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Danger looms over Lokpal Bill



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The anti-corruption movement launched by the Gandhian leader, Anna Hazare, has threatened a number of politicians, bureaucrats and big businessmen involved in various financial crimes against the country and the society. The issue of black money in Swiss banks and calling back the same to the country for investment and prosperity of the nation, has also threatened them of losing their unfair incomes. The United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government led by the Congress party, has been found involved in the practices leading to great sufferings of the countrymen. The Civil Society's proposal in respect of the Lokpal Bill, has been 'turned down' by the Union cabinet despite long protests by different individuals, intellectuals, organizations and the civil society itself. The proposed Lokpal Bill by the Union Cabinet is going to be placed before the Parliament for making a crucial Act, which may not bring any relief to the common people, as most of the institutions including the Prime Minister, are kept out of its purview. This, if passed is certainly going to increase 'top level' corruption, which would badly affect the general public.

An example in the case of Assam can be given about Rs one thousand crore scandal in North Cachar Hills (NC Hills), which came out in light last year. Under heavy pressure from various sections of the society including media at the initial stage the National Investigation Agency (NIA) probe was initiated. As reported by a section of the press, the NIA found the name of certain high powered persons involved in the large scale corruption. When the NIA officials wanted to question and sought permission from the chief minister of the state, to quiz them they were refused permission. There was no way to complete the probe and the NIA submitted the report suggesting conducting inquiry by Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) as there was a number of anomalies detected by it.. Announcement of CBI probe was also made, but there was no progress.

When the report came to the light, various ministers threatened to sue the media house reporting the scam of North Cachar Hills, but nobody dared to sue till now. Instead the chief minister, who refrained to give permission to the NIA for quizzing the officials involved in the scam 'boasted' before the local media that no name was given by the NIA in its report. Perhaps the chief minister did not note this point that unless the Agency was permitted to quiz those people their names could not be given in the report.

This is a short example which hinders even the judiciary to perform well. The corruption has spread in the judiciary also. Unless the men in power including the prime minister and the judges are brought under the Lokpal, there is every danger that the people of the country could get justice. It is also interesting that the Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh has no objection to come under the Lokpal, but others have objection. May be they are planning to 'plant a corrupt PM' in future who could protect their interest. Now, Anna Hazare has decided to start his agitation from August 16 next, in case the suggestions of civil society are included in the Bill.



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