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Builders remain biggest poll donors

Manufacturing and real estate companies top list of contributors to parties

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New Delhi: Manufacturing and real estate sectors might be going through a slump in their businesses, but they continue to remain big funders to political parties, an analysis of donations made between 2012-13 and 2015-16 reveals.

After electoral trusts set up by big corporate conglomerates to fund parties without appearing to favour one over the other, the highest donations have come from individual businesses such as distilleries, steel, cement, sugar, food production, ceramics, textile, real

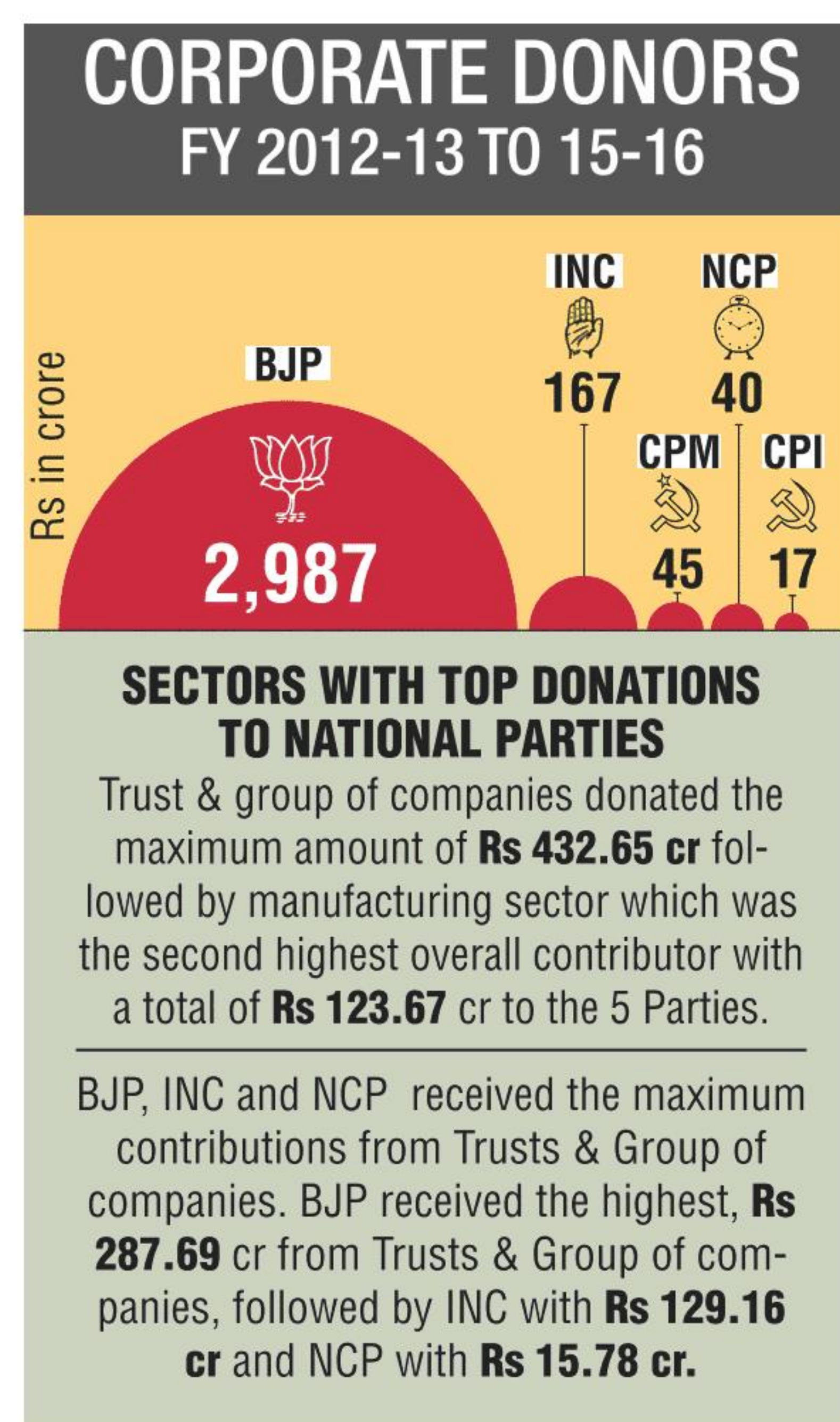
estate, and mining.

The Association of Democratic Reforms (ADR) said that Rs 956.77 crore was received by five political parties — BJP, Congress, NCP, CPI and CPI(M). As much as 89 per cent of the total contribution was from known sources.

The BJP tops the list of corporate donations. The analysis also reveals dwindling fortunes of the Congress. The BJP received Rs 705.81 crore over the past four financial years from 2,987 donors. Contribution to the Congress is Rs 198.16 crore from 167 corporate donors.

Earlier, an analysis of donations made between 2004-05 and 2011-12 had recorded just Rs 192 crore worth of corporate donations for the BJP, followed closely by the Congress' Rs 172 crore.

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Builders remain biggest poll donors for political parties

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All political parties are required to submit annual details to the Election Commission of India about donors who have contributed above Rs 20,000 in a financial year.

Between 2012-13 and 2015-16, the BJP's and the Congress' voluntary contributions above Rs 20,000 from corporate/business houses are 92 per cent and 85 per cent, respectively. The CPI and the CPI(M) have the lowest share of corporate donations at 4 per cent and 17 per cent, respectively.

The maximum corporate donations were received by the national parties in the financial year 2014-15 during which the Lok Sabha elections took place.

Satya Electoral Trust is the top donor to three of the national parties. The trust donated 35 times in 3 years, amounting to Rs 260.87 crore during 2012-13 to 2015-16.

The BJP declared receiving Rs

193.62 crore while the Congress got Rs 57.25 crore from the trust. The NCP received Rs 10 crore from the trust during the same period.

The General Electoral Trust is the second highest corporate donor to the BJP and the Congress. Between 2012-13 and 2015-16, the trust donated Rs 70.7 crore and Rs 54.1 crore to the two main national parties, respectively.

The real estate sector was the biggest donor to national parties during 2012-13, contributing Rs 16.95 crore. The BJP received the highest contribution of Rs 15.96 crore followed by the Congress with Rs 95 lakh and the CPM with Rs 4 lakh. Trusts and groups of companies with varied interests in mining, real estate, power and newspapers donated the highest amount of Rs 419.69 crore to the national parties.

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