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Jayalalithaa convicted in corruption case, gets 4 yrs in jail, Rs 100 crore fine

Convicted in a disproportionate-assets case, loses CM post; violent protests break out across Tamil Nadu

BS Reporter | Bangalore/Chennai

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J Jayalalithaa

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In a ruling that could have a far-reaching impact on the politics of Tamil Nadu, a trial court on Saturday sentenced Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa and three other co-accused to four years in jail in an 18-year-old Rs 66.65-crore disproportionate-assets case. Additionally, a hefty penalty of Rs 100 crore was imposed on Jayalalithaa.

The Supreme Court had ruled last year that if a law maker is found guilty of corruption and gets a sentence of more than two years, he or she immediately loses membership of a legislative body. So, conviction and sentencing imply that Jayalalithaa ceases to be a member of the [Tamil Nadu](#) legislative Assembly with immediate effect and will not be able to contest elections for the next 10 years (she will not be able to contest polls for six years after completing her jail term).

The other three sentenced on Saturday are Jayalalithaa's close aides Sasikala Natarajan, Ilavarasi and foster son Sudhakaran. They will have to pay Rs 10 crore each as fine. If any of the convicted persons fails to pay the fine, he or she will have to serve an additional year in jail.

Earlier in the day, Jayalalithaa and the others arrived in Bangalore, where a special court was to pronounce its verdict, in a special flight and were taken for medical examination.

The

LETTER OF THE LAW
Past instances of chief ministers being convicted or jailed in criminal cases

Chief Minister	Party	State	Chargecase
A R Antulay (1982)	Congress	Maharashtra	Extortion
J Jayalalithaa (2001)	AIADMK	Tamil Nadu	Conviction in the Tansi land scam case
Parkash Singh Badal (2003)	SAD	Punjab	Alleged involvement in a corruption case
Shibu Soren (2006)	JMM	Jharkhand	Alleged involvement in murder of Shashi Nath Jha, his personal secretary
Madhu Koda (2009)	BJP	Jharkhand	Involvement in a mining scam
B S Yeddyurappa (2011)	BJP	Karnataka	Involvement in allegedly illegal land deals
Om Prakash Chautala (2013)	INLD	Haryana	Irregularities in recruitment of 3,000 teachers
Lalu Prasad (2013)	RJD	Bihar	Involvement in the ₹950-crore fodder scam
Jagannath Mishra (2013)	Congress	Bihar	Involvement in the ₹950-crore fodder scam

In brackets: Year in which the conviction/imprisonment took place
AIADMK: All-India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, **SAD:** Shiromani Akali Dal,
JMM: Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, **BJP:** Bharatiya Janata Party, **INLD:** Indian National Lok Dal, **RJD:** Rashtriya Janata Dal

judgment was pronounced at a makeshift court set up at Gandhi Bhavan near the Parappana Agrahara jail in Southeast [Bangalore](#).

John Michael D'Cunha, the special court judge, read out the 1,300-page judgment, convicting Jayalalithaa under Section 13 (1) (E) of Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988. She was proved to have misused her office and amassed crores of rupees that were disproportionate with her known sources of income.

Soon after the sentence was pronounced, Jayalalithaa and others were taken into judicial custody and sent to a state-run hospital for medical check-up. Special public prosecutor G Bhavani Singh said: "All the four convicted persons, including Jayalalithaa, will be lodged in the central jail here."

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Singh also clarified that a bail application could not be moved in a lower court as the sentence was of more than three years of jail term. Jayalalitha could, however, appeal in either the Karnataka or [Tamil Nadu](#) high court for relief from the jail sentence. "The fine will be recovered through sale of property, including jewellery and land seized during the trial," he added.

According to lawyers, Jayalalithaa is unlikely to get bail anytime soon — at least for a year. Filing an appeal in the high court will take some time.

Disturbances and street protests broke out in Bangalore, as well as several towns and cities of Tamil Nadu, after the court's decision. The police took nearly 500 persons into custody from outside the [Bangalore](#) court and extended the prohibitory orders to up to five km from the special court premises till Saturday midnight.

QUICK RECALL

A timeline of the case

1996

- **Jun 14:** Subramanian Swamy files a complaint against J Jayalalithaa
- **Jun 18:** The then DMK government registers FIR against Jayalalithaa for having assets disproportionate with her known source of income

1997

- **Jun 4:** Chargesheet filed in the Rs 66.65-crore disproportionate-asset case
- **Oct 21:** Court frames charges against Jayalalithaa, Sasikala, Sudhakaran, and Ilavarasi

2003

FEB 28: DMK leader K Anbazhagan asks Supreme Court to transfer trial out of Chennai

- **Nov 18:** Apex Court orders transfer of trial to a special court in Bangalore, observes 'fair trial was not going' in Chennai

2010

- **Jan 22:** Supreme Court clears way for trial of DA case; trial begins

2011

- **May 16:** AIADMK returns to power, Jayalalithaa becomes CM again
- **Oct 20 & 21 and Nov 22 & 23:** Jayalalithaa appears in special court

2012

- **Oct 29:** John Michael Cunha appointed as special judge

2014

- **Aug 28:** Trial concludes; special court says verdict will be pronounced on Sep 20
- **Sep 15:** Jayalalithaa seeks change of location over security concerns
- **Sep 16:** Special Court allows Jayalalithaa's plea, orders for shifting of venue near [Bangalore](#) Central prison; postpones verdict to September 27
- **Sep 27:** Jayalalithaa convicted in the case; gets four years in jail

ALSO READ: [Jayalalithaa convicted: a profile](#)

[Tamil Nadu](#) Governor K Rosaiah had to immediately call a meeting of the administration to discuss ways to maintain law and order in the state. Since Jayalalithaa's party, the All-India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) has a comfortable majority in the Tamil Nadu Assembly, a replacement chief minister will have to be appointed immediately. Several names were in circulation but no confirmation on the next CM had come till the time of going to press.

As many as 60 members of the state Assembly and 18 AIADMK members of Parliament came to Bangalore from Chennai to show solidarity with the chief minister. Besides 20,000 other people were learnt to have arrived in the city from across Tamil Nadu.

The disproportionate-asset case dates back to 1996, when Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) General-Secretary K Anbazhagan filed a complaint, claiming Jayalalithaa had amassed Rs 66.65 crore of wealth that was disproportionate with her known sources of income. In a raid carried out in 1997 in connection with this case, 800 kg silver, 28 kg gold, 750 pairs of shoes, 10,500 saris, 91 watches and other items were seized from Jayalalithaa's Chennai residence.



Later, on a petition filed by Anbazhagan, who expressed his doubt over conduct of a fair trial in Chennai with Jayalalithaa as Tamil Nadu chief minister, the Supreme Court transferred the case to a Bangalore special court in 2003.

Jayalalithaa, who has waged several legal battles and seen several ups and downs in her political career, had to earlier quit as chief minister immediately after taking oath in 2001. This was after the Supreme Court declared her appointment null and void because she had been sentenced to two years of rigorous imprisonment in a corruption case.

At that time, O Paneerselvam, a junior minister in her Cabinet, was appointed the chief minister of Tamil Nadu. By 2002, she was cleared of all charges and again sworn in as CM.

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