

Battle for possession of the Tricolour

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(This is the English translation of the Hindi article titled 'Tirange Par Kabze Ki Ladai' which had been published in 'Yuva Samvad' and Hastakshep.com in 2011. Since then, the business of the country's national flag Tricolour has increased manifold in the corridors of power. One can note that anti-corruption movement which was held under the aegis of "India Against Corruption", and the new specimen of corporate politics that emerged from its womb, came riding on the Tricolour. It can also be noted that the progressive and secular camp of India's civil society had put its full force in establishing that ideology-less politics. In the era of the booming business of the Tricolour, this party and its supremo's campaign, be it the market ventures or business of children's happiness, is accomplished by waving the Tricolour. Delhiites have become accustomed to seeing new hoardings, bearing the print of the Tricolour and the leader on them, being put up regularly through private companies by spending crores of rupees of public's hard-earned money.

Last two decades have especially witnessed corporate politics raising the Tricolour very high. Last year it was reported that the Federation of Overseas Indians hoisted the largest Tricolour on the occasion of 75th Independence Day at the famous Times Square in New York City. I had no idea that on the occasion of Amrit Mahotsav of the Independence, the big brothers sitting in power at the center would take the business of the Tricolour to the sky!

This decade-old article, which explores the power of the Tricolour flag of political India, is being re-shared here with a short 'PS' for new readers.)

Tricolour of power of the ruling-class

The celebration of the 62nd Republic Day was completed on 26 January (2011). The Tricolour was hoisted in the sky and above the 'Rajpath' of the capitals of the country and the provinces and was eulogised. Celebrations were also held in small places of government establishments with great pomp. The ruling class's love for the Tricolour is seen every year on Independence Day and Republic Day. The level of engrossment of ruling-class with the Tricolour is such as if they themselves are swaying with it. The Tricolour now symbolizes the might of India's ruling-class. In fact, both have blended into each other. The power of the people contained in the Tricolour has been completely subsumed by the ruling-

class. The Tricolour which is seen waving all around us is the national flag of the ruling-class of India. Whoever will be in possession of the Tricolour will also be in possession of the country. That is why there is a competition among the ruling-class as to who can wave the most beautiful Tricolour and who can fly it highest.

I have mentioned earlier in another article that multinational companies, who have invaded *Madre Hind* (Mother India) and its poor children in pursuit of profit, also love the Tricolour. On Independence and Republic Days, the corporate love for the Tricolour spills over like that of the political elites. Our children often learn the glory of the Tricolour from their advertisements. I have told in detail that the work of selling the country's resources to these companies and corporate houses is done by the ruling-class keeping the Tricolour as a witness. On the day when Manmohan Singh and Sonia Gandhi's government struck a permanent nail in the country's identity, sovereignty and security apparatus by signing a nuclear deal with the US, the Tricolour was hoisted on the Parliament with great pride. Then I described that if the BJP and its allies opposing the nuclear deal were in the government, they would have done what the Congress and its allies did. MNCs are now permanent members of India's ruling-class. In this sense India has indeed been globalized.

During the freedom struggle, the Tricolour happened to be the flag of the Congress, in the middle of which was placed the mark of the spinning wheel. In the Constituent Assembly, instead of the spinning wheel, the *Dharma-Chakra* was adopted, while the Congress Party retained the tricolour with the spinning wheel as its party flag. Despite the controversies arising out of the divisions in the Congress, the Nehru family Congress never abandoned this tricolour. The Congress got split in 1969. Then the party flag with the spinning wheel and election symbol having pair of two bullocks were frozen by the Election Commission. When Indira Gandhi's Congress got the election symbol of a calf drinking cow's milk, it replaced the charkha in the tricolour. On another split in the Congress in 1978, the Congress under Indira Gandhi got *Hath* (Hand) election symbol. The same was also placed in the middle of the previous tricolour. The party has been getting electoral benefits throughout from the tricolour as its flag. It is always been ahead in the fight for the capture of the national flag, the Tricolour, about which I am going to discuss this time. If the power of the ruling-class resides in the Tricolour, then obviously, there is also a fight for its possession. Many forms of that fight keep coming to the fore in the course of time.

For a long time, it has become a trend to say in the public discourse that let's see who will unfurl the Tricolour at the Red Fort this time or next time? Or, who has hoisted the Tricolour on the Red Fort on how many times? In this way it is also said that let us see whether so and so will be able to hoist the Tricolour on the Red Fort or not? It is another way of saying as to who will be the most powerful personality and group of the ruling-class of the country? Every person engaged in the business of doing power-politics in India, who dreams of becoming the Prime Minister, must have imagined himself hoisting the Tricolour on the Red Fort!

When there was some delay in pulling the strings during the time of Chaudhary Charan Singh, the message was made that he was not the right contender to hoist the Tricolour! Means, he has not been identified with the Tricolour; the Tricolour, which symbolizes the power and glory of the ruling-class. One can notice that the intellectuals of India hardly mention Charan Singh in their political analysis. If I ever wrote two or three articles on him, a Marxist friend said what has happened to me? The message being that political writing should be focused on those who truly belong to the ruling-class!

The BJP, the country's second largest political party, a contender for power, this time decided to hoist the Tricolour in a different way. There is a saying about the power that it tastes like blood in mouth. The defeat in the last general election has once again left the BJP restless. Throwing aside its beloved saffron flag and saying 'ya tiranga tera hi asra' (O Tricolour you are the only support), it announced that it would unfurl the Tricolour at Lal Chowk in Srinagar on Republic Day, thus giving a nationalist reply to the separatists. According to the party, Kashmir has gone into the hands of the separatists and the Tricolour which is hoisted there, or will be hoisted on this Republic Day, does not have the power of patriotism.

The BJP wanted to send a message to the voters that the Congress government it has elected, and its nationalism does not have the strength to tackle with separatism and terrorism. Hence it does not accurately represent the power of the Tricolour. That strength lies in the nationalism of the BJP, which has the courage to take the risk and hoist the tricolour at Lal Chowk. The BJP believed that the message of its patriotism and brave action would reach the people of the country, and would give the party a chance to hoist the Tricolour once again at the Red Fort next time. It may have a slogan in the next general election - 'Bring back BJP, Save Kashmir'.

The BJP knows that the tide of emotions rises not only in Pakistan, but in India as well about Kashmir. The Congress leaders asked the BJP not to do politics on a sensitive issue like Kashmir. That is, they feared that BJP's campaign to hoist the tricolour in Kashmir may give the party a political advantage. On 12 January 2011, in the name of *Ekta Yatra* (unity march), a tri-coloured chariot was decorated from Calcutta, which was to reach Lal Chowk in Srinagar. Although the event was of Bhartiya Janata Yuva Morcha, many big and prominent leaders of the party attended the occasion. Ignoring the appeal of the Central and Jammu and Kashmir governments to stop the program in view of the delicate situation in Kashmir, it strongly advocated the program.

Waving the tricolour during the *Ekta Yatra*, the BJP organized programs and made statements at many places. The organisers said that they are nationalists, who are going to Kashmir to fight the separatists; That the Congress has surrendered to the separatists in Kashmir; The governments at the Center and in Jammu and Kashmir are behaving like there is an emergency on the ground by snatching away the constitutionally mandated civil right to hoist the tricolour. They further asked whether the non-violent movement is being crushed by the security forces or is it a crime to carry and hoist the tricolour in this country?

A senior journalist of 'Jansatta', unfortunately who can never think of citizens or human beings except on the lines of their religious identity as Hindu and Muslim, wrote that when so many Muslims recruited in Jammu and Kashmir Police can carry the Tricolour every day, then the BJP should also be allowed to hoist the Tricolour. Why is it being stopped? Janata Dal (United) is an ally of the BJP. Its leaders said that the BJP should not do this on a sensitive issue like Kashmir. Nitish Kumar, the new *Vikas-Purusha* (icon of development) of the ruling-class, also made similar remarks, but the BJP did not pay any heed to him. The Sangh Parivar knows reality and status of such 'backward emperors' who do politics of becoming chief minister-prime minister only, that too only for one or two innings. There is a big mission in front of the Sangh – to build a *Hindu Rashtra*. It is a long-term project. Not knowing how many George Fernandeses and Mayawatis will have to give minister-chief ministerial shifts till the goal is achieved. Creating a *Hindu Rashtra* is a sacrificial work, so sacrifice has to be made - 'May your glory be immortal, mother, we should not stay for four days'!

During its reign, the BJP had made a lot of efforts to woo and threaten Muslims. Vajpayee also wore a green *safa* (turban), and the RSS had announced that Muslims would be included in the RSS. But there are Muslims that do not come

together in support directly. The advantage of backward and Dalit leaders is that they join them. In this way, even the Muslims who have split from the BJP get involved in the task of building a *Hindu Rashtra*. The BJP also considers Dalits and backwards to be in its scheme of things when it makes Mayawati and Nitish Kumar the Chief Minister. Although such leaders might comfort themselves by believing that they are using the BJP, while the truth is quite the opposite – which is that they are the ones being used. This contribution of the 'progressive' role of Dalit and backward upsurge to the *Hindu Rashtra* should also be noted.

However, some BJP leaders were arrested in Jammu and addressed the media. In protest against their arrest, Rajnath Singh sat on a fast at Raj Ghat in Delhi. They must have felt that sitting at Gandhi's samadhi and talking about non-violence would have some effect. The blatant and hypocritical appropriation of Gandhi by the ruling-classes of India is unimaginable. They will not shy away from committing 'vadh' (slaughter) and make him 'pratah smarneeey' (morning memorable) too! Sonia Gandhi and Manmohan Singh say they are working to build the India of Gandhi's dreams, with farmers committing suicides, youth unemployment, children malnourished and millions of working people becoming victims of starvation and disease!

The BJP's *Ekta Yatra*, which was started with much fanfare, ultimately died on the way to Jammu. There was no crowd of workers/supporters. The Tricolour could not be hoisted at Lal Chowk. Not a single leader or worker reached Lal Chowk by breaking the circle of security forces. In Kathua town of Jammu region, according to reports, BJP leaders performed the Tricolour hoisting ceremony in the presence of around 200 workers. Everyone knows that if there is no own government, then there is a risk in the 'movement'. They have known for generations the difference between living in the spirit of taking risks and taking risks in reality.

In this context, an episode of 'Maila Aanchal' (by Phanishwarnath Renu) can be seen here: "August 1942. Climb the court. Good luck. The police fire in the air. People are running. Bavandas exhorts, the public sees the opposite. A man of one and a half hands is standing with his chest taunting. ... 'A voice from Bombay!' ... the public returns. Bavandas crosses the circle between the feet of the policemen and the victorious Tricolour rises with pride. ...Mahatma Gandhi ki Jai!" (p. 131)

Describing the program as a success, despite not being able to unfurl the Tricolour, BJP leaders called the workers who took part in the *Ekta Yatra* brave

and started heaping praises of their bravery. Bravery of words is encouraged in this way! BJP had not expended so much effort for nothing. It already knew that whatever the situation is, the Tricolour would not be allowed to be hoisted at Lal Chowk. They also knew that the bravery of words is for the route of the march and actually reaching Lal Chowk would be risking their life. But it hoped that doing so would generate publicity, which could provide political leverage to the party. Their efforts attracted a lot of publicity in the media. They knew that political benefits will become known later.

It is an age-old rant of the BJP that only it can ensure the victory of nationalism over separatism. In its view, hoisting the tricolour at Lal Chowk is an act of national unity and patriotism. It has, in fact, done this exercise once before. In 1991, its senior leader Murli Manohar Joshi had undertaken *Ekta Yatra* and flew to Sri Nagar by aeroplane and hoisted the tricolour at Lal Chowk. Since then, separatism and terrorism have increased manifold. This problem is not limited to Kashmir only. The entire North-East including Assam has been in the grip of separatism for a long time. It is not that there are Muslim separatists only. BJP's own ally Shiv Sena keeps beating poor working North Indians in Maharashtra every now and then. If there is any dispute with the states bordering Maharashtra, then Shiv Sainik punishes the citizens of that particular state for staying in Maharashtra. The public to whom the BJP wants to show the power of the Tricolour can ask it that if national unity over separatism is won by hoisting the Tricolour at Lal Chowk, then why it could not be achieved earlier?

A comprehensive character-sketch of the ruling-class

Lohia has described the Indian ruling-class in terms of cowardice and hypocrisy. Further can be added to this that it has also been an imitator. One could find so many manifestations of the cowardly, sycophantic and imitative character of the ruling-class in history and present. However, the elaboration of this point is not intended here. It can be said that the Sangh Parivar appears to be the most pathetic of those manifestations. Its hollow account of taking risks and displaying bravery is empty. The communal power it shows time to time can only be called gallantry in its own dictionary. The Sangh Parivar did not participate in the freedom struggle. If it had, it would have had the courage to take risks and would have understood the pluralistic nature of India. Then, its own condition would have been better, and it would also have been able to work for the betterment of the society. Its bravery has seen light of the day now when there is security and comfort, there are chariots on earth and airplanes in the sky,

there is sleeping and eating in luxurious hotels, and media people providing them much desired publicity.

Atal Bihari Vajpayee, as prime minister, used to point out that no *mai ka lal* (son of mother) can buy India. That is, at least not till he is alive. He is the same Vajpayee who has been talked about as an informer against those who took part in the Quit India Movement. His defenders attribute the same to his young age. However, from Khudiram Bose to Bhagat Singh, the age of revolutionaries did not last long. We don't want to raise an old story here. Anyway, he was not the only one to act as an informer in the Quit India Movement. The communists turned espionage into a campaign. Before that, there were informers of the revolutionaries and also among the revolutionaries. Some of them continued to face stigma till after independence. Even before that, a major reason in the defeat of the revolt of 1857 was that the British were able to identify potential informers in the movement and once identified they were deputed by the British.

Let's turn our attention to today. During the prime ministership of Vajpayee, who proudly called himself a *Swayamsevak* first before being the prime minister, there was no shortage of resources which were sold to the MNCs, and attacks within the country and on the border. Had the BJP formed the government in the last general elections, it would not have undertaken the exercise of *Ekta Yatra*. Then it would have not have found any problem with the national unity. Just like the ruling Congress sees it now. This is the universal quality of the ruling-class. The Congress defeated the BJP once again in the last general election, so the reason was clear. It has proved to be more efficient than the BJP in firmly promoting the neo-liberal system serving corporate interests. The reason for that is also clear. Today's Congress has no burden to carry in the name of legacy except late Shri Rajiv Gandhi. Today's Congress means Smt. Sonia Gandhi. There can be consciousness in Smt. Sonia Gandhi's either of the struggle for freedom and its values, nor of post-independence Nehruvian socialism. The spark of Smt. Indira Gandhi's, who withstood the pressure of America, is also critically amiss in today's Congress.

Prominent orientalist and Indian scholars have not been able to fathom the good/bad great ocean that India is named after. Obviously, that work is not under the control of Smt. Sonia Gandhi. To be fair to her these cannot be called the shortcomings of Smt. Sonia Gandhi. Her incompetence for all this is axiomatic. She has also shown no serious effort to overcome this inefficiency. She is the 'queen' of Congress as Rajiv Gandhi's wife and her son 'Yuvraj' of the

country. They have, however, understood very well that the ruling-class of India blindly follows the person who rises to the top of power for whatever reasons. You would know Manmohan Singh. He is an eruption of the seed of capitalist imperialism sowed in the colonial era. Therefore, the service of neo-imperialism is the only and natural act for him. That is why today's Congress works in a more agile manner than the BJP in favour of neo-imperialism. Even the BJP does not have the legacy of the freedom struggle, but it keeps on holding to the burden of the 'greatness' of the ancient *Hindu Rashtra* and Hindu culture. However, it also has some 'modern dreams'. It had a dream that India should strengthen its ties with capitalist America by cutting itself off from socialist Russia. In this, it gets a double benefit. First, the seed of the idea of equality will be destroyed from India for ever which will help immensely in the establishment of a *Hindu Rashtra*. Second, by joining India, America will cut off from *Muslim Rashtra* Pakistan, which further will serve the cause of *Hindu Rashtra*.

The BJP conducted several rounds of negotiations with America as soon as it got power at the center for the first time. People would have not forgotten the rounds of Jaswant Singh-Talbot talks. Throughout its reign, the BJP indulged American with flattery to take on the Congress. But a mind always stuck in the past remains a laggard. The BJP forgot that Russia is in disarray, and Rajiv Gandhi had put the Congress into the role of America's *sevak party* (serving party) in India before the Narasimha Rao-Manmohan Singh duo arrived. It is clear that the Congress, the pinnacle of corporate capitalism, is more suitable to the US than the BJP. If Sonia Gandhi's bet is right in the next election, then the government of India and the ruling class will become an extension of America directly. Then, Andersons and Quattrochis would not have to leave India and flee to America or Europe. No matter how much bloodshed, bribery and espionage they beget they will stay here, because their dictates will work up to the internal apparatus of the Government of India and the ruling-class. The American 'quality' that has seeped into the nerves of India's ruling-class will only be absorbed into its government machinery.

The natural democratic role for an opposition party would be to fight with the ruling party to address the grave crisis on national sovereignty and deprived sections of the society. The BJP is the largest opposition party in the country. But it fights for the capture of the Tricolour in order to create the strength to emerge as the top leader in the neo-liberal plunder of the country. It neither feels that there is a threat to national unity, nor does its patriotism get stressed in view of neo-imperialist forces' meddling in the country. Thus, the history of the BJP so

far shows that it too is unable to understand the India that came out of colonial slavery due to the freedom struggle.

However, the possibility of a new beginning is always open to anyone. But the BJP, as usual, has disappointed this time too. During the entire *Ekta Yatra* and when it was stopped, no statement of any BJP leader came to the effect that the power of the Tricolour would be employed to fight against the neo-imperialist establishment by linking it with the people of the country. Clearly, the two big groups of the ruling-class of India have devalued the Tricolour in the fight for political supremacy by cutting it off from the nationalist spirit of common people of the country.

The devaluation deepens, as the fight to capture the Tricolour is to facilitate neo-imperialism by coming to the government. Angered by the promotion of neo-liberal policies of the BJP, Govindacharya has been running a separate 'national self-respect movement'. Some people even join him. But there is the same problem with Govindacharya as it is with the RSS-BJP. His idea of national self-respect soon slips away to the familiar ground of 'Hindu self-respect'. The RSS-BJP should have left the fascination of *pracheen* (ancient) and made today's Indian society and nation its first concern. Alas, it could not happen.

There are remnants of the past to be found in every society. A society as ancient as India, it is natural to have a lot of them. If a political group clutches on to it, it will always have a certain amount of response and support from the people. The BJP receives that response and support and its politics goes on. The meaning of humanity is always in making new achievements. It is needless to say that the BJP and the Congress minds have a lot in common. Otherwise, the RSS would not have grown so much without its own government. Again, it would be needless to say that there are no farmers and labourers in the core of RSS. Its backbone is the small/medium traders and service sector employees-officers, who have made their successful subsistence under the Congress rule.

This time on 26th January I was in Surya Nagar, a colony of Ghaziabad in NCR. Resident Welfare Association had organised a program in a big park on the occasion of the Republic Day. Posters with the inscription 'Proudly hoist the Tricolour, show Indianness' were put up at the gate for the venue. In the speeches that were being held there, pride was also reflected in the decision of the BJP to hoist the Tricolour at Lal Chowk. In the posters and speeches, expressions of satisfaction of both the Congress and the BJP were reverberating among themselves. A child's poem surprised me a little. He spoke of the

incompleteness of the freedom that came while stepping on many corpses amidst the ritual poems. But I was soon disappointed too. The child called for the merger of Lahore, Karachi and Dhaka into India as soon as possible to achieve the complete independence!

Rest of the ruling-class

Now let's talk a little bit about the ruling-class outside the larger circle of Congress-BJP. It is not mentioned openly, but the fact is that BJP is not the only political group which has compulsively accepted the Tricolour on the 'logic of power'. The entire official Marxist camp of India compulsively salutes the Tricolour. It knows that if one corner of the ruling class is to be held, then the Tricolour has to be kept as a witness in the ruling business. Whatever the flags of Russia and China, they can be of party-use, the flag symbolizing the power of the ruling-class in India is the Tricolour. If the extremist groups do not believe in the Constitution, they do not believe in the Tricolour either. They attack on a united Indian state based on the might of the Tricolour. If their attack would be successful, they will wave their own flag which most likely be uni-colour. If there are no parties other than them, then there will not be their flags either.

Let's extend this discussion a little more. If the RSS people, gratified with an ancient Hindu culture and its geography *Hindusthan*, do not love the idea of India that came into existence on 15 August 1947, then Marxists also never have. Therefore, even the flag that came out with that idea of India cannot be a natural love for both of them. The reason is not hidden. The India of one's dreams resides in distant times, in other distant places. Both complain that why independent India did not come into existence as per their ideas? Or why doesn't it come now? Ultra Marxists perceive the separation of Kashmir from India as a dream that the Indian state will then begin to disintegrate, and thus, it will be punished for coming into a different existence from what they had thought. That is, they not only have offence with the current Indian state, but also with the idea of India that came into existence with the independence.

Needless to say, that this too is a reflection of idle thinking. Many streams of ideas and actions were active in the struggle for the independence of India, which also clashed with each other, and simultaneously also operated by validating each other. The inspiration of those thoughts and actions was not solely Indian. The context of the whole world was active in them. Although during that period the world mostly meant Europe and America as it is today.

But all those inspirations, good or bad, could have come to fruition on the test of the then Indian reality.

The good or bad idea of India that came into existence after going through two and a half hundred years of anti-colonial struggle was a set of the potential and possibilities of all such inspirations. We have to understand and accept this reality. Gandhi did that difficult task of aggregation at a historical stage. If he was not there at that time, someone else would have done it. It could also have been done in a better way than Gandhi. It could have been worse though. Gandhi tried his best that no platform or symbol of independence should become a platform or symbol of the power of the ruling-class. The second thing he did was that India should leave the tendency of slavery. With the independence, such an idea of India and the world was created in which *Swaraj* (self-rule) would not be hindered. The third thing he suggested that whatever happens, it should be done in a non-violent way. The concept of *Swaraj* and the non-violent method of achieving it, which Lohia called the greatest revolution the world has ever seen, have been utterly discardable and condemnable for Marxists and RSS people. Because they believe that what is the best has happened – in time for one, in space for another. The only responsibility is to implement that.

For Gandhi, perfection was the result of a process, not a ready-made formula in one's mind. The process of that phase of history was as vast and complex as it has hardly ever been in any society. The freedom movement led by Gandhi was bound to have weaknesses and failures, because he was doing a great job. Those who claim to have 'revolution' and armed the masses for it with ready-made formulas, need to pause and think why their idea of India did not come into existence or does not come? Then maybe they can also contemplate that if they have an opposition to Mother India?

As I have mentioned above, during the freedom struggle, the Tricolour used to be the flag of the Congress, with the spinning wheel mark in the middle. Gandhi used to associate the mark of the spinning wheel with labour and the common Indian. The Tricolour was a symbol of the faith and power of the people for him. In 1947, when the Constituent Assembly removed the spinning wheel and placed the *Dharma-Chakra* in the middle of the Tricolour, he was puzzled. But when it was explained to him that the printing cannot be done on both sides while keeping the spinning wheel, and the *Dharma-Chakra* also assumes the meaning of the spinning wheel, he accepted. He never showed extra attachment or impulse towards the Tricolour. Not even in those times when the Hindu

Mahasabha and the Muslim League used to give more importance to their saffron and green flags than the Tricolour; And even used to tore the Tricolour. During the Hindu-Muslim riots that broke out in 1946-1947 just at the time of independence, he accepted placing the Muslim League flag with the Tricolour.

Criticizing Gandhi in an unhistorical and uninformed manner is as wrong as his selective appropriation. I feel that the democratic, secular and socialist political understanding and consciousness of the people of India would have been more mature if there had been a role and participation of all the inspirations on the litmus test of the then complex reality.

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PS: A decade after the above article, a few things can be clearly seen:

*The RSS/BJP under the leadership of Modi-Shah-Bhagwat has left the Congress miles behind in terms of abuse of power in just 7-8 years of rule.

*The Congress had definitely stained the sheet of democracy by imposing Emergency in 1975. However, the present government has converted the democracy itself into an emergency!

*The RSS/BJP has completely got rid of the slowness of Vajpayee-era regarding privatization-liberalization i.e., de-nationalization of national assets. In this way, it has badly beaten the Congress as the favourite party of the corporate houses as well.

*The RSS/BJP had adopted the Tricolour initially to tame the power of the Congress. Now it has raised the same Tricolour to divert the attention of the common countrymen from the neo-imperialist slavery, and the working people from the problems such as poverty, unemployment, inflation, malnutrition etc.

*Under the ongoing corporate politics, if the national icons will be used in the making of corporate India, then the national flag will also be used for the same.

*The 'Har Ghar Tiranga' program of the government, which will run from August 13 to 17, on the occasion of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, needs to be seen from this perspective as well.

* It is natural for the Congress to get distracted when the Tricolour has been so captured by the RSS/BJP. The Congress has called the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' program a hypocrisy, accusing the RSS/BJP of being a pseudo-nationalist. It has reminded the people of the country that the RSS opposed the freedom movement, and did not hoist the Tricolour at its Nagpur office for 52 years after the country became independent. It has also opposed the government's decision to make the Tricolour from machine and polyester, and to import it, opposing the changes made in the Flag Code. The Congress has also taunted the government's 'Har Ghar Tiranga' program as 'Har Ghar Cheen Ka Tiranga' program.

*In this fierce battle of the ruling-class to capture the Tricolour, the Congress itself has also remembered that the Tricolour is a symbol of the innumerable sacrifices and the independence and the sovereignty of the nation. It is to be hoped that this understanding of the Congress about the Tricolour will remain the same in future also.

*The progressive, democratic and secular camp may appreciate that the junior Modi, produced, promoted and supported by it, is heavily indulged in a drill vis-a-vis senior Modi in the battle of *Tiranga Rashtrvad* (Tricolour Nationalism)!

*The occasion of Independence Day is a day to remember along with the independence of the country that every Indian as a citizen (and human being) has his/her own independent existence. The ruling-class engaged in the destruction of national institutions and selling national assets/resources to domestic and foreign companies cannot confuse its national spirit by making *tamasha* of the Tricolour or running 'patriotic courses' in schools/colleges.

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