

'67% OF DONATIONS TO NATIONAL PARTIES BY UNKNOWN SOURCES'

Relevant for: Indian Polity | Topic: Elections, Election Commission and the Electoral Reforms in India Incl. Political Parties

As much as 67% of donations to national parties in 2018-19 came from “unknown sources,” an increase from 53% in the previous financial year, said a report released by the Association for Democratic Reforms on Monday.

The ADR analysed the income tax returns and donation statements submitted to the Election Commission by the BJP, the Congress, the Trinamool, the Communist Party of India, the Communist Party of India (Marxist), the Nationalist Congress Party and the Bahujan Samaj Party.

The BSP declared zero voluntary contributions, the report said.

Total income

The total income of the parties was Rs. 3,749.37 crore, of which Rs. 951.66 crore was from known donors.

Electoral bonds accounted for 78% of the Rs. 2,512.98 crore, or 67%, income from unknown sources.

While parties are required to give details of all donations above Rs. 20,000, donations under Rs. 20,000 and those via electoral bonds remain anonymous.

Out of the total income from unknown sources, 64% went to the BJP and 29% to the Congress.

“Since a very large percentage of the income of political parties cannot be traced to the original donor, full details of all donors should be made available for public scrutiny under the RTI [Right to Information Act],” the ADR said in a statement.

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