

## Cong, BJP draw swords over Mallya

PL Puniya says he witnessed the meeting, BJP accuses UPA of giving 'sweet deal' to KFA

**NEW DELHI, SEPT 13 /-** The Congress and the BJP were locked in a fierce war of words over the Vijay Mallya case today when Rahul Gandhi openly accused the Union finance minister of lying and allowing the billionaire tycoon to flee the country. The BJP threw a counter punch, claiming that the Gandhi family tried to help Mallya's floundering Kingfisher Airlines in 2011-12.

A day after the former Kingfisher Airlines boss said in London that he met Arun Jaitley before leaving India and offered to settle his dues — a charge the finance minister denied as "false" — the battle lines were firmly drawn. Seeking to back his accusation, Congress president Rahul Gandhi said party MP PL Puniya saw Jaitley sitting with Mallya in Parliament's Central Hall on March 1,

2016 and held an elaborate 15-20 minute meeting with him. Puniya added that he had seen Jaitley and Mallya talking discreetly when he was in the Central Hall of Parliament. "On March 3, we heard from the media that he (Mallya) fled the country on March 2. I have clearly stated about this in each of my interview with the media. There are CCTV cameras, we can all see that for proof. If I am wrong, I will resign from politics," Puniya said at a press conference.

Stepping up his attack, Rahul asked Jaitley to resign and challenged Jaitley to get CCTV footage of the day "Mr Jaitley is lying, the Government is lying on Rafale and the government is lying on Vijay Mallya. A meeting was held with Mr Arun Jaitley and Vijay Mallya. The logistics of Mr Mallya leaving the country were



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— P L Puniya, Cong MP

discussed in that meeting," the Congress president alleged, bringing in the Rafale fighter jet deal. He went on to say that Mallya was given free passage out of the country by the finance minister. Describing it as an "open and shut case of collusion", he alleged there was some deal between Jaitley and

Mallya. "The criminal had told him, 'I am going to run away to London'. The finance minister has accepted publicly that he has been told by a criminal that he is going to run away and the finance minister has not done anything, has not informed the CBI, and has not informed the ED," Gandhi said. The BJP hit

back with equal ferocity, blaming the UPA government of giving a "sweet deal" to Kingfisher Airlines to keep it afloat and suggesting the airlines was perhaps owned by the Gandhi family. "There is a series of letters between the RBI (Reserve Bank of India) and the SBI (State Bank of India). These letters show us

how the previous dispensation under Sonia Gandhi was biased, partial and kept all norms and regulations at bay to give a sweet deal to Kingfisher Airlines," party spokesperson Sambit Patra told reporters, showing a bunch of documents. "Sometimes it seems the airline was not owned by Mallya, but by the Gandhi family in proxy," Patra added. Union minister Piyush Goyal joined the chorus of protest from the ruling party and said Rahul Gandhi should explain the relations between his family and Mallya. The now-defunct Kingfisher Airlines was given loans bypassing all norms, laws and regulations, Goyal said. Countering Rahul's demand for Jaitley's resignation, he said the Congress president should instead quit all the posts he holds. Mallya, he asserted, had no credibility

as he was under the "glare of law" and was a criminal. He could not be taken seriously, Goyal added. His party colleague Subramanian Swamy also spoke on the issue. "We have now two undeniable facts on the Mallya escape issue: 1. Look Out Notice was diluted on Oct 24, 2015 from 'Block' to 'Report' departure-enabling Mallya to depart with 54 checked luggage items. 2. Mallya told PM in Central Hall of Parliament that he was leaving for London," he said on Twitter. Immediately after Jaitley's sharp rebuttal on Wednesday, Mallya had appeared to tone down the seriousness of his comments, saying it was "not fair" to create a controversy over this issue as it was not a "formal meeting" and he only "happened to meet" the finance minister. (PTI)

INMAS develops country's first indigenous anti-nuclear medical kit

**NEW DELHI, SEPT 13 /-** In a major shot in the arm for paramilitary and police forces, scientists at a central research institute claim to have developed India's first indigenous medical kit that may ensure protection from serious injuries and faster healing of wounds resulting from nuclear warfare or radioactive leakage. The kit, developed after two decades of work by the Institute of Nuclear Medicine and Allied Sciences (INMAS) here, has over 25 items, including radio-protectors that provide 90-90 per cent protection against radiation and nerve gas agents, bandages that absorb radiation as well as tablets and ointments.

Developed in India for the first time, it's a potent alternative to similar kits that were till now being procured from strategically advanced nations such as the US and Russia at much higher prices. INMAS director A K Singh told news agency PTI.

The contents include an advanced form of Prussian blue tablets, highly effective in incorporating Radio Cesium (Cs-137) and Radio Iodine, among the most feared radionuclides in nuclear bombs that destroy human body cells. The tablet provides 100 per cent absorption from the gut and other portals of entry to the human body, according to documents inside the medical kit accessed by PTI.

According to INMAS, the kit has been developed for the armed, paramilitary and police forces only as they are the first ones likely to get exposed to radiation — be it during nuclear, chemical and biomedical (NCB) warfare or a rescue operation after a nuclear accident.

The kit also has an Ethylene diaminetetraacetic acid (EDTA) injection that traps uranium in the guts and blood of victims during a nuclear accident or warfare. (PTI)

## Ranjan Gogoi appointed CJI

**NEW DELHI, SEPT 13 /-** Justice Ranjan Gogoi was today appointed as the 46th Chief Justice of India, according to the Union Law Ministry.

Gogoi would assume office on October 3 after present incumbent Dipak Misra retires a day before. Justice Gogoi will have a tenure of a little over 13 months and would retire on November 17, 2019. President Ram Nath Kovind signed warrants of appointment of Justice Gogoi following which a notification announcing his appointment was issued. Born on November 18, 1954, Justice Gogoi was enrolled as an advocate in 1978. He practised in the Gauhati High Court on constitutional, taxation and company matters.

Gogoi was appointed as a permanent judge of the Gauhati High Court on February 28, 2001. On September 9, 2010, he was transferred to the Punjab and Haryana High Court. He was appointed as Chief Justice of Punjab and Haryana High Court on February 12, 2011 and then a judge of the Supreme Court on April 29, 2012. Justice Misra had earlier this month recommended Justice Gogoi as his successor as per established practice of naming the senior-most judge after the CJI for the post.

## 'Mera Booth Sabse Mazboot; PM's mantra for BJP workers

**NEW DELHI, SEPT 13 /-** The wind is blowing in the BJP's favour and Opposition parties are clutching at each to withstand its force, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said today while exhorting party workers to follow the mantra of 'Mera Booth Sabse Mazboot' to ensure victory in the next general elections.

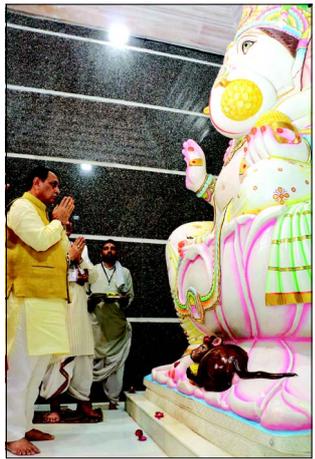
Addressing party workers of five Lok Sabha constituencies via the NaMo app, Modi said the BJP's biggest strength is its workers. Their hard work has ensured the party's historic success and progress in a short span of four years, he added. He attributed the party's success to its workers and their grip over their respective polling booths. "Mera Booth Sabse Mazboot" (my polling booth, the strongest), this is the only mantra and this is our strength," the Prime Minister said in a video interaction. Replying to a question on opposition parties stitching an alliance for the 2019 polls, Modi assured the party workers that the BJP will win again.



"... the wind is blowing in favour of BJP even stronger than 2014. That's why opposition parties are clutching each other's hands to save themselves from being blown away." The Prime Minister also urged party workers to continuously interact with voters of their respective

constituencies and ensure that at least 20 families and youth are working with the party in every polling booth. He was addressing workers from five constituencies — Jaipur (Rural), Nawada, Ghaziabad, Hazaribagh, Arunachal West — in Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand and Arunachal Pradesh.

Modi, who was nominated the BJP's Prime Ministerial candidate this day in 2013, said only in the BJP can an ordinary party worker become its leader. He also asserted that someone else can also take his place tomorrow. Lashing out at the Congress, Modi said it is, unlike the BJP, a one family party. He said he felt pity for dedicated workers of the opposition party. "Many capable and committed workers of the Congress were sacrificed for interests of the family," he said. The Opposition is resorting to lies in its campaign but today people in the country are awake while opposition is not ready to come out of its slumber, the Prime Minister said. (PTI)



Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani performs 'Puja' at Ganesh Mandir on the occasion of 'Ganesh Chaturthi' festival, in Vadodara on Thursday.

## 2 JeM terrorists killed, 8 security personnel hurt in Reasi encounter

2 Pak militants killed in Sopore

**JAMMU, SEPT 13 /-** Two JeM terrorists were killed and eight security personnel injured today in an encounter in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district, a day after they fired on a police party here and escaped, officials said. A gunbattle with a third militant is underway, they said.

The encounter broke out after security forces, comprising CRPF, police and Army personnel, during a cordon and search operation, zeroed in on a location near a house in the district's Kakryal area, and surrounded the terrorists, the officials said. Drones and choppers were used in the operation, which was launched Wednesday to track the three Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) militants, aged between 18 and 22 years, they said. Two terrorists were killed and eight security personnel, including deputy superintendent of police (DSP) Mohan Lal, injured, police said. Five CRPF personnel and three policemen were injured during the operation, they said, adding that they were admitted to the Narayana hospital in Katra.

The cordon and search operation to track down the terrorists was launched in the Jhajjar-Koti forest belt in Jammu and Reasi district after the militants fired on the security personnel on the Jammu-Seinagar National Highway Wednesday, the officials said. The militants after the incident had fled into the forest belt of which Kakryal is a part.

Meanwhile, two Pakistani militants, including the mastermind of an IED blast in which four policemen lost their lives earlier this year, were killed in an encounter with security forces in Sopore area of Baramulla district of Jammu and Kashmir, police said. The militants belonged to Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) outfit. Security forces launched a cordon and search operation in Chinkipora near Arampora area of Sopore township in the north Kashmir district this morning after receiving intelligence input about the presence of militants in the area. The search operation turned into an encounter after the hiding militants fired upon the forces. (PTI)

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