

# After Jawhar Sircar slams 'corruption' in TMC, fellow MP Saugata Roy says he should resign

*Sreyashi Dey*

**Kolkata:** The Trinamool Congress (TMC) cannot win the 2024 Lok Sabha election with a “half-decayed body due to corruption”, party MP and former bureaucrat Jawhar Sircar has said, hoping that West Bengal Chief Minister and TMC president Mamata Banerjee will take “remedial measures” to improve the party’s image.

Sircar told the TV channel *ABP Ananda* Monday that his family wanted him to quit politics and his friends had mocked him for being part of the TMC after state education minister Partha Chatterjee — now sacked — was [arrested](#) by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in July over the alleged School Service Commission recruitment scam.

Sircar also said he was shocked to see the [chests of cash](#) being seized from Chatterjee’s close aide’s residence.

His remarks drew sharp reactions from his Trinamool colleague and fellow parliamentarian Saugata Roy, who told ThePrint, “At a time when central agencies are hounding the Trinamool, how can he (Sircar) make such comments? His statements have hurt the image of our party and if he wants to leave, he should also resign from the Rajya Sabha seat that was given to him as a prize from the TMC. He is selfish and self-centred.”

Mamata, too, has been vociferously [criticising](#) the central agencies, even warning the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and ED of legal action if state police officers were probed.



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## ‘Don’t want to run away unless it’s suffocating’

A former CEO of Prasar Bharti and secretary to the Government of India, Sircar was nominated to the Rajya Sabha by the TMC in July last year, and [elected](#) unopposed.

Speaking to ThePrint, he said, “Unless Mamata Banerjee wants me to quit, I am not quitting. I don’t want to run away from the big fight of 2024, unless it’s suffocating,” adding, “I am sure Mamata Banerjee will take remedial steps to improve the image of the party.”

Speaking further on the corruption allegations, Sircar explained how he sees corruption at the state and central levels. “What the (national) opposition must realise is that they were, or are, on old-style cash support for political campaigns, with leakages and misuse by collectors that I call ‘retail corruption’,” he said.

“(Prime Minister Narendra) Modi, on the other hand, has constructed his steel pipeline of ‘corporate corruption’ with *quid pro quo* with mega corporates through the sale of national assets — the Russian oligarch model,” Sircar added.

“Funding is at his command in obscene numbers, thanks to advanced management techniques. His lot are advised by the best, highly-paid specialists in tax law, criminal law, company laws. Else, massive multi-hundred-crore operations to topple governments in Karnataka and Maharashtra could not be executed without a scratch,” he told ThePrint.

“The opposition has to understand this paradigm change and act accordingly — not just pelt pea shots at ‘pipeline corruption’,” added Sircar.

This is the first time a sitting Trinamool MP has issued public statements about the need for the party to uphold a clean, corruption-free image.

## Catch-22 for TMC?

Political analyst Biswanath Chakraborty, while speaking to ThePrint, said that “Sircar represents a section of Trinamool leaders who are honest and have a clean public image”.

“On the other hand, a leader like Saugata Roy, who is a seasoned politician and has also [reportedly](#) been seen in the Narada sting tapes,

has no problem in speaking out against Sircar. The TMC, however, is under pressure, and the public is also mocking the party,” he said.

Author and political analyst Jayanta Ghoshal had a different view.

“I don’t think the TMC will act against Sircar. He represents the urban, educated class and the Trinamool also believes in internal democracy. On the one hand, yes, the party is facing embarrassment due to corruption, but it’s also strategically playing the victim card to show how the Centre is specifically misusing its agencies to target the TMC. So, Sircar’s statement isn’t a big deal for the party,” he told ThePrint.

At a Trinamool press conference Tuesday, spokesperson Kunal Ghosh and minister Dr Shashi Panja both declined to comment on Sircar’s statement, saying the party’s disciplinary committee would investigate the matter and act.

In January this year, Mamata had [asked](#) TMC leaders not to air their differences in public and embarrass the party. She had asked her MPs to speak out only within the party.

BJP leader Priyanka Tibrewal alleged that the Trinamool had no determination to end corruption. “Saugata Roy would want Sircar to resign from the Rajya Sabha. The TMC takes money for Rajya Sabha seats, too. So, a replacement would bring more money to the party funds. Mamata Banerjee has backed a corrupt leader like Anubrata Mondal who is [in jail](#). The party is not serious about eliminating corruption.”

(Edited by Nida Fatima Siddiqui)

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