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## **INDIA'S TOP COURT STRIKES DOWN SYSTEM FOR ANONYMOUS POLITICAL DONATIONS AHEAD OF NATIONAL ELECTIONS**

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*Indias top court on Thursday struck down a controversial election funding system that allowed individuals and companies to send unlimited donations to political parties without the need to disclose donor identity, a system critics have long said is undemocratic and favored Prime Minister Narendra Modis ruling party.*

A five-judge constitution bench on the Supreme Court ruled that electoral bonds are unconstitutional and violate citizens right to information held by the government. It ordered the government-owned State Bank of India to stop issuing these bonds and provide details of donations made through them to the Election Commission of India.

The electoral bond scheme was introduced by Modis ruling Bharatiya Janata Party in 2017. Before that, political parties in India had to disclose the identity of any donor who gave more than 20,000 rupees (about \$240). But the latest instrument of political financing allowed them to declare the amount of money they received through the bonds, but not the funders identity.

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