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## CBI arrests YSR's son, sets up Cong for bypoll defeat

Reddy loyalists call for statewide bandh today, arrest comes just days ahead of June 12 bypolls

Team DNA | Hyderabad



Andhra Pradesh was put on high alert with the police clamping prohibitory orders under section 144 of the CrPC in various cities and towns after the CBI arrested YS Jagan Mohan Reddy on Sunday evening.

After questioning him for several hours on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, the CBI charged Reddy, 39, under various sections of the IPC for having assets that are disproportionate to his known source of income and formally arrested him around 7.30pm.

Addressing the media after meeting Reddy, his mother Vijayamma said her son had been victimised because the Congress – scared of his growing popularity — had conspired with the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) to get him arrested ahead of the

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June 12 bypolls in 18 Assembly constituencies.

After his arrest, Reddy said he would fight the battle legally. "I am confident of a positive outcome," he said. His anticipatory bail petition will come up for hearing on Monday. Reddy loyalists have called for a complete state shutdown on Monday.

Former TDP leader MV Mysoora Reddy, who recently joined Reddy's YSR Congress, termed the arrest "unfortunate" while Telengana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) leader KT Rama Rao said many Congress ministers were involved in the "conspiracy" against Reddy. Senior BJP leaders said the timing of the arrest was suspect and that Reddy had been a victim of political vendetta.

Senior leaders from the Chandrababu Naidu-led TDP, however, said the party would "expose the criminal activities of Jagan and how he supported criminals for killing hundreds of TDP supporters between 2004 and 2009".

Fearing a backlash from YSR Congress workers, the AP Special Police and the Rapid Action Force were deployed in front of the Dilkusha guesthouse, Raj Bhavan Road, where the CBI had kept Reddy. The police flag marched in several towns and ordered shops in places like Kadapa to down the shutters. Also, the AP State Road Transport Corporation was asked to pull off its buses from the roads and drastically cut down services till further orders.

The CBI has charged Reddy with sections 420 (cheating), 120-B (criminal conspiracy), 477 (falsification of accounts) and 409 (criminal breach of trust by public servant, or by banker, merchant or agent).

Following the AP high court orders, the CBI began its investigation into Reddy's wealth, which he is accused of accumulating when his father YS Rajasekhara Reddy was the CM from 2004-2009.

YSR's son won his maiden election in 2009 from the Kadapa parliamentary constituency while YSR was running for the second term as the state's chief minister. Reddy came to the fore after his father, YSR, died in a helicopter crash in September 2009.

Soon after his father's death, Reddy — riding on a huge sympathy wave — had almost staged a coup with the support of 150 Congress MLAs to get the CM's post. After a humiliating rebuff from the Congress high command, Reddy quit the Congress and floated his own party, the YSR Congress.

The CBI has already filed three charge sheets and arrested four, including former minister M Venkata Ramana, YSR's family auditor Vijay Sai Reddy, industrialist Nimmagadda Prasad and bureaucrat Brahmananda Reddy for helping Reddy amass a fortune. But who will gain the most from this arrest? Political experts feel this will trigger a sympathy wave for Reddy and his candidates will sweep the bypolls.

Moreover, the YSR Congress — anticipating an arrest — had kept a list of leaders to be poached from other parties, including the Congress and TDP. A senior party leader said at least three Congress MPs would cross over to the YSR Congress. Congress leaders, however, have a different take on the matter. They feel Reddy's arrest would help the Congress to consolidate its voter base. But some senior party leader are not too sure of such an outcome. Allegations against Reddy have confused the voter because the cases have raised credibility questions for the Congress that had come to power through Reddy's father YSR.


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## POLITICAL ADVANTAGE?

**Political experts** feel the arrest will trigger a sympathy wave for Reddy and his cardinals will sweep the June 12 bypolls

**While the** BJP said Reddy had been a victim of political vendetta, the IIP said it would expose his criminal activities

**The CBI** has charged Jagan Mohan Reddy with sections 420 (cheating), 120-B (criminal conspiracy), 477 (falsification of accounts) and 409 (criminal breach of trust by public servant, or by banker, merchant or agent) of the Indian Penal Code

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