

Jayant Patil in ED office for 9 hrs over laundering case

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Mumbai: NCP's state president Jayant Patil spent around nine hours on Monday in the Enforcement Directorate (ED) office after being summoned in a money laundering case connected to Infrastructure Leasing & Financial Services Ltd (IL&FS) Group companies.

ED is investigating if Patil helped IL&FS get government contracts in lieu of illegal monetary gain through subsidiary companies. It is alleged that the "monetary gain" which amounted to "proceeds of crime" was routed through banking channels and cash to Patil's aides. ED decided to record Patil's statement to ascertain the details.

When the media asked Patil about the allegation of receiving money from a subcontractor of IL&FS, he said, "It's wrong information and I was not asked (by ED) about any money-related details. I am again saying I never had any connection with IL&FS or its group companies."

On Monday morning, more than one thousand NCP workers gathered at Ballard Estate area of south Mumbai outside the party office. Patil arrived at the NCP office around 11am and after spending some time with party workers walked to the ED office located 100 metres away.

Around 300 policemen were deployed to control the crowds and they barricaded the road. Policemen asked NCP supporters to remain confined to their party office premises but they sat in protest on the road till Patil was allowed to go. The supporters

kept raising slogans such as "ED government" which were heard at the ED office. One of the supporters, Raja Bhau Jadhav, said, "He (Patil) called one of our party leaders from the ED office to ask us to maintain calm. Why the ED is raising an over two-decade-old issue now? It's just harassment." Another party supporter, Amit Shirsonkar, said, "He (Patil) is a clean leader so he dares to face investigation. Those who were corrupt already left the party and joined the

ved from IL&FS to Patil's close aides. There is no clarity about the nature of the contract IL&FS received from the government with the help of Patil when he was a minister.

Earlier, the ED had searched Patil's aides' premises along with the subcontractor involved in the transaction and had recorded their statements along with others.

On May 10, ED issued its first summons to Patil for his statement in the case, just after searching offices of two audit



Jayant Patil on Monday; he said he never had any connection with IL&FS

ruling party."

Patil who arrived at the ED office around noon left after the questioning around 9pm.

Patil later told the media that he answered all questions put forth by ED. "I finished reading half of a book at the ED office," he said.

It is alleged that IL&FS Group received a government contract to build infrastructure facilities which it subcontracted to another private company. The private company paid part of the payment it received

from Deloitte Haskins & Sells LLP and BSR & Associates (KPMG). It was alleged the auditor firms deliberately and knowingly did not report the true state of affairs of the IL&FS companies and helped in ever-greening of loans, which caused losses to the creditors who had invested in the non-convertible debentures of the group. There is no clarity if searches at the auditors premises in connection with the IL&FS companies were linked to alleged proceeds of crime.

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