

ALL INDIA FORWARD BLOC

17th PARTY CONGRESS

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Part I

1. Socialism Is the Future

1.1 Tumultuous changes have been taken place in the voyage of mankind since our last Party Congress. The bubble of developments through capitalist pattern has been blasted into smithereens as all the developed economies are plunged into deep crisis. Banks, insurance companies, stock markets and other financial institutions have been collapsed one after another in these countries and the governments are forced to allot public money to save these private financial capital forces in the names of bailout packages. All the respective governments have ignored the public resentments and tried their level best to tax more the general public.

1.2 Our country and the world are confronting multifaceted problems due to increasing imperialist interferences and capitalist exploitations. When the disintegration of Soviet Union and the set back in East European Socialist Bloc happened, the hired writers of capitalism wrote several epitaph of socialism. Such forces are now keeping meaningful silence when the socialist and alternative people's movements are spontaneously developing in many countries against capitalism and imperialist maneuverings.

1.3 But it is to be kept in mind, specially, when we discuss about the future of Socialism, the effect of the disintegration of Soviet Union and adoption of the policies of market oriented economic reforms in the people's Republic of China and simultaneously the gigantic presence of the imperialist globalization of the capitalist forces during the first decade of the 21st Century __ it is clear to the Socialist forces across the world about the severe impact on the hundreds of millions working class people on the 'paradigm' they construed for years together. After the defeat of the Communist rule in Soviet Union and other Communist States in East Europe, the deep confidence and faith of the people on Socialism against Capitalism has been put in utter dilemma. A section of the Communist parties of different countries is trying to come out of this situation by bringing some changes in their approach to classical Marxism. In different countries in Europe, the Communist parties have shifted their Ideological line and merged with the Social Democratic parties to become updated and modern. Of course, in the third world Countries, some Communist parties are still alive by projecting their anti-establishment role. But the situation is going down to their reach day by day. It is a fact that the disintegration of Soviet Union, Switching off the responsibility of world revolution by China, Cuba and Korea and above all the all out attack on the political philosophy through globalized capitalism __ the faith and confidence around Marxism is getting weak day by day. Naturally, the people are automatically getting reluctant to organize movement for Socialism with conviction as earlier. Moreover, the experience in Soviet Union specifically pointed out that the 'bureaucratic centralism' in place of 'Democratic

Centralism' actually ruined the system in Soviet Union as established by the Communist Party. In fact, the Communist Party of Soviet Union failed to propagate the idea of socialisation of the productive system there by involving the people in general. Therefore, the social system as run by the Communist Party in USSR for more than 70 years cannot be termed as Socialism.

2. Netaji's India Socialist India

2.1 The core-concept of Netaji's political philosophy is to project with equal impetus the 'Social' and 'Individual' - both entities of the mankind in the history of progress of human civilization. Karl Marx has explained explicitly the history of progress of human civilization taking into account only on the social entity of human being. Marx has put extra-ordinary importance on matter to explain the social entity of mankind. But Netaji Subhas firmly believed that the basic inspiration of struggle seems to be inculcated in both the 'Social' and 'Individual' entity of the human being through several actions, reactions and contradictions of their 'Social' and 'Individual' entities. Subhas Chandra further believed that the Social entity of the human being develops through contradictions of multifaceted social relations creeping through social strata where in he/she lives, language and culture, religious faith, heritage, education, profession, nature & environment and above all the state and economic conditions etc. jointly acts as the driving force of human civilization. Simultaneously he further believed that on the foundation of the social entity, an Individual through numerous actions, reactions and contradictions may achieve an extra-ordinary identity through his/her contributions as Scientist, Literature, Artists, Dramatist, Academic, Poet, Social Reformer etc. By this way the individual entity of a man flourished on the ground realities of his social status. Therefore, it is obvious that an Individual standing on the ground realities of his society tries to combat the multifarious forces through which the Individual simultaneously acquire the strength to uplift his conscience to multi-dimensional height. So, for physical survival and as well as mental fulfillment, the role of conscience can not be negated in any circumstances. Hence it could be said without any ambiguity that the contradiction between the 'Social' and 'Individual' entity of human being happens to be the 'fundamental' one. Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose had this rare quality of a Statesman and Philosopher to analyze the multidimensional process of progress of 'Conscience' and 'struggle'. That is why he could be addressed as the Numaro Uno Statesman-Philosopher of the 20th Century.

2.2 Therefore, the call of All India Forward Bloc - Netaji's India - a Socialist India in its National Council meeting in Nagpur, Maharastra on 15-17 February 2008 is not only relevant to-day ___ but also the only option of Left forces in India to get united to launch protracted war against imperialist invasion of Capital under the aegis of globalisation, liberalisation and privatisation on the way as paved by Netaji.

2.3 The leaders and workers of the party should remember the historical observation of Subhas Chandra in his Kabul Thesis of 1941 wherein he prophesied that "With regard to the future Ghandhian ideas of post struggle reconstruction which are partly medieval and partly anti-socialist are contrary to those of the Forward Bloc which has a thoroughly modern outlook and stands for 'Socialist Reconstruction.' Considering the need of the nation and analysing the postwar World order, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose like a true Statesman expressed his views in a letter addressed to Mahatma Gandhi from Arakan Front during 1944, April-May. It is really

surprising to see in this letter his astonishing observation, “if the Allied Forces become victorious in this war, America not Great Britain shall come out as the Supreme power of the world.... The ruling power in Washington is making plan to expand its influence all over the world. The ruling class of America and their supporters in the civil society are also organising campaign to make the coming days as American Century...”

2.4 He further articulated, “Having sprung from the soil of India as a product of historical necessity and having at the same time the capacity to assimilate what is healthy and beneficial in the environment and in the world outside, it will be able to fulfill the dual role of conducting the National Struggle to its cherished goal and of building up a new India on the principles of Liberty, equality and social justice”. He concluded his thesis by saying, “The Forward Bloc is a revolutionary and dynamic organization. As such it does not swear by copy-book maxims or by text books of politics or economics. It is anxious to assimilate all the knowledge that the outside world can give and to profit by the experience of other progressive nations. It regards progress or evolution as an eternal process to which India also has a contribution to make”. In that respect the idea and process of socialism should be evaluated through scientific means. Therefore, the All India Forward Bloc is committed to work for ‘scientific socialism’, which precisely enunciated in the constitution of the party.

2.5 Infact, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose strongly believed that India has a mission to contribute to the progress of world civilization based on the basic principles of freedom, democracy, justice, equality and love. Naturally he had strong conviction towards individual emancipation from all sorts of political, social and economic bondages which would ultimately lead to a class-less society. Since beginning of his life, Subhas Chandra moulded his life in such a way by which he could sacrifice his life for the cause of India’s Independence and restructure the sphere head of world civilization in course of presentation of a better human civilization free from material and moral exploitation. The core concept of Socialism as enunciated by Netaji seems to be “Socialist India”. The Indianisation of Socialism as developed by Netaji is based on

- a) National revivalism and secularism as inculcated in the multicultural ethos of Indian civilization.
- b) Humanism above any religious dogmatism, communalism and fundamentalism.
- c) Socialisation of the production and distribution system of the Nation.
- d) The course of progress of civilization based on pluralism.

2.6 During the thirties of the last century what Subhas Chandra observed happened to become very much relevant in the 21st Century. Now-a-days, by dint of the startling advancement of Science and technology, the world has virtually become a global village. This vision of a Statesman, infact, made Subhas Chandra larger than life. When Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru believed, “that fundamentally the choice before the world today is some form of Communism or some form of Fascism, and, I am all for the former, that is Communism”. Subhas Chandra profoundly declared, “unless we are at the end of the process of evolution or unless we deny evolution altogether, there is no reason to hold that our choice is restricted to two alternatives

Whether one believes in the Hegelian or in the Bergsonian or any other theory of evolution - in no case need we think that creation is at an end". Subhas Chandra further believed that "In spite of India's Geographical isolation, Indian awakening is organically connected with the march of progress in other parts of the world and facts and figures have been mentioned to substantiate that view. Consequently, there need to be no surprise if an experiment, of importance to the whole world, is made in India".

3. Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's Concept of Socialism

3.1 In recent times, the All India Forward Bloc has given two main political slogans, viz. 'Rebuild India in Netaji's Way' and 'AIFB for Netaji's India __ a Socialist India'. The first one was raised at the National Council meeting of the party held in Calcutta in 2003 and the second one was from another important National Council meeting held at Nagpur from 15-17 February 2008. Incidentally, the other important political document is very often being referred to was adopted at the Special Party Plenum of All India Forward Bloc held at Thiruvananthapuram in 1992, which explained the Specifics and Particularities related to Netaji's momentous call - 'Socialism in Indian way, under Indian Conditions.'

3.2 In view of some recent reinterpretation of some practised Marxist tenets in the Marxist circle, we need to revisit Netaji's concept of Socialism and clarify its fullest implications. This Marxist circle is now suggesting that some of the key assumptions of 20th century socialism are perhaps not valid in the political economy of 21st century India. They are now suggesting that the means of production must be "socially owned", but not necessarily "state owned". This concept of "social ownership of the means of production under socialism" is very often claimed as an innovative idea of the modern communists. But in reality, this was pronounced as early as 1938 when the great revolutionary socialist leader Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose clarified it in his Presidential address at the Haripura Congress (1938).

3.3 We may quote the relevant portion of Subhas Chandra's speech at Haripura : "Last but not the least, the state on the advice of a planning commission, will have to adopt a comprehensive scheme for gradually socialising our entire agricultural and industrial system in the spheres of both production and appropriation." In his farsightedness Subhas Chandra could correctly identify this process of gradual transformation of Socialism in near future. He further said, "Extra Capital will have to be procured for this, whether through internal or external loan", and "An extension of the cooperative movement will be necessary for the benefit of both producers and consumers" (Haripura speech, 1938)

3.4 Subhas Chandra once more confirmed this concept of Socialism in his famous article - 'Forward Bloc - its justification' (Kabul, Feb-Mar, 1941) - where he mentioned - "Social ownership and control of both production and distribution" as one of the eight issues the Forward Bloc stands for.

4. No Role Model For Socialism.

4.1 It is a fact that there is no role model of socialism, which is suitable for putting into practice for the entire world. Each country has its own history, geography, requirements, culture, and different subjective and objective conditions. Therefore a 'tailor made' pattern will not work everywhere. But such system should absorb the

developments of different countries and to follow the movements of different sections of the people. The voice of the people should get priority while formulating policies and programme, which can be a universal approach as a prelude to establish a system.

5. Movements For Socialism.

5.1 The bubble of capitalism has been busted since the collapse of the investment bank Lehman Brothers in 2008. The debt crisis in Greece, 'We are the 99%' movement in USA, the youth and worker uprising in England, the people's rally in Rome, Toronto, Frankfurt, Sydney, Tokyo etc are amply proving that capitalism is not a panacea for the miseries being confronted by the general public. The protesters are openly criticizing the role of finance capital in shambling their economic system. They are loudly protesting the weird policy of granting huge tax concessions to the financial oligarchs, curtailing of health facilities and pension, privatization of social services etc. The Occupy Wall Street (OWS) protest inspired the people of different European countries to come to the street against privatizing the profits and socializing the losses. Now such people's movement has developed in more than 82 countries and 950 cities across the world.

5.2 The socialist movements in Latin America and the left swing in many of the European countries are the ray of hope in the struggle of working class for their survival. We are of the firm opinion that socialism according to the situation and circumstances is the one and only alternative to capitalism. In fact these movements have become the sources of inspiration to carry forward the anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist battle. The All India Forward Bloc is of the opinion that the time demands more concerted action from the left and socialist forces.

6. Socialism Crushes the False Propaganda.

6.1 When the USSR disintegrated, the western media and their imperialist bosses were busy in writing the obituary of Socialism. They declared that socialism is dead and the salvation of the world lies only in capitalism. But now when the card palaces of capitalist economies are crumbling one after another the obituary writers are hiding somewhere and trying to announce it as a temporary phenomenon. The moot question is not whether it is temporary or permanent. The vital issue is the deepening crisis in capitalism and the relevance of socialism.

6.2 When we talk about socialism, it is imperative to think loudly about the different ways of practising socialism. The idea of socialism is not derived by the Communists or Marxists. The concept of equality and the equal distribution of wealth were very much there in all the civilisations in different degrees. Many ancient thinkers and scholars have preached about equality and social justice. Many leaders of 19th Century got opportunity to put into practice the very idea of socialism. The USSR and the East European Countries practised Socialism for many decades. But it failed after a certain period due to various reasons. But the reasons are not the same as the obituary writers of socialism have written immediately after the collapse of USSR. It is a fact that no power in the world has the capacity to kill an idea. Socialism is an idea of equality. Therefore, it cannot die.

7. Importance of Democratic Centralism.

7.1 It is now a proven fact that it is not the failure of the idea but it is the abject failure of the implementation process. It is a fact that when 'democracy' was wiped out from the principle, it was bound to collapse. When democracy vanished from organisational activities and administrative process, 'party bureaucracy' came into the centre stage. The common people were neglected and corruption and nepotism were at the peak when absolute party bureaucracy came into being. Socialism never advocates party supremacy rather it ensures equal rights.

8. Experiences of Socialist Pattern.

8.1 The Socialist economies have taken several steps to increase social production. When social production increases at a remarkable pace, the method of economic management has also to be changed accordingly. These types of reforms are necessary when the economy of the state keeps a growing velocity. But it should not shackle the basic foundation of the socialist economy. But in the name of 'reforms' Mikhail Gorbachev introduced undiluted 'Market Economy' and dismantled the socialist institutions. The 27th Congress of CPSU opined in 1986 that new quality of growth, all out intensification of production on the basis of scientific and technological progress, a structural reconstruction of management and organising and stimulating labour are necessary. But this process of reforms derailed in the course of its implementation though the CPSU explained Perestroika as "Socialist economic acceleration and the consolidation of socialism in practice".

9. The Chinese Experience.

9.1 Compared to USSR, the People's Republic of China has started the process of 'Reforms' in very slow pace. It started scientific reforms in 1978, when Com. Deng Xiaoping became the leader of the Communist Party of China. The CPC reviewed without any dogma that there were defects in the socialist system of China established by Com. Mao Tse Tung after the revolution of 1949. In the beginning like any other developing economy, the China concentrated on agricultural development because agricultural development can bring rural development too. The practice of 'Contract and responsibility system' yielded much to the overall growth of rural economy of China. The introduction of Socialist Market Economy was the turning point of China's process of 'reforms'. It is also a fact that the market will remain so long commodities were produced. The recognition of the importance of market does not mean that the system became capitalist. China is the best example how the market can be controlled under a socialist economy. But it is imperative to mention here that this theory will be safe so far the control of market remain with the state. If the government failed to check the greedy attitude of the market, the system will have to face serious consequences. However the enviable socio-economic development China has achieved in the last three decades is no doubt within the policy contour of Chinese Socialism with Chinese Characteristics.

9.2 However, it is worth to discuss the reports regarding increasing disparity between the rural and urban people of China. It is a fact that one section of the urban people are becoming hangers-on of the flickering glitters of capitalist manipulations, which is fading away the real values and culture of Chinese people and their great revolution. Many of these sections are not realizing the ill aims of these capitalist forces and the orientation of the CPC is not working adequately to address this

serious issue. We hope that as an experienced party, the Communist Party of China is capable to handle this erosion and adopt appropriate measures.

10. The Vietnam Model.

10.1 The implementation of 'Doi Moi' (Renewal or Renovation) was started in Vietnam as a part of 'reforms' in 1986. The Vietnam Communist Party closely observed the Chinese experiences and the setbacks of USSR before it started its 'reforms'. Like China and India, Vietnam is also an agriculture oriented country. Therefore they also started the reforms in agriculture sector. The lands were distributed to the farmers and free market system allowed. Flow of FDI was welcomed under strict state vigilance. Scientific agriculture production was introduced. Now Vietnam can compete with any other country in the world so far as agricultural yield is concerned. It is important to note here that Vietnam is not diluting its confidence on Socialism. 'Doi Moi' is an auxiliary approach to the basic system of Vietnam.

11. The Latin American Uprise.

11.1 Cuba is implementing Socialism in Cuban Style. Cuba declared that socialism or death. While holding high the banner of Cuban style socialism, Cuba is inspiring the whole anti-imperialist movement of the world. The Cuban experience is influencing many Latin American countries like Venezuela, Bolivia, Columbia, Ecuador, Argentina etc. to nationalise the natural resources and to follow the path of Socialism.

11.2 Laos and Mangolia are also following the path of socialism according to their circumstances and requirements. North Korea (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) is practising 'Juche Idea' developed by Com. Kim Il Sung. It is nothing but Korean way of implementing Socialism and ensuring social justice.

12. Relevance of Indian Socialism.

12.1 All these experiences show that the countries following socialism are not imitating each other. All are implementing their own form of socialism based on ground realities. It is imperative to remember the prophetic words of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose that each country should adopt their own form of socialism according to their circumstances and requirements. Netaji was one of the foremost leaders who pleaded for the idea of socialism during the liberation movement. In fact nationalism and socialism were the main planks of Netaji in the freedom struggle. He observed "Indian nationalism is neither narrow nor selfish nor aggressive. It is inspired by the highest ideals of human race viz; Satyam (the true), Shivan (the good) and Sundaram (the beautiful). Nationalism in India has instilled into us truthfulness, honesty, manliness and the spirit of service and sacrifice. What is more it has roused the creative faculties, which for centuries had been lying dormant in our people and as a result we are experiencing a renaissance".

12.2 Netaji had clear idea about socialism. But he never believed the copy book maxim of any type of socialist practice. He advocated for 'Indian Socialism'- Indian socialism in Indian way under Indian conditions. In 1931, when he became the President of AITUC, Netaji said "I have no doubt in my own mind that the salvation of India, as of the world, depends on socialism. India should learn from and profit by the

experience of other nations – but India should be able to evolve her own methods in keeping with her own needs and her own environment. In applying any theory to practise, you can never rule out geography or history. If you attempt it, you are bound to fail. India, should therefore, evolve her own form of socialism. ... It may be that the form of socialism which India will evolve will have something new and original about it which will be of benefit to the whole world”.

12.3 Netaji had developed his concept about socialism based on Indian culture, heritage, moral and spiritual values of life. Perhaps it may be one of the basic differences between Marxism and the socialist Concept of Netaji. He had confidence on Indian spiritual heritage. Therefore, his philosophical approach could not accept fully the theory of dialectical materialism. He said “ The materialistic interpretation of history, which seems to be a cardinal point in communist theory will not find unqualified acceptance in India, even among those who would be disposed to accept the economic contents of communism” He further said “ Changes by dint of the interactive functioning of multiple factor. To pick up only the material or the economic factors of life as the only and exclusive determinants of life and thought is the height of oneness”.

12.4 It clearly shows the concept of ‘Indian Socialism’ preached by Netaji. The world experiences of implementing socialism, now proves that the socialism can neither be imported nor exported. It has to develop by the people of each country according to their circumstances. While applying socialist principles, the heritage and culture of the country should be given paramount importance. Therefore Indian Socialism is relevant and it is the only way for the salvation of the Indian people from all miseries they are confronting.
