

## Alva quits party post, Moily accuses her of indiscipline

Congress leader Margaret Alva Tuesday resigned as general secretary of the party - and was immediately accused of indiscipline on the ground that she had gone public on an issue that should have been resolved internally.

'We have told the party members not to speak either for or against it. The matter is being looked into by the Disciplinary Action Committee (DAC) chairman and we will react once the matter is finalized,' Congress spokesperson M. Veerappa Moily told reporters soon after Alva had handed her resignation to party president Sonia Gandhi.

'There is a breach of discipline by Margaret Alva and there is no doubt about it. All allegations made by her are an after thought. She should not have made public these things. The Congress party has its own norms and disciplinary standards and party members should abide by it,' Moily added.

According to party insiders, Alva, who was summoned back from poll-bound Mizoram, a state she is in charge of along with Maharashtra, Punjab and Haryana, had appeared before Defence Minister A.K. Antony, who is the DAC chairperson, Monday to substantiate her version of how tickets were 'sold' during Karnataka assembly polls in May.

She later met Gandhi and offered to step down as party general secretary.

That the party was not prepared to let Alva off the hook was indicated by a statement from Congress general secretary Rahul Gandhi.

'I am not unhappy with the distribution of tickets,' Gandhi told reporters.

Last week, Alva had alleged in an interview that tickets were 'sold' during the Karnataka assembly elections, saying that 'different yardsticks' were being applied in deciding party nominations for upcoming elections in six states.

She had questioned why her son Nivedith and the grandson of former union minister C.K. Jaffer Sharief were denied nominations while relatives of two dozen leaders were given tickets in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan and Jammu and Kashmir.

'Were my son and Jaffer Sharief's grandson anti-national, terrorists or smugglers?' Alva had asked.

Alva's allegations were labelled a 'stunning revelation' by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) which was quick to capitalise on the issue. 'This has thrown up a cash-for-ticket scam,' BJP spokesperson Rajiv Pratap Rudy said here.

This prompted Moily to retort that the BJP should refrain from fishing in troubled waters.

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