

Voice of the Communist Ghadar Party of India on the

Power to Decide

**This publication contains three statements issued by the
Central Committee of Communist Ghadar Party on 1st, 18th &
28th Aug, 2011**



Communist Ghadar Party of India

August 31, 2011

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Preface:

The capitalist class still has the upper hand in this period, but things do not always pan out according to its plan. Some things turn into their opposites, as a result of developments that the ruling class does not predict. This is the case with the process of formulating and presenting a Lokpal Bill in the Indian Parliament. Throughout the month of August, 2011, which was the month of mass upsurge inspired by the satyagraha of Anna Hazare, the Communist Ghadar Party was active in analysing the developments and presenting the line of action based on analysis. Here we bring together three statements issued by the Central Committee during this month, with the most recent statement presented first and the oldest statement presented last. They together provide a clear exposition of the line along which the mass movement is advancing and the Navnirman of the state, for which the conditions are crying out.

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People's will is supreme and not the will of Parliament!

Statement of the Central Committee of Communist Ghadar Party of India, 28th August, 2011

As part of the efforts of the ruling class to prettify the corrupt party dominated system, the UPA government initiated the process of formulating a Lokpal Bill. Its aim was to create an anti-corruption agency under the control of the party in power, and to do so by following a so-called consultative process. The government hoped to satisfy international capitalist investors as well as appease domestic critics through such a "governance reform".

The groundswell of anger and disgust with the existing corrupt state and super-exploitative system was so strong that consultations on the Lokpal Bill gave rise to a truly mass movement, which the government did not expect. Far from shoring up the credibility of the party dominated political system, the mass anti-corruption agitation headed by Anna Hazare has pushed all parties in Parliament on the defensive. It has further deepened the crisis within these parties and in the system they dominate.

The government wanted to create an authority that would only investigate corruption involving senior officials. The Anna team and other organisations of the people said: No, we want the concerns of all the people to be addressed, and therefore the jurisdiction of the Lokpal must cover all levels of governance. The government went ahead with its own narrow version, but has been forced to backtrack. The Parliament has been compelled to discuss the immediate demands of Anna Hazare and his team.

What the people's agitation has managed to achieve is to pressurise the parties in Parliament into action. The satyagraha of Anna and numerous people who voluntarily joined him has inspired the toiling majority of people and given them enormous confidence. The partial gain achieved so far has shown people what collective mass political action can achieve.

The mass agitation has raised the level of consciousness about the fundamental flaw in the existing system of democracy, in which big business interests and their corrupt parties control the Lok Sabha. It has further exposed multi-party representative democracy as a process designed to permit the biggest exploiters, corrupt ministers and officials to loot and plunder our land and labour.

People demanded a referendum on the Jan Lokpal Bill, drafted by persons outside Parliament. The government did not accept this demand. All the parties that benefit from the existing corrupt system, including Congress, BJP and CPI(M), wanted decision-making power to be kept strictly within Parliament.

The fundamental flaw in the existing system of democracy is precisely that it excludes the vast majority of people from the decision making process. Parties financed by big capitalists have the major say in selecting candidates for election, in forming governments and in passing laws. People have a marginal role and only on polling day. The mass agitation for a people's Lokpal Bill has highlighted this fundamental flaw.

The question that has assumed centre-stage by the development of events is where supreme power lies, and where it must lie. Who is sovereign? Is the people's will supreme or is the will of Parliament or will of Cabinet supreme?

Rahul Gandhi, speaking in the Lok Sabha, argued that the agitation against corruption must not be continued any further because it poses a threat to "supremacy of parliament". This argument is repeated by various defenders and apologists for the status quo, who wish to hide the fact that parliament is dominated by parties of vested interests, which is why millions are on the streets.

Our martyrs of 1857 declared that "Hindustan belongs to us! We are her masters!" The end of colonial rule in 1947 did not end the colonial legacy of a corrupt state that defends a system of ruthless plunder by an exploiting minority. Sovereignty was transferred from the British Crown to the Indian Parliament, but it did not reach the hands of the masses of our people. Today the people are demanding what belongs to them. They are saying: We do not trust you, the corrupt parties of big capital!

The duty of communists is to utilise the political crisis of Indian democracy to put forward and agitate for the alternative. This is what Marx and Engels meant when they wrote in the Communist Manifesto that the proletariat must “win the battle of democracy”. The Communist Ghadar Party of India has put forward the vision of a modern democracy that would affirm the will of the toiling majority of people.

All the parties in Parliament have been thrown into internal crisis, as their own rank and file members have been inspired by the mass movement. The left parties in Parliament are also facing internal crises. They have lost face among the toiling masses by defending the supremacy of Parliament and criticising the mass agitation as being a “middle class” movement.

The Communist Ghadar Party of India believes that the times are calling on all progressive forces to unite around the program to end the party system of governance and vest sovereignty in the hands of the workers, peasants, women and youth of all nationalities of India.

In order to take control of our destiny and deploy the resources of this land and our labour power for our common benefit, the working people need to replace the party system of governance with new mechanisms and a political process that will ensure that the people are the masters. We need a new Constitution that would be the fundamental law governing the new political system.

The present talk-shop parliament and state assemblies must be replaced with bodies that combine delegated decision-making power with the responsibility to ensure their implementation.

People cannot hand over all power into the hands of their elected representative. They must retain the power to demand accounts from their representative and to recall him or her at any time.

People must have the right to initiate new laws. Important decisions must require the approval of the majority of people through a referendum.

The right to select candidates for election must be taken out of the hands of political parties. The high command of parties must not

be permitted to distribute tickets as they do today. All nominated candidates must go through a serious selection process, where people can present arguments to reject unsuitable candidates. Organisations of the people, including workers' and peasants' unions, women's and youth organisations, must all be encouraged and enabled to nominate candidates for election.

Elected organs of power must be created at the base of society – samitis in every mohalla, every village, industrial area and college campus. Such organs must oversee the process of selecting candidates and enable people to exercise their right to reject and to approve, right to recall and to initiate legislation. Election expenses must be covered by the State, with equal time allocated on television and radio channels for all candidates.

The Indian Union must be reconstituted as a free and equal union of all nations, nationalities and tribal peoples constituting today's India.

This is the Navnirman of India, for which the conditions at this time are crying out. It is the logical path of evolution of the mass agitation that is developing at this time.

The working class, led by its vanguard party, will use such a modern democracy to win over the vast majority of people to march steadily on the road of revolutionary transformation from capitalism to socialism and communism, the abolition of all forms of exploitation and corruption, and all class and caste distinctions in society.

Brashtachar ki Ek hi Ilaaj --Lok Raj, Lok Raj!

Nayi Sadi ki Hai Yeh Maang – Hindostan ka Navnirman!

Hum hai iske maalik! Hum hai Hindostan!

Mazdoor, Kisan, Aurat aur Jawan!

Condemn the fascist crackdown on dissent by the Manmohan Singh Government!

Statement of the Central Committee of Communist Ghadar Party of India, 18 August, 2011

Starting from late in the evening of 15th August, the Government of India unleashed its security forces to prevent a popular rally against corruption from taking place in Delhi and in many other places all over the country. In the early hours of 16th August, in a pre-meditated and planned way, security forces under the command of the Home Ministry swooped on Anna Hazare and other leaders of the agitation, placing them in "preventive custody". Thousands of people who had come out to register their support were also arrested.

Home Minister Chidambaram claims that the pre-emptive arrests are legitimate because the Anna team did not agree to a long list of conditions formulated by the Delhi Police. One of the conditions they were supposed to sign on is that no more than 5000 persons would assemble at the main venue of the protest. Another condition was that the protest was to be limited to three days. The Home Minister claims that while a citizen has right to dissent, it has to be within "reasonable restrictions" imposed by the police.

Is it reasonable to ask a popular movement against the existing corrupt system, a movement that is calling on all the people to join in, to agree that not more than 5000 would assemble in the capital city or that the protest should be limited to three days? Would any self-respecting political movement agree to such conditions? No, it is not acceptable. It is not at all reasonable for those in power to impose restrictions on those opposing their rule, and claim that this is necessary in the national interest and for the sake of GDP growth.

The Communist Ghadar Party condemns the deprivation of the right to conscience and right to dissent as fascist actions of the Central Government!

Faced with outpouring of thousands of people in the capital and all

over the country, the government has been forced to temporarily retreat. It has been compelled to allow the protest to go on for a period of 15 days without restrictions on number of participants.

In his speech delivered at the Red Fort on 15th August, on the occasion of the 64th anniversary of India's political independence, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh accused all those who oppose the present course of our country as being roadblocks to the progress of India. Alluding to the crisis in US and Europe and the development of events in North Africa and West Asia, he attacked the people's struggles in our country, saying some forces are trying to destabilize India. He equated the progress of India with the expansion in wealth and global clout of the capitalist monopolies. He rejected the demand of the people that they must have a say in governance, a say in laying down the laws of the land and in crucial public decisions.

The spokespersons of the Congress Party are trying to justify the attack on popular dissent as being unavoidable while maintaining "law and order". This is the same logic which the British colonial rulers used in the past. They branded our revolutionary martyrs, like Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev, as being roadblocks to the advance of British India. They deprived them of their right to conscience and of the right to life itself. They condemned them as being terrorists.

Today we have the "brown sahebs" who represent the independent Government of India, which is condemning those who raise their voices in protest as being roadblocks to progress, as disrupters of India's rapid advance.

The skyrocketing food prices, massive loot of the public exchequer by monopoly capitalists and the ministers and officials in their pay, along with attacks on workers' rights and forcible grabbing of peasant and tribal lands, are bringing lakhs of our people onto the streets in protest.

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh brazenly declares that only Parliament can decide the laws of the land. People have the right only to petition the government and the parties in Parliament. People cannot decide about laws and policies. They cannot be allowed to decide their own future. They can protest but only within limits imposed by the ruling power.

The colonialists declared that they had been given the right to rule and plunder India because they were “civilized”, while our people were allegedly unfit to rule themselves. The present day champions of parliamentary democracy claim they have the right to rule and plunder our land and labour, and to impose “reasonable restrictions” on all protests, because the 1950 Constitution of India says so. More and more people in our country are refusing to accept this assertion.

If economic policies can be changed when they become outdated and no longer suitable for the big capitalists, why should a 60 year-old Constitution be treated like a holy cow? Why should there not be a referendum on the need for a modern Constitution that affirms the inviolability of people’s rights, including their right to rule themselves?

The opposition parties in Parliament are playing a devious game. They are pretending to be in favour of the right to dissent, but their aim is limited to dislodging the Congress Party and taking its place. They are in full agreement with the Congress Party that the Parliament is supreme and the people should not have any role in decision making.

Today, there are sharp conflicts amongst the monopoly capitalists over who will benefit the most from the loot and plunder of the land and labour of our country. These contradictions can be seen in the way different capitalist groups are taking opposing positions on the ongoing mass protests. It cannot also be ignored that the US imperialists are calling upon the government of India to “exercise restraint” in dealing with the protests. People must ponder over why the US imperialists, who are bombing Libya, Afghanistan and Pakistan and have wreaked death and destruction all over the world, are expressing such views.

The agencies of imperialism, headed by the United States, are well known for infiltrating people’s movements in Asia and all over the world. US imperialism masterminded so-called revolutions of yellow, orange and other colours, always with the aim of establishing regimes aligned with the geo-political strategy of Washington. It is interfering today in the mass movements in Tunisia and Egypt.

The point is that the Government of India is not consistent in opposing foreign imperialist interference. It regularly collaborates

with the US to interfere in Pakistan and Afghanistan. When it wishes, the Government of India raises its voice against the “foreign hand”, as it is doing at this time. This reflects the imperialist nature of Indo-US relations, characterised by collusion as well as contention.

People must be vigilant about, and not be fooled by, the games of the parties in Parliament, the games of the different capitalist groups, and the geo-political games of US imperialism and Indian imperialism. We must remain focused on defending our right to dissent, to gather in public places, to discuss and organise to change the corrupt and exploitative system.

There is a historic clash taking place today between those who want to end the monopoly of power and wealth; and those who are defending the existing order and its political process of representative democracy.

Those holding power want to convert all forms of dissent into a crime. The very same Manmohan Singh government, which had earlier declared armed struggle to be a crime, now declares that non-violent methods of struggle are also a crime. Defence of the right to dissent is essential to fight the fascist offensive headed by the Home Ministry.

The struggle against corruption is part and parcel of the struggle to change the political and economic system in our country. An important and immediate aim of this struggle is to reclaim from Parliament what belongs to the people, namely — sovereignty, the supreme decision making power.

Forward with the program to vest decision making power in the hands of the people!

InquilabZindabad!

Time for the people to reclaim from Parliament the power to decide

Statement of the Central Committee of Communist Ghadar Party of India, 1st August, 2011

The movement to present to Parliament a Lokpal Bill formulated with the people's consent, and the opposition of the ruling and opposition parties in Parliament to this movement, raises an important question of principle.

Should the power to make laws be confined to the Members of Parliament, or should it reside in the hands of the people? The Congress Party, BJP and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) differ with one another over the question of whether the Prime Minister should be included in the purview of the proposed anti-corruption agency called Lokpal. However, they all agree that the power to decide lies strictly limited in the hands of Parliament, they do not want to extend it to anyone outside Parliament.

According to these parties that dominate TV talk shows, people of our country can give their views, but they have no say in the decision. Once they cast their votes, they lose all their power. The power to decide has been transferred by them into the hands of those they elected. This is the common position and political outlook shared by the Congress, BJP and CPI(M) – the three parties who are supposed to be engaged in a Big Fight.

The position of the Communist Ghadar Party of India is that the time has come to end the monopoly of legislative power held by the Members of Parliament. The time has come to vest supreme decision-making power in the hands of the people as a whole, so that (i) absolute power is vested where it belongs, and where the toiling majority of people want it; (ii) no member of society is above the law, which is equally binding on all, and (iii) the will of the majority actually prevails.

Communist Ghadar Party is of the view that the existing system of parliamentary democracy and its party-dominated political process

is out of step with the times. The system and its underlying theory are not only alien, imported from Europe, but several centuries old. It is designed to confine decision-making power within a privileged minority.

What does it mean for the people to hold decision-making power in their hands? It means that the role of the people cannot and must not end on voting day. They must not hand over all their power into the hands of those who win elections.

First of all, people cannot be asked to choose among candidates whose selection is without their approval. People, organised in definite collectives in their respective constituencies, must enjoy and exercise (i) the right to select, approve and reject candidates for election, (ii) right to recall those they elect at any time, and (iii) right to make new laws or change old ones.

Any party that defends the monopoly of legislative power in the hands of Parliament, swearing by the 1950 Constitution, is in effect defending the "right" of a super-rich exploiting minority to impose its will on our society. The monopoly capitalists impose their will through money power and control over the parties and politicians in Parliament.

The Communist Ghadar Party of India unconditionally supports the movement for people's empowerment – that is, for the people to become the decision-makers. Only then will majority rule become a reality, instead of being just an empty phrase. The real big fight is not among parties that defend the status quo. The real big fight is between those who defend the status quo and those who want profound transformations so as to vest sovereign power in the hands of the people.

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