
Bengal

Jawhar Sircar's Stark Warning: "BJP Threatens Bengal's Soul, SIR Undermines Votes"

By: **Shahnawaz Akhtar And Nurullah Jawaid** April 23, 2026

Kolkata: Ahead of the crucial West Bengal elections, former bureaucrat and ex-Member of Parliament Jawhar Sircar has issued a strong warning to voters against supporting the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), calling it not only a grave threat to Bengal's pluralistic culture but also "anti-India."

Speaking exclusively to *Insaf News Online* and *eNewsroom*, Sircar—widely regarded as a public intellectual known for his integrity—launched a scathing critique of the BJP's politics under Narendra Modi, the governance of Mamata Banerjee, and the functioning of the Election Commission. He also expressed disappointment with how the Supreme Court handled the contentious SIR (Special Intensive Revision) case.

The former bureaucrat, who has conducted at least five elections during his tenure as State Election Commissioner, asserted that the entire SIR process is illegal and driven by mala fide intent.

BJP Is Not Only a Threat to Bengal's Culture but India's Too

On being asked how seriously the people of Bengal should view the upcoming election—especially in the face of a party that, according to critics, does not align with Bengal's cultural ethos—Sircar responded sharply.

"See, the party (BJP), which you are indicating, is not only against the culture of Bengal, it is also against the culture of our nation. We did not see, such kattar (hardened party) in the country. Bengal is more liberal. Here since 200 years, we try to forget caste and Hindu-Muslim issue, so Bengal did not see that much riots, as much it happened in West Pakistan (today's Pakistan). Few riots happened, to take properties by some greedy people, but there is no feeling of hatred among people here."

He further added: "There are 10 to 15 percent people who do not bear each other. Which now increased to 35 percent, who did not like Mamata Banerjee government. Mamata Banerjee government has several issues too, including corruption. And civil society was against it too, but since BJP's looming threat, people get confused. I say, neither dada (Modi), nor Didi (Mamata) but choose a good candidate, from whichever party he belongs too, even independents. And when I say about elected good candidates, I know, they will never go to BJP."

No Legal Basis for SIR, It's a Manufactured Exercise

On the SIR exercise, Sircar pointed out, "I conducted elections at a time when the current Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar was still in school. So he cannot teach us what the law is. There is no such provision as SIR in the law."

He claimed that in the past 75 years, no such exercise had ever been conducted, calling it "a creation of Gyanesh Kumar's imagination." He further noted that entries were made through Booth Level Officers (BLOs), many of whom are not proficient in using computers.

Raising serious concerns, Sircar said that citizens whose names have been deleted on such a large scale have the right to know how these entries were made in the system.

The former state election commissioner also alleged that the terminology used during the SIR process in Bengal was intended to reduce Bengalis to **second-class** citizens. According to him, the BJP and its political culture are not just anti-Bengal but anti-India, and the party lacks an understanding of Bengal's cultural fabric.

Expressing disappointment with the judiciary, he said, “I do not understand why the courts could not stop this process despite such a clear situation. The Supreme Court has been slow in several matters in recent years.”

Watch the [full interview](#) of Jawhar Sircar

BJP's Strategy, Bengal's Resistance and Political Faultlines

Sircar noted that in Gujarat and other states where SIR was conducted, large-scale deletions also took place. However, since elections are not imminent there, public awareness remains low.

“In Bengal, the opposition is stronger because the Election Commission’s manipulation has been exposed,” he said, alleging that SIR is part of a broader strategy by the BJP to win elections in the state.

Responding to the Chief Justice’s remark—“Why is there politics over SIR in Bengal?”—Sircar argued that the contradictions are far more visible in Bengal and its citizens are more politically aware.

Criticizing the BJP’s political approach, he said Bengal has spent over 200 years attempting to overcome caste and religious divisions. While a few communal riots did occur, he maintained they were driven by vested interests rather than hatred.

“The soul of Bengal does not carry hatred,” he said.

Beyond Identity: Call for Development, Accountability and a Third Alternative

Sircar, the anti-corruption crusader acknowledged public dissatisfaction with the Mamata Banerjee government, stating that concerns such as corruption and lawlessness are valid and deserve discussion. However, he emphasized that the people of Bengal reject both corruption and communal politics.

“Personally, I am in favor of a third alternative beyond both Mamata Banerjee and Narendra Modi,” he said.

He also urged Muslims to focus on development issues rather than identity politics, stressing that elections in Bengal should center on social and economic concerns.

Questioning Mamata Banerjee’s secular credentials, Sircar remarked:

“When riots were taking place in Murshidabad, Mamata Banerjee was performing puja (worship) in Digha. Had she acted decisively, the BJP would not have had the opportunity to politicize the situation. She created the ground for BJP.”

Recalling former Chief Minister Jyoti Basu, he said Basu would issue strict instructions against rioters, enabling officials to act decisively and without fear.

Concluding the interview, Sircar urged all eligible voters to exercise their franchise. He warned that any attempt to impose a government against the spirit of Bengal would not be accepted by its people.