

Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury writes to Lok Sabha Speaker, asks for a debate on Rahul Gandhi's disqualification

PATNA: CONGRESS DARPAN

Congress leader in the Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury on April 4 wrote to Speaker Om Birla to have a debate on the disqualification of party leader Rahul Gandhi.

In his two—page letter, Mr. Chowdhury pointed out that Bharatiya Janata Party leader Naranbhai Kachhadiya did not face the same action and continued to be a Lok Sabha member after he was convicted in a case on April 13, 2016, when a district court gave him a three—year sentence.

"Shri Kachhadiya preferred an appeal to the High Court and the Honble High Court on April 18, 2016 declined to stay the conviction. However, the Honble High Court allowed suspension of the sentence. As per the provisions of Section 8 of the Representation of the People Act 1951, Shri Kachhadiya should have been disqualified from the membership of the House; however, the then Honble Speaker did not resort to any action (including disqualification) against the Honble Member," Mr. Chowdhury said in his letter. Later, Mr. Kachhadiya got relief from the Supreme Court.

He said it was "intriguing" to note that Mr. Gandhi was "summarily disqualified" from the Lok Sabha in the wake of a verdict by a Surat court, even though his two—year sentence was suspended by the same court for a period of one month to facilitate his appeal in higher courts.

"Sir, I am begging your indulgence to spell out the fact that under Section 8 of the Representation of Peoples Act 1951, two conditions are to be met before disqualifying an elected



member. First the member has to be awarded conviction for an offence and second, he has to be sentenced to imprisonment for not less than two years," the Congress leader said.

He said before disqualifying the elected member, these two conditions are considered as prerequi-

sites. "In my view, the second condition cannot stand the test of the prescribed provision of Representation of People Act as the sentence of Shri Rahul Gandhi ji was suspended by the trial court itself," he noted.

Arguing that "what is sauce for the goose must be sauce for the

gander", Mr. Chowdhury wrote, "With heavy heart and mortification, I plead to you that there should be a debate in Parliament as to ascertain whether our leader Shri Rahul Gandhi ji has been awarded disproportionate punishment, which smacks of cognitive dissonance."



Rahul Gandhils disqualification: Who is really to blame for the decline of civility in politics?

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M Rajivlochan's article kAn attack on civility! (IE, March 30) has been published in response to the newspaper's lead editorial of March 25, titled kDisqualified. The editorial was about the cancellation of Congress leader Rahul Gandhils membership of Parliament after his conviction by a Surat court in a defamation case. In the opinion of the newspaper, the swift action against Rahul Gandhi is yet another example of a politics of vindictiveness. The newspaper also opined that this action is another bad sign for a democracy. Disagreeing with the editorial, Rajivlochan has suggested that a better title for the editorial would have been kDeservedly Disqualified! — which means, Rahul Gandhi should have been put in the dock for his disqualification, not the government.

Registering disagreement with the editorial, the author has served some assumptions about politics, the judicial system and civility in



society, which can only be termed as surprising. Before proceeding further, I would like to make it clear that as a citizen, on the basis of the Constitution, and as a political worker, on the basis of socialist ideology, I am opposed to the politics of Rahul Gandhi and Arvind Kejriwal. I also see no point in lumping together Rahul Gandhi and Kejriwal, as Rajivlochan has done in his article. My political

belief is that the semiological universe of the RSS/BJP, the Congress and most of the political parties involved in the game of power is the same. This universe is formed by the nexus of corporate—communal—criminal forces — even if there is a difference of some degrees between these parties and leaders on this account.

Rajivlochan says in his article, "Arvind Kejriwal and Rahul Gandhi

seemed to be willing to make specific accusations that would actually torture the honour and dignity of other people on false grounds." The article is about Rahul Gandhi. The editorial to which it was responding was also written regarding the question of Rahul Gandhils conviction and disqualification arising out of it. But Rajivlochan seems to have included Arvind Kejriwal in the later part of his article so that it does not appear that Rahul Gandhi, a "liar", is the only target. The author further says, "No other political leader in India does this. At least I don't know of anyone else who insists that their accusations against others are correct, especially since they have no evidence to back the accusations." According to this assumption, the rest of the country's politics and leaders should be considered beyond reproach. For those suffering from depression due to the present political decline in India, the author has presented this great recipe!

The Congress Central Election Committee meeting is underway under the chairmanship of Congress President Shri Mallikarjun Kharge ji under the Karnataka elections. Many senior leaders including former party president Rahul Gandhi are present in the meeting.





All India Fishermen Congress launches a massive protest challenging Rahul Gandhi Ji's disqualification & Modi govt's bid to hand over coastline to corporates. Night marches in front of the Raj Bhavan & awareness campaigns against BJP's anti-fisherman policies will be organised.





'Double Engine Sarkar' is now synonymous with BJP's double betrayal. The BJP is in complete chaos, and the party is split. Congress will take on the corrupt '40% Commission Sarkar' unitedly & emerge victorious with over 2/3rd majority.

- Randeep Singh Surjewala ji



The corrupt BJP came to power after plotting 'Operation Kamala' with the sole motive of looting Karnataka. The Kannadigas will throw the BJP out of power and bring back Congress—led government in the state.

- Siddaramaiah Ji

The violent attack on peaceful Congress workers in Nagercoil, Tamil Nadu, by BJP supporters is an attack on democracy and the freedom to protest. We strongly condemn this heinous act of violence and demand swift action.

