History of Ghadar Party

One hundred years ago, Hindustan Ghadar Party was formed by Indians in the US. It was a historic milestone in our anti-colonial struggle.

The goal of this party was to organise a revolution to liberate our motherland from British servitude and establish a free and independent India with equal rights for all. It believed this to be the necessary condition for our people to hold their heads high anywhere in the world.

WHO WE ARE

If anyone asks who we are
Tell him our name is rebel
Our duty is to end the tyranny
Our profession is to launch revolution
That is our namaz, this is our sandhya
Our puja, our worship
This is our religion
Our work
This is our only Khuda, our only Ram.

[Kartar Singh Sarabha, Ghadar Party activist who became a martyr at the age of 19]

Colonial rule came to an end 66 years ago but the people of India are not free from exploitation, oppression and grinding poverty. Nor are Indians abroad free from discrimination and super-exploitation, racial profiling and attacks on the right to conscience.

Social revolution remains the need of the hour. Ghadar jari hai!

Let us end the slavery of India; Let the land be reborn!
Let nobody be impoverished; Let us build such a new country!

[From the song “Communist Ghadar Party ne lalkaar lagayi hai”]
The sword of valour reflects the readiness to fight till the end to oust the hated colonial rule.

The Ghadaris argued that British rule over India has no legitimacy; it does not provide and care for the people. It is based on brute force. It is therefore justified and essential for the people to use force to end this unjust rule.

“Freedom is not obtained by begging, 
By appeals political power is not won
Do not petition like cowards,
Take the sword and they will run!”

{Ghadar Verse}

They clarified that revolutionaries are neither terrorists nor anarchists. Those in power are to be blamed for the terror and chaos in society. This was true then and continues to be true today. By refusing to address the people’s needs and concerns, and unleashing force to silence dissent, those in power are preventing any peaceful resolution of problems.

What kind of freedom is this where our sisters are burnt alive? 
When we demand food we receive bullets
Let us become a revolutionary storm and overturn this!

{From the song “Ao uthen, mere desh vasyon!”}
The flag of Ghadar Party displayed two swords – symbolizing Vidya (knowledge) and Veerta (valour).

The first issue of the weekly organ, Ghadar, proclaimed: “Today on November 1, 1913, a new calendar is launched in the history of India. From now onward, a war against the British Rule is initiated from a foreign land in our native languages … The power of the PEN will explode like a ball of cannon. This newspaper is the staunch enemy of the English Empire, and a bugle of challenge for the Indian youth. Wake up, take up arms and fight for the independence of India.”

Right at the time of its founding, Hindustan Ghadar Party laid down the rule that religion is to be considered a personal matter and had no place in the organization. This is based on the wisdom of the Bhaktas and Sufis who held that the Right to Conscience belongs to every human being and that it cannot be given or taken away by anyone.
The Ghadaris recognised that private property over land and other resources was at the heart of the system of plunder. They proclaimed that “In the domain of economic and social welfare the party will foster the spirit of cooperation on as large a scale as possible. Instead of private and unorganised business enterprises, the party prefers cooperative union” and called for the “abolition of all systems which make the exploitation of man by man possible”

[Manifesto of HRA, 1925]

Learning from the Ghadar of 1857, and upholding its slogan, “Hindostan belongs to us; We are her masters!” the party gave concrete shape to this principle in the form of the political aim and vision of a federal Republic of United States of India.

Let centuries of darkness come to an end,
Let knowledge and prosperity brighten our lives,
Let us, with our hands, bring about the New Dawn!

[From the song ‘Ao uthen, mere desh vastyon!”]
Those who travelled thousands of miles to escape the misery at home found themselves to be third class citizens in the most advanced capitalist democracies. They refused to put up with their oppression, and recognised that its root lies in the enslavement of our motherland.

Today, the fruits of our toil are getting concentrated in the hands of a few big capitalists, not only the British but also American, German and Japanese, in addition to the brown sahebs of India Incorporated. Big business houses are engaged in a race to join the ranks of the richest billionaires of the world, while India remains home to the largest numbers of people living in abysmal poverty.

“The land of Bengal and Bihar has given us iron and coal in abundance
The fertile fields of Punjab have filled our godowns with grain
Why then does hunger and poverty still stalk the country?
(From the song “Communist Ghadar Party ne lalkaar lagayi hai”)
Green was one of the colours of their flag, symbolizing the fertility and productivity of our land and labour. They realised that our people were poor because the wealth of Hindustan is being looted and plundered by the British colonialists.

Today, too, our people are refusing to put up with the loot and plunder. They are rising in protest all over the country and organising to reclaim the wealth of Hindustan that is rightfully theirs. Young workers are refusing to accept that they must remain cheap labour so that the Indian capitalists can expand rapidly and foreign capitalists will invest more in our country. Peasants are refusing to part with their land for the sake of expanding the wealth of Indian and foreign corporations. Tribal peoples are refusing to let their mineral wealth be plundered.

“United, let us end exploitation and oppression; let us drive out hunger and enslavement from the face of Hindustan!”

{From the song “Ao uthen, mere desh vasiyon!”}
Saffron in the flag of Ghadar Party symbolized the fearless spirit of self-sacrifice, the party’s irreconcilable opposition to colonial rule and plunder.

According to British government records, 2312 Ghadaris had entered India between 13th October, 1914 and 25th February, 1915. Their number increased to more than 8,000 in 1916.

The Ghadaris called on people to reject the compromising path of the Congress Party. They faced the brutal repression and tyranny of the colonisers with the courage of conviction that their cause is just. They did not fear the gallows, or the Cellular Jail of kaalapani.

Today, too, our people are braving the lathis and bullets of the security forces to defend their rights and resist super-exploitation and plunder. We are being divided and diverted from our common struggle by numerous compromisers and conciliators with the status quo.

We must learn from the Ghadaris and build up the revolutionary organisation and consciousness of the working people so as to establish a State that would provide for and protect all members of society.

*Freedom demands our head,*  
*Not to bow down but to hold high,*  
*With our hearts as strong as the Himalayas,*  
*Let us oppose every kind of oppression!*

(From the song "Raste pe tumhare chal ke hum azaad ab desh karayenge")
Red colour in their flag symbolized the blood of the toilers of all nations; and of their unity in struggle for liberation from imperialist enslavement and capitalist exploitation.

The Ghadaris drew valuable lessons from the experience of the working class and revolutionaries of other countries, with whom they closely cooperated to advance the common struggle against imperialism.

*Brave youth, raise the red flag*
*Workers and peasants*
*Spread this call far and wide*
*Ghadar Party, Lal Salam!*

(from the song "Uthake jhanda veer jawanon")

In the course of mobilising Indians abroad for the revolution, the Ghadaris realised the need for unity of Punjabis, Bengalis, Kashmiris, Sindhis, Marathas, Gujaratis, Tamilians, Odiyas and all the numerous other peoples who have inhabited this ancient land for centuries.

Hindustan Ghadar Party put forward the vision of a federal Republic of United States of India, respecting the sovereign rights of every nation, nationality and people within our country.

But alas, the advanced progressive thought of the Ghadaris was rejected by the Constituent Assembly, which chose to retain the territorial definition of India inherited from British colonialism. The 1950 Constitution does not recognize the multi-national character of India. As a result, several permanently “disturbed areas” have been created within independent India.

Today, the Indian working class is the most numerous class in the country, highly skilled and multi-national in character, with strong ties with the peasants at home and with workers abroad. It is the class which is capable of leading the struggle for liberating our society from all forms of exploitation and oppression.

*I am the worker of Hindustan, the new world is in my hands!*
*Workers of the world are my loyal comrades!*

(From the song "Kranti ki rah dili mein")
One hundred years later...

One hundred years after the founding of Hindustan Ghadar Party, the world is in great turmoil.

The capitalist-imperialist system is in deep crisis. Foreign interference in the affairs of independent states is rising. War clouds are gathering over South Asia.

The ruling class of our country is responding in the most irresponsible manner. Intoxicated by their ambition of sitting at the imperialist high table, the rulers of India are eager to participate in unjust imperialist wars. They are escalating state terrorism and preparing for aggression in the name of fighting “Islamic terrorism” and “cross-border terrorism”.

The parliamentary system and its political process serve to divide the working people and impose the dictate of the capitalist billionaires. Election campaigns are used to divide people on the basis of religion, caste, nationality, the so-called secular-communal divide and other forms of inter-capitalist rivalry.

There is an urgent need for political unity of all concerned around one single aim and program, opposed to the so-called reform program of globalisation through liberalisation and privatisation.
Call of our Martyrs

The common aim and program around which we must unite is to reconstitute India on new foundations, so that the people become her master. This is the call of our martyrs.

The aspiration of our patriotic people was to create a new social order completely free from the colonial theories and institutions of ruling to plunder. The 1950 Constitution, however, was not designed to break with the colonial past. It was designed to perpetuate and consolidate the power that already existed, with adjustments to suit the needs of the brown sahebs who replaced the white men.

Why should we, the people, not elect a Constituent Assembly to formulate a new fundamental law to enable India to march on the high road of civilisation in this 21st century?

_Navnirman of India is the call of the Ghadar!_

_Slogan of CGPI adopted by its Second Congress in 1998_
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