

Indian Revolution – Indian Communist Movement

Almost hundred years had passed since the formation of the Communist Party of India. Since its inception the party was subjected to repression. This repression was unleashed on the freedom loving national revolutionaries as well as on the communist fighters who participated in the independence struggle with anti-imperialist aim. They were implicated in Peshawar, Lahore, Kanpur and Meerut conspiracy cases. In the trial of Kanpur and Meerut conspiracy cases, Communists had not concealed their ideals and causes. They declared that it is not at all a crime to wage struggle for the liberation of people of India from the imperialist shackles and to emancipate the toiling masses of workers, peasants and weaker sections from economic, political and cultural exploitation. They voiced the necessity for the people to organize against feudalism, imperialism and capitalism.

We as communists, during 1925 to 1947, and then up to 1952, had built the movements of workers and peasants while participating in the independence movement. We have organized many a militant struggle of working class. The middle-class employees and teachers got organized under our leadership. We organized the writers and artists with patriotic, democratic and socialist aims. We fought for the rights of women and made them part of the movement for independence and peace. The communist party established itself as the party of the toiling people with the policies and slogans: oppose fascist war, protect socialism, oppose communalism and national chauvinism, and oppose the attempts of the imperialist, feudal and capitalist forces to flare up communal, caste and regional clashes among the people.

Until 1942, for two decades, the party through its hard and untiring work in the face of many repressions got itself identified as the third largest party in the country. It gained wide recognition among the people even in the midst of internal struggles on the policies of the party. The peoples movement had reached the level of armed resistance.

The party worked with a concrete programme against feudal ideology. It owned up and brought to light many social reformers and progressive writers. It showed the way for a new culture by promoting on a wider scale the widow marriages. Social marriages as against the traditional form of marriage. It opposed the child marriages and marriages against the will of the girls. It worked for the gender equality. The communist party swam against the tide at a time when the untouchability, caste discriminations and blind faiths and practices were prevalent.

The Communist Party educated the people on how to resist the feudal atrocities: if you do not have a stick in your hand even a goat will bite you; get yourselves armed and fight against caste oppression and communal attacks. It was the party which inculcated the consciousness among the people and made them to organize around the general slogans of independence, democracy, socialism and world peace and led the people's movements and built the organized peoples resistance against imperialism and feudalism. The dedicated work without expecting anything in return personally and even laying down their own lives by thousands of party members and hundreds of party cadre were invaluable. We cannot forget the positive impact they have made on the society. The values and commitments established by that generation of communists continue to inspire and worth emulating to us even today.

The communist movement means the organisations and the agitations and struggles conducted by the organizations of patriots, democrats, workers, peasants, other toiling people in urban and rural areas, women, youth, students, children, writers and artists as well as defying the atrocities committed by the exploiting classes and repression by the state. More than this the communist movement means the movement built through the life sacrificing work with a social cause.

This was one phase. It was the best phase in the communist movement. But it could not march forward. Why it was so? True, it could not march ahead; faced setbacks. Yet the cause of communism is there standing tall before us. With the strength of this cause, we will review the history; learn lessons from it and march forward.

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Defeat of fascism in the Second World War and the victory of peace loving, democratic and communist forces has brought many changes in the world. The victory of Soviet Union; its reconstruction of the country from the destruction brought by the fascist war; the march of socialist construction; the coming to power of workers parties in East Europe; Chinese Revolution at the verge of victory; the rise of peasants and workers struggles in our country; the progress of the party in various sectors – all this had two types of influence on the party leadership and ranks. Subjective thinking had overtaken the dialectical materialist approach. The central leadership of the party led the workers and peasants movements with two types of guidance. The differences in the political and ideological understandings in the leadership was the reason for this situation. There was struggle on two or three understandings at the level of central leadership.

We cannot forget the fact that the root cause for the split in the communist party was the differences on the assessment of the character of bourgeoisie in India and the ideological differences that arose in the international communist movement. A friendly discussion on these issues can enable us to correct the mistakes in our understandings and show the way for our unity.

Along with the above issue, there is another crucial issue: the confusion prevailed in deciding the character of our society. At what stage we are now in the process of development of society from slave to semi-slave to feudal to semi-feudal, capitalist and to socialist system? The communist movement is plagued with the confusion and differences on this issue.

The character of big bourgeoisie in India and the process under which the power had come into its hands; its subservient relations with imperialism; the support of imperialism to feudalism and feudal landlords support to imperialism helping each other to withstand or not – does these questions remain as points of difference? Are not serious differences existing in the assessment of these issues?

Who is the national bourgeoisie? Is it industrialist or big business? Is it the upper middle class and middle class that owns and earns private property? Have not lack of clarity on this issue led to disunity in the party?

Has not the phenomenon manifested in the leadership of the party that was over awed by the philosophical thinking of and qualities of the bourgeois leadership of national movement, blunted our class orientation and the edge of our class struggle? Has not the role of our party as one of the leaders of national movement got reduced? As a result of this, had not the basic classes of the party – rural toilers and urban workers – ran behind the mirage of reforms by the exploiting government? Had not many alien theories raised their ugly heads due to abandoning of dialectical and materialist principle in conducting class struggles? Has not the party's mass base and hold got weakened? In the struggle of proletariat, who stands by our side and who takes the side of exploiting classes? Are we taking the decision on these questions on the basis of class analysis? Are not our capabilities are being lost because of alien class outlooks on this issue?

Many communist sympathisers, well-wishers of revolutionary movement, even our adversaries are thinking that the personal ambitions, egos and careerism are the reasons for the inability of communists to remain in one organization. Consequently pessimism is being expressed. Are there no ideological, political and organisational reasons for the spread of such tendencies?

The communist party is not discussing the differences on the basis of ideological principles and class struggles. The discussions are being focused on non-issues and secondary issues.

Taking this as an advantage, some opportunist intellectuals who vulgarise communist ideas are mixing some progressive ideas with romanticism. They are spreading certain theories and ideas that are anti-Marxist and serve the interests of exploiting classes. They are trying to project themselves as the 'guides for the misguided communists'. This is a prominent trend today. Our failure to be sufficiently cautious about these intellectuals who maintain close relations with the communists and move around spreading wrong interpretations to communist theories and the histories of class struggle. As a consequence,

alien class theories, trends and practices are creeping into the party and are creating impediments to the process of our development. These forces cannot destroy us, but they remain as hurdles for class struggles and the unity of class movements.

Keeping this whole situation in our view, where to begin our discussions? What are the ideological tenets to formulate clear cut policies? We have to concentrate on these issues.

What is the character of Indian society? What is the stage of Indian revolution? There is a need for deeper and wider discussion on these issues. There is need for discussions on the feudal and semi-feudal and colonial and semi-colonial characters. Is the understanding on penetration of capital into rural economy new? Is then the idea that the entry of capital into rural India would change the nature of Indian society is being pushed forward? Then should the communist party adopt achieving socialism as its sole aim and work? If so, have we to change the understanding that imperialism, feudalism and comprador bourgeoisie have become main impediments for the progress of people of India?

Then are we proposing to put aside our programme of CPI (ML)? No, not at all. Our documents have to be tested in the practice. If we let the documents to remain as just documents and move in our own way, will not our integrity towards our policies be questioned? So we have to continue our practice based upon our party's documents. At the same time, we are placing the above questions and issues for discussion keeping in view the long term perspective and the task of rallying and uniting forces on a broader scale. It is not unnatural if questions like: Is it correct to engage in academic discussions and is it necessary to open up the Pandora's Box now etc. to crop up. Yet it will cause no harm to the movement as long as we have enough convictions and commitment towards the cause and practice.

The confusions being spread by the opportunist theoreticians and intellectuals have been influencing the genuine communists, Marxist-Leninists and disheartening the well-wishers of the communist movement. So the above issues are meant for wider discussion. Without keeping aside our practice, discussing the problems faced by the revolutionary movement dispassionately stands as a historic task and responsibility before all the communists today.

Let us make a success of the seminar on 3 & 4th April 2015 commemorating comrade Kanu Sanyal and thousands of communists fighters and martyrs.

[In the seminar, papers were presented on different subjects. Com. Alope Mukherjee presented on "Feudalism-Capitalism-Imperialism on the Present Context", Com. Subodh Mitra on "Indian Revolution and Question of Stage of Revolution", Com. Jaswantha Rao on "Semifeudalism-Capitalism-Imperialism-Inter Relations" and Com. G.Vijay Kumar on "Differences Concerning the Strategy of Indian Revolution"]