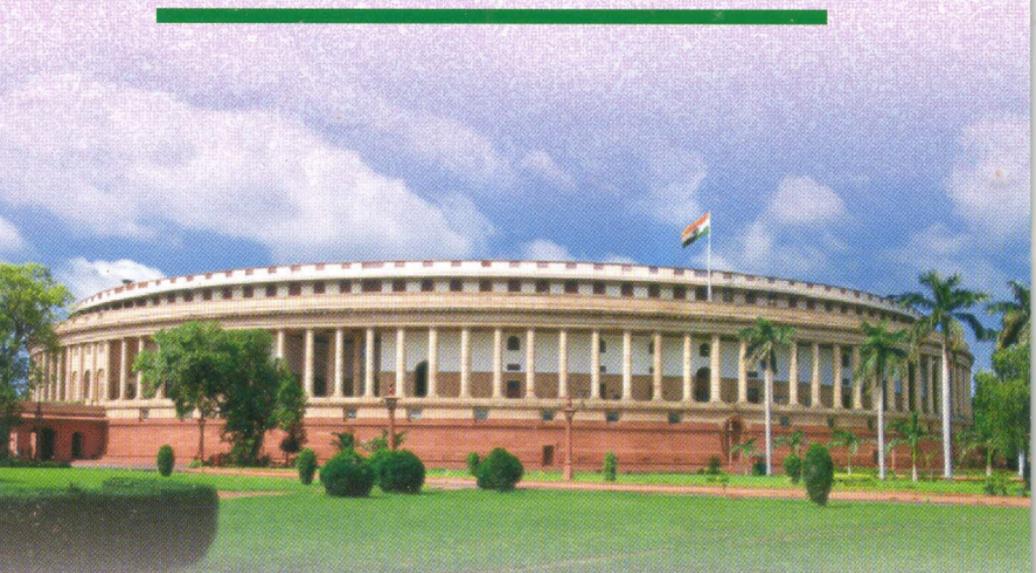


INDRAJIT GUPTA



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

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Indrajit Gupta was an outstanding leader of the Communist movement, a committed social activist and a peerless parliamentarian who had the distinction of serving eleven terms in the Lok Sabha. Born on 18 March 1919 in a family of senior civil servants, Indrajit Gupta did not follow the family tradition of taking up the civil service as a career. He graduated from St. Stephen's College, Delhi, in 1937 and then left for higher education in England to join the King's College, Cambridge University. Drawn to the Communist movement during his student days in Britain, he returned to India in October 1940 after obtaining the degree in Economics.

Soon, Indrajit Gupta plunged into the freedom struggle and became a full time worker of the Communist Party of India. He went underground for one and a half years during 1948-50 and suffered imprisonment in 1953 and 1959. He steadfastly remained devoted to the Communist movement, involving himself with the grassroot workers and the trade union movement. In the years that followed, he was the voice of the Communist Party in the Parliament.

In 1968, Indrajit Gupta was elected the Secretary of the National Council of the Communist Party of India. He suffered imprisonment once again in 1969. Indrajit Gupta was elected as the Deputy General Secretary of the Party in 1988. He was made the General Secretary of the CPI in 1990, an office which he continued to hold till 1996.

Indrajit Gupta was first elected to the Lok Sabha in 1960 in a by-election from the South-West constituency in West Bengal and continued to be a member of the Lok Sabha till the very last, with the exception of the period between 1977 and 1980. He was a member of the Second and Third Lok Sabhas from 1960 to 1967 representing the Calcutta South-West constituency; Fourth and Fifth Lok Sabhas from 1967 to 1977 representing Alipore; Seventh and Eighth

Lok Sabhas from 1980 to 1989 representing Basirhat; and Ninth to Twelfth Lok Sabhas from 1989 to 1999 representing the Midnapore parliamentary constituency of West Bengal. He was re-elected from the Midnapore parliamentary constituency in the Thirteenth Lok Sabha. Being the senior-most member, Indrajit Gupta was popularly known as the 'Father of the House'. He was Speaker pro-tem for the Eleventh, Twelfth and the Thirteenth Lok Sabhas as well.

One of the most outstanding parliamentarians of all times, Indrajit Gupta proved himself a debater par excellence who was fully conscious of the norms, rules and procedures of the House. He could enthral the House with his effective and forceful arguments and exceptional articulation of the issues of the times. His analytical mind was able to delineate the most complex political, social and economic issues in the most convincing manner. His oratorical skill was legendary and he could speak with authority on an array of subjects. He was also a champion of the cause for gender equality and was in the forefront to demand action to have specific and concrete schemes and legislative and administrative measures for the empowerment of women. He always showed the highest regard to the Chair and strictly followed the rules, procedures, and etiquette. He symbolized politics based on values and principles. His down-to-earth demeanour and impeccable integrity won him the respect of all.

During his illustrious parliamentary career, Indrajit Gupta also helped to strengthen the Parliamentary Committee System in our country. He was the Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence during 1995-1996 and Chairman of the Committee on Subordinate Legislation during 1999-2000. He was also a member of various Parliamentary Committees like the Rules Committee during 1990-1991; General Purposes Committee during 1985-1989 and from 1998-1999 to 1999-2000; Committee on Defence, during 1998-1999 and 1999-2000; Committee on Petitions during 1986-1987; Business Advisory Committee during 1986-1987 and 1989; Library Committee during 1990-1991 and Committee to Review the Lok Sabha Secretariat Rules, 1955 during 1990.

Indrajit Gupta served as the Union Minister of Home Affairs from 1996 to 1998 when his administrative acumen came to be widely acclaimed.

In recognition of his many splended contribution to the strengthening of parliamentary democracy and parliamentary institutions in the country, Indrajit Gupta was conferred the first Bharat Ratna Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant Outstanding Parliamentarian Award in the year 1992.

A very active trade union leader, Indrajit Gupta was elected the General Secretary of the All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) in 1980. He was also closely associated with the activities of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU). In 1998, he was elected as the President of the WFTU and in the Delhi Congress of the WFTU in 2000, he was elected the President of Honour of the Organisation. He effectively articulated the problems faced by the workers in Parliament as well as outside.

Indrajit Gupta had to his credit two publications, namely '*Capital and Labour in the Jute Industry*' and '*Self Reliance in National Defence*'.

Indrajit Gupta was ever dedicated to the uplift of the poor and the destitute and always fought for the vulnerable sections of society. He used the forum of the Parliament to effectively articulate the aspirations of the people, voice their concerns and frustrations, and seek the redressal of their grievances. His grassroots experience, incisive intellect and brilliant oratory helped him to reach out to all sections of our people. He was, above all, a fine human being exemplifying the adage, 'simple living, and high thinking'.

Indrajit Gupta passed away on 20 February 2001 at the age of 82 at his residence in Kolkata. The then President of India, Shri K.R. Narayanan, while paying tributes to this great leader, pointed out that Indrajit Gupta "enriched parliamentary proceedings and debates with his passionate espousal of public causes, his eloquent oratory and subtle and penetrating wit." The then Vice-President of India and Chairman, Rajya Sabha, Shri Krishan Kant, described Indrajit Gupta as "a versatile parliamentarian, a powerful communicator, an adept administrator and a distinguished

mass leader who left a distinct mark in society and in polity with his innate simplicity, commitment and sincerity."

The then Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, describing Indrajit Gupta as a "towering personality" recalled that "his life was like an open book. He always expressed his views as a seasoned Parliamentarian and contributed greatly for evolving consensus in the time of crisis...He had always a deep sense of concern for the problems of the country and the lot of the downtrodden and the exploited."

Several national leaders and all political parties profoundly condoled the demise of Indrajit Gupta. As the West Bengal Chief Minister, Shri Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee, pointed out in his tribute, in Indrajit Gupta's death, India had lost an outstanding leader genuinely dedicated to the welfare of the people and secular ideals.

[The Statue of Indrajit Gupta, sculpted by Shri Debabrata Chakraborty, will be unveiled by the Vice-President of India, and Chairman, Rajya Sabha, Shri Bhairon Singh Shekhawat. The Statue has been donated by the Communist Party of India.]