

Corruption: PM Guarding the Guilty, says BJP Lawmaker

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By Suresh Kumar

Corruption is worse than prostitution. The latter might endanger the morals of an individual, the former invariably endangers the morals of the entire country.

-Karl Kraus

The much talked about Lokpal Bill aimed at curbing corruption is getting drafted to be presented in the coming monsoon session of the Parliament. Here the resounding question of the *aam aadmi* is "will the Lokpal do any good." Though we have stringent laws to prevent corruption, billions of the taxpayer's money is being swindled and the culprits are scot free.

According to a study by Transparency International in India more than half of those surveyed by the organization had firsthand experience of paying bribe or peddling influence to get a job done in a public office. The study estimated the monetary value of petty corruption in 11 basic services provided by the government, like education, healthcare, judiciary, police, etc., to be around Rs.21,068

crores. In fact, Management Guru (late) C K Prahalad had said last year, the cost of corruption to the country might as well exceed Rs. 250,000 crores per year. According to a survey

"Lokpal could be necessary but not sufficient enough to weed out corruption"



Janardhana Swamy, BJP MP (Lok Sabha)

conducted recently by an anti-corruption organization most of the corruption is in the form of bribe and a whopping 91% of the bribe demands originate from government officials in India.

We have watch dogs not just at the central or state level, but in every department. We have a chief vigilance commission at the centre and vigilance commissioners for every state. All the departments do have chief vigilance and vigilance officers intended to curb corruption. So it is not that there is no scheme to scrutinize corruption.

As Janardhana Swamy, a BJP member of parliament from Karnataka, has rightly presented "Lokpal could be necessary but not sufficient enough to weed out corruption." The young lawmaker, an electronics engineer who

has his master's degree from the prestigious Indian Institute of Science Bangalore, is much perturbed on the ever growing menace of corruption.

According to this young lawmaker there cannot be any instant magic solution to stop corruption. Let there be any legislation, this menace is there to continue till the root cause is disorganized and treated accordingly. "We have been just talking about on the cure (of corruption), but yet to diagnose the cause of this cancer. The therapy becomes effective and easy only if the true cause is traced out."

Swamy further added "Just by punishing a few here and there we cannot deter the corrupt or put an end to corrupt practices. Corruption is so deep rooted and prevalent in every walk of life in this country."

As a lawmaker he understands the enormity of corruption and the urgency to rein in the corrupt. "We need to have a conclusive approach in fighting corruption. In the young minds a strong feeling against corruption need to be inculcated. The basic ethics and culture should be taught to the children so that they grow as responsible citizens and don't succumb to the social evil."

The young Member of Parliament is agitated at the fact that the corrupt are getting protected at various levels rather than punished. Referring to the 2G spectrum and CWG scam he said, even the Prime Minister was guarding the guilty in various corruption cases.

Asked if Mamohan Singh was a failure as prime minister, Swamy responded, "See I don't prefer to use the harsh word failure. He is the head of the government. So he is accountable for all that are happening in his government, including the scams. People in general feel the prime minister is protecting the culprits."

About the prickly issue of the inclusion of the Prime Minister's Office or the Judiciary within the ambit of the Lokpal Bill the Lawmaker replied in no uncertain terms, "everyone needs to be brought under the preview (of the Bill). None is above the law of the land, even the President. But there should be provisions included to restrain people from misusing the law."

The Bill should have provision to prosecute those who misuse the anti-corruption law to

defame, belittle or settle personal vendetta, Swamy demanded. "Public figures, particularly political personalities, are often targeted by people with ulterior motives. That should not happen. The bill should have protection against such moves. The bill should have have terms to punish those who try to falsely implicate."

On the role of the anti-corruption crusader Anna Hazre Swamy said, "his motives are laudable, but I am not sure about the path he has chosen. I fear if he has properly identified the issue of corruption. I mean its cause and gravity. Let me reiterate, it will not be possible to wipe out this social evil overnight. To fight against this evil we have to educate and awaken the society."

The public mood is surely in favour of a stringent legislation against corruption. But will it sail through? Lokpal bills were introduced in 1968, 1971, 1977, 1985, 1989, 1996, 1998, 2001, 2005 and in 2008, yet they were never passed.

<http://apnnews.com/2011/05/08/corruption-pm-guarding-the-guilty-says-bjp-lawmaker/>

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