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Hours before polling, I-T dept raids former Speaker Koliwad

GANSADHAR HUGAR @ Haveri

INCOME Tax Department sleuths and officials from the state Excise Department conducted a joint raid on Tuesday at midnight on the residence of Congress candidate K B Koliwad at Ranebennur, after receiving an anonymous complaint. However, the officials returned empty-handed, as they did not find any unaccounted cash or illegallystored liquor.

Senior leader Koliwad is the party candidate from Ranebennur assembly segment, which is going to polls today. Now, the raid, which was conducted just 48 hours before voting day, has led to anger among Koliwad's supporters.

Irked over the raid, his supporters and hundreds of party workers gathered in front of Koliwad's house at night, and raised slogans against Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa and Home Minister Basavaraj Bommai, accusing them of misusing power. There was a lot of tension in the area before police arrived at the scene and brought the situation under control.

District Excise officer Nagashayan told the media that the raid was conducted after the control room received a complaint that there was illegal stashing of cash amounting to Rs 10 crore at Koliwad's residence. They searched the leader's entire home, but didn't find anything, Nagashyam added.

Reacting to the raids, former Speaker Koliwad said the act was "purely politically-motivated". "BJP's political vendetta against me and Congress leaders will not benefit them. The people of Ranebenur will elect me with an additional margin of 20,000 votes," he said. He alleged that the BJP is conducting such raids after smelling their defeat in this bypolls.



Patil seeks Bommai's resignation

Haveri: Congress leader and MLA HK Patil has sought Home Minister Basavaraj Bommal's resignation for misusing the state's official machinery. He urged the Election Commission of India to register an FIR against Bommai. who, he claims, has violated the model code of conduct at Nidagatti village checkpost, in KR Pet constituency, Mandya district, on November 20. He urged the EC to deport Bommai from Karnataka till the bypolis are through. Slamming the I-T on Congress candidate K B Koliwads's residence and Congress leader Thippanna's house in Hirekerur on Wednesday, Patil alleged that CM Yediyurappa is misusing power.