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Arvind Kejriwal quits over Jan Lokpal



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Unable to introduce priority legislation in Delhi Assembly

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His resignation came hours after his government could not introduce the Bill in the Delhi Assembly as 42 MLAs – 32 of the BJP, eight of the Congress and one of the Janata Dal (United) and an Independent – opposed it in the 70-member Assembly.

While announcing his resignation to cheering supporters at his party office, where he went from the Assembly, with his trademark muffler around his head, Mr. Kejriwal attacked the Congress and the BJP for stalling the anti-corruption legislation and linked it with his government's decision to register an FIR against Reliance Industries head Mukesh Ambani.

"When we tried to pass the Delhi Jan Lokpal, the Congress and the BJP ganged up to stall it. Why did this happen? Because three days back, we registered an FIR against Mukesh Ambani who runs this country. For last 10 years, he was backing the UPA government, but for the last one year, he is behind Narendra Modi. From where does Mr. Modi get so much money?" he asked alleging a "nexus" among the Congress, the BJP and Mr. Ambani.

"People from the Congress and the BJP know if this law is brought in, their leaders will end up in jail. They realised that after we booked Mukesh Ambani and Union Minister Veerappa Moily, if we pass the Jan Lokpal Bill then other senior leaders like Sharad Pawar and Kamal Nath may be next in line," he said.

Before facing defeat on the introduction of the Bill in the afternoon, the Assembly was repeatedly disrupted in the morning as the Congress and the BJP demanded that Speaker M.S. Dhir read out a written "message" from the Lieutenant Governor over the constitutional status of the Bill. The Bill was listed as the last item, but it ended up dominating the Assembly proceedings.

Finally, Mr. Dhir read out the message and allowed the Chief Minister to table the Bill and directed a discussion on it. This led to chaos and the House had to be adjourned and the Speaker called an all-party meeting.

When the Assembly reconvened, the Speaker decided to get a sense of the House whether the Bill could be introduced, where the motion was defeated. Apart from 27 MLAs of AAP, its rebel MLA, Vinod Kumar Binny, voted in its favour.

Reacting to Mr. Kejriwal's resignation, Delhi Congress chief Arvinder Singh said: "We did not withdraw our support. Had that been the case, we would not have supported the Appropriation Bill that was taken for voting after the Lokpal Bill."



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2. Provides for expeditious investigation and prosecution of offenders to deal with “corruption, public grievances and non-delivery of services.”
3. The Jan Lokpal shall have “administrative, financial and functional independence from the government of the National Capital Territory of Delhi.”
4. “Transparency in administration and probity in public life” should be the twin responses of an efficient and effective administration. “Corruption is a key factor in economic underperformance and the major obstacle to poverty alleviation and development and general disenchantment in public.”
5. In a departure from the central Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2014, the Bill provides for redress of public grievances and protection to whistleblowers. The Jan Lokpal shall have jurisdiction over the Chief Minister, Council of Ministers, Members of Legislative Assembly members of local bodies and any category of permanent, contractual or non-permanent employees engaged by the government and members of public authority.
6. Any investigation under the Act shall be conducted by the Jan Lokpal investigation officer, who shall be a Group-A officer. After approval of the Jan Lokpal, the Director of Prosecution shall, within 30 days, file a case before the Special Court.
7. The ombudsman shall have the powers to suo motu initiate appropriate action on receiving information about corruption. The officers authorised to investigate an offence under the Act shall have the same powers as vested in a police officer under the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973.
8. The Jan Lokpal shall comprise a chairperson and six other members.
9. The ombudsman will have the powers to recruit investigating officers. It will be empowered to temporarily attach property and assets acquired by accused public servants in certain cases as well as recommend cancellation or modification of licence, lease pacts etc if obtained by corrupt means.
10. It shall have the powers to issue directions for transfer or suspension of an accused person under investigation if it is apprehended that the person may tamper with evidence or influence witnesses.

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