious consignment across the Tiau river along the India-Myanmar border. During the operation, the traffickers escaped from the spot but the consignment was seized, the Assam Rifles statement said. During the search, 28.52 kilograms of Methamphetamine tablets worth Rs 85.56 crore were recovered, it said.

Cong presses for JPC after bribery charges against Gautam Adani in US

NEW DELHI: The Congress Party on Thursday reiterated its demand for a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) investigation into the various allegations against Adani Group companies following the US market regulator Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) charged Gautam Adani, Sagar Adani and executives of Adani Green Energy in a bribery case.

"The indictment of Gautam Adani and others by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) of the US vindicates the demand that the Indian National Congress has been making since Jan 2023 for a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) investigation into the various Modani scams," senior Congress leader and Rajya Sabha member Jairam Ramesh said.

Ramesh also targeted Prime Minister Narendra Modi, alluding to the 'inti-



mate nexus between the PM and his favourite businessman."

"The SEC's actions also cast poor light on the manner in which its Indian counterpart, namely SEBI, has gone about investigating violations of securities and other laws by the Adani Group and its abject failure to hold the Group to account for the source of its investments, shell companies, etc," he said.

Billionaire Adani group chief Gautam Adani and other senior executives have been indicted in New York over their role in an alleged multibillion-dollar bribery and fraud scheme.

The indictment alleges schemes to pay over \$250 million in bribes to Indian government officials, to lie to investors and banks to raise billions of dollars, and to obstruct justice.

Reacting to the develop-

ment, Jairam Ramesh said, "The five-count indictment of Gautam S Adani, Sagar R Adani and others unleashed by the US Attorney's Office, Eastern District of New York has revealed more shocking details about Adani's criminal activities."

"It alleges that they paid over \$250 million (Rs 2,100 crore) in bribes to Indian government officials between 2020 and 2024. It states that the bribes were paid "to obtain lucrative solar energy supply contracts with the Indian government, which were projected to generate more than \$2 billion (Rs 16,800 crore) in profits after tax."

It alleges that "on several occasions, Gautam S Adani personally met with an Indian government official to advance the Bribery Scheme" and claims to have electronic and cellular phone evidence of this," Ramesh wrote on 'X'.

Ex-VP Venkaiah Naidu inaugurates exhibition as part of LokManthan event

HYDERABAD: Former Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu on Thursday inaugurated an exhibition here organised as part of LokManthan-2024, a colloquium of "nationalist thinkers". Speaking on the occasion, Naidu said the underlying idea of this event is to decolonise the minds of Indians and to foster a sense of pride and commitment to Bharatiya intellectual discourse, culture, heritage, music and dance. "That is the purpose of this programme. It's a noble idea behind the programme," he said. Union Minister G Kishan Reddy was also present. President Droupadi Murmu will inaugurate LokManthan-2024 on November 22. Organised by Prajna Pravah, an organisation of 'nation-first' intellectuals, researchers, and academicians, the event will feature debates on various topics as well as cultural programmes. Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat, and other dignitaries are also expected to attend the event to be held till November 24. Delegates from foreign countries, including groups that follow pre-Abrahamic traditions, will also participate and perform cultural dances and other exhibitions. The Yazidis, who faced attacks by ISIS, are also expected to attend the conference, the organisers said. LokManthan, a biennial event, was previously held in Bhopal, Ranchi, and Guwahati, starting in 2016.

Kathakar International Storytellers festival postponed due to Delhi's air pollution

NEW DELHI: Apart from the regular logistics and government permissions, event and public activities organisers now have to factor in the hazardous AQI levels in the capital. The three-day Kathakar International Storytellers Festival, which was set to take place in Delhi from November 22 to 24 at Sunder Nursery Heritage Park for its 18th edition, has been rescheduled due to the severe-plus pollution level. The organisers stated, "Given the high AQI levels in Delhi, which pose health risks to the public, Team Kathakar has been forced to postpone the Kathakar International Storytellers Festival from November to January next year." The festival was expected to feature a conversation between patron Mohit Chauhan and Lucky Ali, as well as sessions with Sanjay Mishra and filmmaker Sajid Ali. Sajid Ali and Mohit Chauhan were also set to be sharing the making of songs, especially Chamkila, in one of the sessions.

Prarthna Gahilote, co-founder and Festival Director of the Kathakar International Storytellers Festival, said, "Mohitji is a singer, and he understands the harm caused by staying outdoors for an extended period in pollution. We have to be responsible for the health of the artists performing at our festival. We have international artists coming from various countries, and we didn't want to expose them to the harmful effects of spending six hours in the open when pollution levels are so hazardous.

BJP protests against use of 'expensive' items at Kejriwal's earlier bungalow

NEW DELHI: BJP leaders and workers staged a protest here against AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal on Thursday, alleging "extravagant luxurious items" were used for the renovation of the official bungalow that was earlier occupied by him as Delhi chief minister.

Referring to the bungalow at 6, Flagstaff Road, as "Sheshmahal", BJP leaders claimed the extravagantly expensive items found there were not provided by the Public Works Department (PWD) that owns the property. Several BJP MPs, the party's Delhi unit chief Virendra Sachdeva, and Leader of Opposition Vijendra Gupta staged the protest near Kejriwal's present residence at Firoz Shah Road. Former Delhi minister Kailash Gahlot who joined the BJP after quitting the AAP earlier this week also joined the protest.

Polling ends, Fadnavis-Bhagwat meet fuels murmurs on CM post

NAGPUR: Just hours after voting for assembly polls concluded, deputy chief minister Devendra Fadnavis met Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh sarsanghchalak Mohan Bhagwat at Sangh headquarters in Mahal on Wednesday. Dismissing political connotations, Fadnavis told TOI, "Since Bhagwat was in the city, I went to meet him. It was a courtesy visit."

On exit polls projections that suggest BJP-led Mahayuti was

poised to secure 130 to 156 seats which is adequate for govt formation, Fadnavis said, "I do not speculate on exit polls. Let's wait for final results. We are confident Mahayuti will get a majority."

Against this background, Fadnavis' approximately 15-minute meeting with RSS chief triggered curiosity among political analysts with many perceiving it as an attempt to get Sangh's endorsement for the top post. Political analysts surmise

BJP's aspiration for the CM's position, particularly after playing second-fiddle despite having most numbers in the Eknath Shinde regime. With BJP being projected as the single-largest party in this election, the political equilibrium has altered. Party insiders claimed BJP is disinclined to surrender its claim to head the new govt in Maharashtra. Customarily, BJP consults RSS before finalising crucial leadership decisions, particularly

the CM candidate. Observers hint BJP has demonstrated collaborative disposition with allies. If the party performs the way analysts have projected, it could reinforce its pre-eminence within the alliance.

Earlier in the day, Fadnavis demanded a thorough probe into allegations of bitcoins misappropriation in 2018 cryptocurrency scam against Congress state president Nana Patole and NCP (SP) working president Supriya Sule.

BPL cards must be restored except for govt employees and income taxpayers: Siddaramaiah

NEW DELHI: Amid the chaos over cancellations of ration cards for lower-income families, the Karnataka government issued a clarification on Thursday and said that only ineligible BPL cards will be revoked.

Karnataka's food and civil supplies minister KH Muniyappa said that BPL cards will be restored except for government employees and income taxpayers.

The state government's BPL card revision programme aims to assess current cardholders' eligibility status to identify ineligible beneficiaries. Minister Muniyappa clarified that a minimal percentage of BPL cards, approximately one to two per cent, have been reclassified as APL cards. "Today we have decided (that



there is) no question of cancelling (the BPL cards). Every card is eligible. They will get the rice after one week. We have got enough money to disburse for the DBT (direct bank transfer). There is no money-related problem. The only thing is that while

we are doing this one or two per cent of BPL cards have been converted to APL (Above Poverty Line). That's why today we have decided, the honourable Chief Minister has taken a decision that all the (BPL) cards must be restored except for government employees and income tax payers," Karnataka Food and Civil Supplies Minister KH Muniyappa told ANI.

The statement followed BJP's opposition to the BPL card cancellation initiative, with demands for the Karnataka Food and Civil Supplies minister's resignation.

Dismissing BJP's calls for his resignation, Muniyappa acknowledged it as standard opposition behaviour, stating it was unnecessary. The minister detailed that

BPL cards of tax payers and government employees would be converted, with 4,036 government employee cards revised, 102,509 cards under review, and 8,647 BPL cards cancelled.

Today BJP president BY Vijayendra claimed that overnight Karnataka government has cancelled 12 lakh BPL cards.

"Desperate CM Siddaramaiah is unable to raise the resources to fulfil the guarantees and it is a desperate act by the Chief Minister...They have cancelled more than 12 lakh BPL cards...Before cancelling the BPL cards, proper rules need to be followed. Instead of that, overnight 12 lakh BPL cards were cancelled. They are bringing poor people to the streets. BJP is not in favour of cancelling the BPL cards..." he

said while talking to ANI. On Monday, Karnataka deputy chief minister DK Shivakumar criticised the BJP for politicising the government's BPL card review initiative.

In his media interaction, he stated, "We are not taking anyone's food away. BJP has no other business than politicising. The percentage of BPL card holders in many constituencies is around 90%. My constituency has 90%, and Holenarasipura has 92% BPL card holders. Hence, we need to ensure that genuine and needy people get BPL cards. Some BPL cards have been cancelled after review."

This statement addressed BJP's accusations that the government was depriving people of food.