

Andhra opposition leaders petition president against graft

Leaders of the opposition parties in Andhra Pradesh Monday met President Pratibha Patil here and complained to her about the alleged 'rampant corruption' in the government.

A delegation of top leaders of the Telugu Desam Party (TDP), Telangana Rashtra Samiti (TRS), Communist Party of India (CPI) and Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) met the president at Rashtrapati Nilayam here Monday evening.

The president, currently on a two-week long southern sojourn, is staying at her southern Indian official residence.

The Andhra Pradesh opposition leaders drew her attention to the recent arrest of an official of fisheries department by the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) and recovery of assets worth over Rs.300 million from him.

The memorandum submitted by the delegation alleged that several ministers and top officials were involved in the corruption scandal. It said executive engineer of fisheries department V. Suryanarayana enjoyed patronage from ministers.

The opposition parties alleged that the government was 'neck deep' in corruption and sought a thorough probe into the scandal.

The delegation, including TDP president N. Chandrababu Naidu and TRS chief K. Chandrasekhara Rao, also brought to the president's notice the issue of slum dwellers rendered homeless by the ruling Congress for building its party headquarters.

They said several poor were forcibly removed from Bheemraowada to pave way for construction of the Congress office, and demanded justice for the displaced families.

The meeting with the president was significant as it hinted the coming together of the TRS and TDP. Chandrasekhara Rao first drove to the residence of Naidu and the duo together left for Rashtrapati Nilayam.

The two communist parties have already announced electoral alliance with the TDP. The TRS president dropped hints that he too would join the alliance to take on the Congress party in the coming elections.

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