

Topic of the week for discussion: 8th to 14th May 2014

Topic: Charges against Robert Vadra are empty propaganda or rooted in truth??

In 2014 Election scenario, Congress party's (read Gandhi Family) is gaining popularity, not from its Prime Ministerial candidate and scion Rahul Gandhi but from its **Son-in- Law Robert Vadra** and allegations against him ; but this infamy is highly dangerous to the already volatile political situation of party.

The allegations of "**Crony Capitalism**" against Gandhi family are levied by the anti-parties. Crony Capitalism is a term describing *an economy in which success in business depends on close relationships between business people and government officials. It may be exhibited by favoritism in the distribution of legal permits, government grants, special tax breaks, or other forms of state interventionism.*

ROBERT VADRA: WHO?

Robert Vadra is an Indian businessman and the husband of Priyanka Gandhi Vadra. He is the son-in-law of Rajiv Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi, and a member of the Nehru family by marriage. He is trader by profession and owns companies namely Sky Light Hospitality Pvt Ltd, Sky Light Realty Pvt Ltd, etc

THE CONTROVERSY: WHAT?

The controversy surfaced in October, when **anti-graft activist** Arvind Kejriwal and his associates accused Vadra of corruption and exposed Vadra's land deals in **Haryana and Rajasthan in October 2012**. He alleged that Vadra, husband of Gandhi's daughter Priyanka, purchased at least 31 properties mostly in New Delhi worth more than Rs.300 crore for which money has come from "**unsecured interest-free loans from DLF Ltd**". Both Vadra and DLF denied the allegations.

According to a report of Wall Street Journal it says that Priyanka Gandhi's husband Robert Vadra had started buying properties from 2009 and the value of it rose 6 times going up to Rs 300 crore. As per their report, Vadra had real estate wealth worth Rs 252 crore in 2012 and had sold a property worth Rs 72 crore mounting his total property wealth to Rs 324 crore in the same year.

"Senior IAS officer **Ashok Khemka**, who was transferred by the Haryana government after he ordered an investigation into the land deals between Congress president Sonia Gandhi's son-in-law Robert Vadra and realty major DLF, mentioned in the report submitted in the matter that Vadra had only Rs.1 lakh in his account while a cheque for Rs.7.5 crore was issued from the same account for the deal.

Topic
Introduction

THE PROPAGANDA: WHY?

BJP did not support Kejriwal at the time when he raised this issue for the first time. The reason given by BJP then was *“BJP did not believe in raising issues about the relatives of leaders of other parties. The BJP had also desisted from raising the Vadra issue in Parliament, despite some of its MPs saying that they had the relevant papers with them since March 2011”*

But now, in the poll season, BJP is highlighting this issue. It is because, Priyanka Gandhi is not actively participating in elections but is supporting her brother in his campaign and she possesses better charisma than her brother; Rahul Gandhi. Her projection and campaigning is posing a threat to an otherwise confident Modi. It is obvious that BJP and Narendra Modi in particular are rattled by the public response to Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and therefore have decided to indulge in a personal witch-hunt against her and her husband.

Various remarks are being given by various detractors, such as:

Narendra Modi: *“Heard about 2G, now we hear about jijaji” Narendra Modi's swipe at Robert Vadra”*

“The Gandhis keep faulting the Gujarat model of development. Can they explain the Vadra model of development?” asked the BJP's Ravi Shankar Prasad.

Mocking the UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi's son-in-law for creating a *“unique business model through which hundreds of crores of rupees can be earned without making any investment,”* senior BJP leader Yashwant Sinha requested the government to honour him by starting a *“Vadra School of Management”*,” The Times of India reported.

Read further:

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/lok-sabha-elections-2014/news/AAP-dares-BJP-to-come-clean-on-Robert-Vadra/articleshow/34304288.cms>

<http://www.ndtv.com/elections/article/election-2014/please-explain-vadra-model-of-development-bjp-taunts-congress-513745>

<http://www.livemint.com/Politics/blyiB4vh8SxBgij54H1BGP/DLFRobert-Vadra-controversy-A-news-roundup.html>