

'Panchayat leaders have big properties, expensive vehicles': TMC's Jawhar Sircar quits as Rajya Sabha MP, writes scathing letter to Mamata

Business Today Desk

TMC's Rajya Sabha MP Jawhar Sircar has resigned over the RG Kar Medical College rape and murder case. In a letter to West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee, Jawhar mentioned that he's quitting politics too due to personal reasons. He also raised serious corruption charges against the lower rung of the party leaders.

"I have suffered patiently for a month since the terrible incident at RG Kar Hospital and was hoping for your direct intervention with the agitating junior doctors, in the old style of Mamata Banerjee. It has not happened and whatever punitive steps the government is taking now are too little and quite late," Sircar said in his two-page letter.

"I think normalcy may have been restored in this state much earlier if the caucus of the corrupt doctors was smashed and those guilty of taking improper administrative actions punished immediately after the scandalous incident happened," he added.

Sircar, who joined TMC in 2021, also raised corruption by former Education Minister Partha Chatterjee. He said was quite shocked to see on TV and print the open evidence of corruption that the former education minister had indulged in.

The Rajya Sabha MP said that he made a public statement that corruption must be tackled by the party and government, but he said he was heckled by senior leaders in the party. "I did not resign then as I had hoped that you would carry on your public campaign against 'cut money' and corruption that you had started a year earlier."

Sircar, a former bureaucrat, said he became increasingly disillusioned as the state government seemed quite unconcerned about corruption and the increasing strong-arm tactics of a section of leaders.

"As you know. I was the only prominent officer who was not given any plot in Salt Lake or anywhere by the previous regime for speaking out too critically. I have grown up in a middle-class family in Kolkata and in my youth, I have travelled in suffocating public transport, hanging on to the footboards of buses. So, after 41 years in the IAS, I can live without embarrassment in a small middle-class flat, next to a big slum and drive a very ordinary 9-year-old car. But I get amazed to see that several elected panchayat and municipal leaders have acquired big properties and move around in expensive vehicles. This hurts not only me, but the people of West Bengal."

"But West Bengal is unable to accept this extravagant corruption and domination. I know that the present Central regime thrives on the multi-billionaires that it has enriched, and not a day goes when I do not accuse it of dirty crony capitalism. I just cannot accept some things, like corrupt officers (or doctors) getting prime and top postings. No."

The TMC leader said that the present spontaneous outpouring of public anger is against this unchecked overbearing attitude of the favoured few and the corrupt. "In all my years, I have not seen such angst and total no-confidence against the government, even when it says something correct or factual."

He further said that the mainstream of the agitation is non-political and a spontaneous one and

it is not correct to take a confrontational stand, by labelling it political. "Of course, the opposition parties are trying to fish in troubled waters, but the mass of the youth and the common people who are out agitating on the streets every second day do not encourage them. They want no politics: they want justice and punishment."

"Let us analyse frankly and realise that the movement is as much for Abhaya as it is against the state government and the party. This calls for course correction immediately or else communal forces will capture this state. I had to say all this in writing as I have not had the opportunity to speak privately with you in several months."

Sircar said his commitment to fight corruption, communalism and authoritarianism in the Centre and the States is simply non-negotiable. "I shall go to Delhi soon and offer my resignation to the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha and will also disassociate myself totally from politics."