

Obituary

Harpal Brar 1939-2025

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Harpal Brar Obituary 1939-2025

Harpal Brar, founder and former chairman of the Communist Party of Great Britain (Marxist–Leninist), passed away in Mohali, Punjab, India on 25 January, 2025, at the age of 85.

Joti Brar, his daughter [recalled](#)

“My father, Harpal Brar, came to London from Punjab, India as a law student in 1962. While waiting for his course to start, he spent time in a library and picked up a book by Lenin. From then on, he was hooked. He has never stopped studying Marxism and trying to implement what he has learned in the working-class movement from that day forward.

My parents began their political journey together in various parties, principally Maoist ones in the late 1960s, and in the mass movements against the Vietnam War and for women’s liberation. Although they did not remain official ‘Maoists’ into the 1970s, they retained their deep love for the Chinese Revolution and respect for the leadership of Chairman Mao. But it was also clear to them that the Maoists were not getting everything right in their struggle against the revisionism of Khrushchev’s Soviet Union. In order to understand what was correct and what was not, they considered it to be their duty to stop depending on leaders to tell them what Marxism is and to master the science for themselves.”

Thereafter, he worked as a lecturer in law at the Harrow College of Higher Education and later established an import business [around textiles](#).

He was politically active in the anti-revisionist *Revolutionary Marxist-Leninist League* but soon left to establish *the Association of Communist Workers*, remembered for a disruptive intervention within the Women’s Liberation movement and polemic tracts. There was also dual membership of the Indian Workers Association, with Brar editor of its journal *Lalkar*. The IWA cut its ties with the paper but Brar continued to independently produce it. The ACW proved to be prolific publishers, and Brar himself published 14 books on various aspects of Marxism, imperialism and revisionism. See <https://www.marxists.org/history/erol/uk.secondwave/uk-maoism.pdf> and [Literature List: UK Anti-Revisionist Material](#) (Woodsmokeblog posting March 2022).

He and his comrades officially dissolved the ACW in 1997 to join former miner's leader, [Arthur Scargill's Socialist Labour Party](#), leaving in 2004 establishing the *Communist Party of Great Britain (Marxist-Leninist)*. After 14 years at the eighth congress of the CPGB-ML in September 2018, Brar announced that he would step down as chairman of the party. He was replaced by Ella Rule, Zane Carpenter and Joti Brar became the party's vice chairs.

Harpal Brar's passing was noted in the [Morning Star](#) and the CPGB (ML) organised [a memorial meeting](#) on 22 March 2025.

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The CPGB-ML's online site, *The Communists* carried this generous appreciation:

[Harpal Brar](#), founding chairman of the Communist Party of Great Britain (Marxist-Leninist), died on 25 January 2025 at the age of 85. He had spent 60 years studying the science of Marxism-Leninism and putting its teachings into practice.

Comrade Harpal fought tirelessly for socialism and against imperialism. He and his comrades kept the flame of Marxist theory and organisation alive in the most difficult conditions – first, when revisionism was ravaging our movement, and then after the fall of the USSR.

His contribution to the international proletarian movement did not go unnoticed. Our party received messages of tribute and condolence from all corners of the globe.

A small selection of extracts from these messages are offered below.

"Comrade Harpal dedicated his life to the advancement of the working class in Great Britain and beyond. His intellectual contributions, including hundreds of books and writings on subjects such as proletarian revolution, women's liberation, zionism, identity politics and self-determination, have been invaluable in educating and mobilising generations of activists. He was more than a leader – he was a guiding light for the Marxist-Leninist movement and a steadfast example of what it means to serve the people with courage and conviction."

"He was a true example of a fighter, a [Marxist theorist](#). His scientific works will remain that pearl, that light that gave hope to the workers' movement in the conditions of our temporary defeat."

"This is a loss not just for his family, but for the whole revolutionary movement worldwide. Marxists of Harpal's stature have made a huge impact on the worldwide Marxist movement, encouraging the correct application of Marxism-Leninism to their work toward the building of a socialist world."

"Every generation has its revolutionary heroes. There is no doubt that the pantheon of communist revolutionaries includes the now immortal Comrade Harpal Brar. Comrade Harpal dedicated his life to the working class, to struggling against imperialism, and to building a socialist world. While socialist nations and once proud Communist parties were falling into revisionism and liquidating, Comrade Harpal defended the immortal science of [Marxism-Leninism](#).

"Comrade Harpal's writings were noted for their ideological clarity and fierce defence of actually existing socialist states. Under his leadership, CPGB-ML remains a powerful force in the international communist movement and the birth of the [World Anti-imperialist Platform](#) can be credited to his many years of theorising and organising."

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