

Globalization and Cakewalk Of Communism - From Theory to “Politricks” A Critical Analysis of Indian Scenario

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ABSTRACT: *There is strange urge to redefine “communism” – to bring the self christened ideology down to a new epithet-Neoliberal communism, may perfectly be flamboyant as the ideology lost its compendium and socially and economically unfeasible due to its struggle for existence in the globalised era. Dialectical materialism is meticulously metamorphosed to “Diluted materialism” and Politics has given its way for “Politricks”. The specific objective of the study is to analyze metamorphosis of communism to neoliberal communism in the antique teeming land of India due to globalization, modernity and changing technology. The study makes an attempt to analyze the nuances of difference between classical Marxist theory and contemporary left politics. The Communist party of India-Marxist (CPIM) has today become one of the multi billionaires in India with owning of one of the biggest media conglomerate. The ideological myopia shut in CPIM ostensibly digressing it from focusing on classical theory and communism has become a commodity. The methodology of qualitative analysis via case studies with respect to Indian state of West Bengal where the thirty four-year-old communist rule ended recently and Kerala where the world’s first elected communist government came to power. In both the states Communism is struggling for existence and ideology ended its life at the extreme end of reality. The scope of the study lies in the effort to siphoning off the ideological impasse engulfed communism and understanding the nuances in the party system. The significance, of the study is that countries which claims themselves as communist countries such as China has given up the rational concepts and searching for new ideology to cope up with the changing trends, the research focus requires sustained and nay exacerbated development.]*

KEY WORDS: *Ideology, communism, neo liberal communism, Metamorphosis, Dialectical Materialism, Diluted materialism, Politricks, Ideological Myopia.*

I. INTRODUCTION:

There is a strange but most cogent and jarring situation where theories remain subservient openly or subtly to the system against which the theory stands itself, can be perfectly defined as ideological euthanasia rather than self deception or peril. The current crisis eating communism is a typical, painful example, as there is an atmosphere of mistrust and turbulence persists in the upper most echelons of communist party vitiated by suspicion, disbelief and ado towards money. Today in the globalized era that we live in majority of the people believe and expect the worst from politics and their doyen, even communism finds no exception. Communism started as a natural protest against blatant exploitation of the labor class. Karl Marx optimistically presumed that the new ideology, over the time period will magically change the whole world into an egalitarian society where the rulers will be working for the working class. But despite the rather piquant ideology could catapult mediocre stirring against the then prevailed capitalistic social system. Marx transformed the economic man of the factory system of the capitalistic society into proletariat who has the right to organize and make his voice heard against oppression, social injustice and exploitation. The capitalistic caricature as an order which deprives the poor of the very dignity of a human being and hence he visualizes the new social and economic order. Thus his name and thoughts frequently evoke an emotional response from both his devotees and enemies. Marxism as a theory emerged successful for a period of time by giving new hope to prevail social and economic system. In the 19th century the stage was particularly set for the entrance of Marx. Everywhere in Europe the lower classes were restless and relentless protests being made demanding political and economic reforms. For example in Germany the Hegelian left was agitating against absolutism. In France, Blanc and Proudhon were exposing the abuses of the social system. In England the Chartist movement was undermining the traditional concept of politics. Marx entered the seen to stress the importance of modern materialism and gave a new impetus to these movements. Communism was agreeably some extent a fitting model for the then social and economic system. It can not be regarded as a theory forever due to it’s variety of anomalies. The biggest failure of Marxism was its failure to understand the genetics theory. It’s been scientifically proved that the ideas, thoughts and beliefs of an

individual are determined by his genes. Marxian ideology of communism is absolutely an exaggerated fable wrapped up in thin layer of facts to make it believable. It is worth looking into the present world political map to understand the status of communism. One who is keen on understanding the world political scene end up with the fact that communism is a Utopian concept and unfit to the social system.

II. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Instead of focusing on theoretical concept of Communism and Marxism, this study makes an attempt to project how the communist ideologies have deviated from their main compendium. We have the exemplars of countries which claim themselves as communist, but of course that is an ostensibly skewed state of communism with the underlying pathos where meticulously suppressed and hardly anything left for an optimistic augur. In Asia, China can be a typical example. It is quiet impossible for man with basic common sense to call China a communist country. This skewed metamorphosis happened to the classic communist theory can be summarized as an epithet – neo liberal communism may be perfectly flamboyant. Neo liberalism is sprucely obscured by thin layer of communism to obfuscate the stark reality. This study makes an effort to project some excerpts from the ideological metamorphosis happened to communist party of India – the CPIM. The workers party of India today has become a corporate company with the biggest media conglomerate. The study is broadly divided into three parts. The first gives a glimpse of history and growth of communism in India. The second part discusses the impact of globalization on communism. The third part from theory to politicks deals with the CPIM's struggle for existence in the globalized era.

History of Communism in India

Pre Independence era

The history of communism in India goes back to the 1920's. The communist party of India was founded in Tashkent, Turkestan autonomous soviet socialist republic on Oct 17th 1920 soon after the second congress of the communist international. The founding members were M.N Roy, Evelyn Trent Roy, Abani Mukherji, Rosa Fitings, Mohamed Ali, Mahumme Shafiq Siddique and MP. B. T Acharya. Soon after its formation CPI began efforts to build a party organization inside India and in turn so many communist groups were formed in West Bengal, Bombay, Madras (Chennai), united provinces, and Punjab. During the 1920 to 1930, the party was badly organized with lack of national co ordination. Even the British government then banned communist activities in India. As of 1934 communist party started becoming prominent in Bombay, Calcutta, Punjab and Madras province. In July 1937 the first Kerala unit of communist party was founded at a meeting held at Kozhicode (Calicut) in July 1942 finally the communist party was legalized in India, and contested in the provincial legislative assembly elections of 1946 and of its own CPI won eight seats, including all the three seats contested in West Bengal. In 1946 communist party took initiative for the 'Tebhaga movement' in west Bengal, a militant campaign against feudalism.

After Independence

During the post independence period communist party was able to entrench its position in India's political map by active participation in Social and economic events. 1948 the second party congress adopted the program of 'Democratic Revolution'. This program included the first mention of struggle against the caste injustice. Soon communist party became increasingly popular in the country by giving new hope to the people. For the first time in the history communist party came to power in the general elections in 1957 in Kerala giving a new impetus to the growth of the party. This was the first time that a communist party won control over an Indian State. E M S Nambodiripadu, became the Chief Minister. With the leadership of Jyothi Basu communism scaled new heights in West Bengal. During the 1960's the relations between communist party of Soviet Union and communist party of China soured. Communist party of China started criticizing the CPSU of turning revisionist and deviating from the path of Marxism-Leninism. Even the Indo-China relationship deteriorated, as the border dispute between the two countries erupted into the Sino-India war of 1962. During the war a fraction of the communist party based the position of the Indian government; until the other section of the party claimed that it was a conflict between Socialist and a Capitalistic state. This finally leads to an ideological Split and gave birth to the Communist Party of India Marxist (CPIM). The West Bengal was under the CPIM rule for 34 years and in Kerala CPIM ruled in alternate terms.

CPI (M) today is recognized by the Election Commission of India as a nationalist party. Prakash Karat is the general secretary of CPI (M) India. One major change happened during these years was that communism lost its significance in India and mainly confined in Kerala, West Bengal and Tripua. There are various socio-economic reasons behind these changes.

Globalization and Communism in India

Globalization emerged as a magical word ever since 1990's. The word globalization is circumscribed by the scholars in many ways. Intuitively globalization is a process fueled by and resulting increasing socio-cultural, technological diffusion. Globalization however, is also an ideology with multiple connotations and lineages. As Cox observed sometimes it appears loosely associated with Neo-liberalism and with technocratic solutions to economic reforms and developments. Globalization made its visit to the antique teaming land of India in early 1990s by the liberalization policies of then incumbent Congress Government of India. Soon the prevailed socio-cultural aspects of India started undergoing a silent but baffling metamorphosis. More often than not, the communist parties particularly the CPIM look with suspicion on any attempt to tamper with the social system. Communists termed Globalization as an American Imperialism and started vilifications with umpteen examples of the countries which embraced the Globalization and ended up with the perils of imperial democracy. Globalization popularized computers in India. Communists from the very beginning were against the technological development, particularly on computers, by iterating computers will reduce the employment opportunities. Mass picketing was organized in India especially Kerala and West Bengal against the Usage of computer in Government offices and Public Sector companies. But, however nothing could stop the ado of people to plunge in the stirrings of Globalization. Globalization redefined the parameters of socio-cultural aspects of Indian Society. One of the major changes was the increase in the educational standards. It is quiet evident from the history that the followers of Communism were largely the illiterates. Even today we can see that the ardent followers of communist ideologies whether low middle classes and the lion's share of the members of the Communist party constitute the manual workers. Once the educational statuses of the people were started increasing communist ideology started slumping. Educated youths started moving apart from the CPIM. The stand of CPIM against technology, computers etc. gave a new impetus to this. Thus the CPIM's technophobia proved to play mayhem. It is evident from the party records that globalization and its influence swelled by the day. Communist party memberships started tottering. The global politics started witnessing communism embracing globalization with intractable ado. CPIM's role model in world politics, China gracefully wedded to globalization. Soon CPIM in India realized that the country is besieged by the globalization and any further attempt to obfuscate the reality would be risible. Globalization thus played a complicit role in metamorphosing the communism in India. Communists today have illicitly become great proponents of globalization and globalism in India, even though they don't agree publicly.

Communism from Theory to 'Politricks'

The failure of communism to cope up with the changing trends and technology ended up the CPIM with its presence in the three states in India – Kerala, West Bengal and Tripura. Out of these three states West Bengal bid goodbye to the 34 year old communist rule in the recent general elections. Kerala too has demounted the communist government and the only state where communist party is ruling in India today is the small and humble north eastern state of Tripura. The reason for the slump of CPIM India is primarily attributed to the dismal performance of its leaders. The party started digressing itself from the social issues and its leaders became white elephants. Politics has given its way to 'Politricks'. The new leaders emerged in CPIM during the period of globalization shepherds the party into the new world of capitalism and the probity and integrity have fallen. The apparent sense of camaraderie between communism and capitalism is amusing. Today in India CPIM has communism only in its name, what exists today is neo-liberalism wrapped in thin layers of communism, and can be termed 'Neoliberal Communism'.

'Politricks' of Religion

It is a well known fact that communism is an ideology built on class theory. Communism nay-say all better modes of social stratification such as cast, religion, gender, etc. but it is proven that the biggest failure of communism that bruised and battered its existence is its ideology of distance itself from casteism. Indian society is a caste driven society. Caste and religion play a complicit role in the politics. Communists realized that years ago and followed the same, but it try to obscure it. True Communist leaders made it clear that avoiding castism in India was the root cause of the failure of the communist party in India. CPIM West Bengal Leader and Bengal's transport minister, Subhas Chakraborty, visited the Kali temple at Tarapith, and offered puja has embarrassed the Marxists in West Bengal. "Wherever I go, my name would suggest that first I am a Hindu and then a Brahmin. I can't deny this," he said. He also said he is more comfortable with Indian traditions like 'pranam' and 'namaskar' than the lal salaam (red salute)A candid picture of Subhash Chakraborty in front of goddess kali a temple adorned the major news papers front page put the CPIM in a limbo.

CPI(M)'s Double Speak

Another double speak was done by CPIM General Secretary during his speech in University of Oxford revealed that cast is a reality and it will be difficult for any political party to continue avoiding cast. During his speech he remembered his meeting with his teacher and Professor of history noted Marxist historian Victor Kierman in 1986 .Prof. Kirman asked Mr. Karat: What is your cast? I said “In Kerala my cast is known as Menon”. Mr. Karat said there was an “acute need” of theorizing the new development in India including the way in which cast continued to retain, its importance at various levels in public and private levels.

To understand the compendium of what Mr. Karat said just look into Kerala during the general election, one can see that communist leaders through the religious and caste leaders and extol them as oligopolistic do in the market for goods, for vote. One side this happens and the other side party denies religious freedom to its followers. Many followers including leaders who have left CPIM recently, stating it is difficult to continue the party by suppressing their religious faith. The youth leader and former president of SFI Sindhu Joy and former members of parliament AP Abdullakutty and Dr KS Manoj are a few examples.

“Diluted Materialism”

Karl Marx was against all arguments which try to prove the existence of god. He showed that all the gods of history have a cultural significance on purely rational grounds. He did not believe that the world is governed by providence. According to him there is no justification for the belief that virtue is rewarded and vice punished. He declared that this concept is rarely the product of childhood imagination and represents a pre scientific way of thinking. Marx pointed out “Man makes religion and religion doesn't makes man” Dialectical materialism involved a transformation in the religious philosophy of mankind. Instead of relying upon the future life, man was to concentrate upon the present, instead of mysticism he was to use the powers of reason. Instead of theology he was to accept the conclusion of science. Instead of the church, he was to follow the dictates of the leaders of proletariat as a result Marx strongly opposed the organized religion. Today what communist party in India is extolling religion secretly and opposing it publicly. The Communist Party in West Bengal started using the picture of Lord Shri Krishna in their election campaigns by saying lord Krishna was a great communist. Democratic Youth Federation of India i.e. DYFI, youth wing of CPIM has put up boards hailing Mother Mary in connection with the holy feast at a church in Kerala It is great to see that DYFI has not given up its customary heroes including Che Guevara and Bhagat Singh but they occupy minuscule space in the poster which has a big picture of Mother Mary holding the infant Jesus.To add to the affect, the board also quotes the verses of the Bible: “From now on all generations will be called me blessed”Soon Swami Vivekananda too found his position in CPIM poster. The most risible incident reported from Kerala, where the communist party started using Jesus Christ pictures in their posters during their election campaigns. The controversy of the last supper picture is another example. The CPIM used the picture of the last supper considered sacred by Christians in this election campaign in a nasty way. The picture of the Last Supper is morphed and instead of Christ it has Barak Obama with various Indian and world leaders whom CPIM do not like. Here the agenda was to use Christianity to prove that capitalism's end is nearing with the joining of Congress, BJP and the West.However due to criticism from various churches CPIM was forced to withdraw the poster.For long, the CPIM used ‘Durga Puja’(Worship of Goddess Kali) as a platform to popularize Marxist literature. Stalls outside Puja marquees across the state did brisk sales and CPI-M supporters would manage the booths. CPI(M) leaders lead religious processions as Centre of Indian Trade Unions i.e. CITU holds Vishwakarma Pujas and Teachers' unions affiliated to the CPI(M) hold Saraswati Pujas. Local units of CPI(M) support Durga pujas across the state monetarily.Another reported event from Kerala is the CPIM's trade union organization CITU's forming a priest association in temples. The picture which appeared in major news papers in India in which the CPIM west bengal Leader Subash Chakraborty praying in front of goddess kali is a typical example for ‘Diluted Materialism’.

‘Politriks’ of Private Property

There won't be any doubt that the Marxist theory is against the capitalists. Marx envisages a classless society where the proletariat or the working class will be the rulers. The followers of Marx have become great capitalists today. Today the total asset of the communist party is about 4000 crores, making it the wealthiest political party in India. CPIM owns one of the biggest media conglomerate in India with three TV channels namely Kairali TV, People TV and Channel We, Two newspapers ‘Deshabhimani’ in Malayalam and ‘Ganashakthi’ in Bengali. Apart from this CPIM also have many super specialty hospitals and luxury apartments for its rulers. In a recent move CPIM set up a 30 crore worth amusement park ‘Vismaya’ in Kannur district of Kerala. There is a controversy over the CPIM's channels as a liquor Barron called Manichan who was responsible for the death of 36 by hooch supplied by him, donated 50 lakhs to CPIM's channel. This proves that the CPIM is subservient, openly to the capitalist.

The Bengal CPIM recently has confiscated lands from the poor agriculturists and to distribute it to the business giant Tata for setting up the Nano car production unit. This led to people protests where many died in the police firing. Finally communist lost their 34 year old rule in West Bengal and also witnessed the emergence of charismatic leader Mamata Banarjee. Not just the party, the party leaders too became the loyal servants of capitalists. Kerala Communist party secretary Pinarayi Vijayan became the epicenter of controversy in connection with his alleged nexus with certain neo capitalists. The Controller and Auditor general of India report said, the deal when Mr Vijayan was Electricity Minister of Kerala during 1998 with Canadian firm SNC Lavlin for the repair of their generators was a huge fraud and cost the state exchequer a staggering 3.76 billion. But the then CPIM government of Kerala refused to give permission to prosecute Mr. Vijayan. Another allegation against Mr Vijayan is that his son went to pursue his MBA course at the University of Birmingham with less than 50% marks. Spending 50 lakhs, neither Vijayan nor his wife's has known source of income to expand such an amount for their son, and he has not availed any bank loan either. Amidst this controversy another leader Mr M A Baby said: "when Gandhi and Nehru could study abroad there is nothing wrong in 'poor Vijayan's' son doing the same. The acute deception is not the money spent, in fact during this period the CPIM was conducting state wide protests against self financed courses and capitalist owned colleges. Party secretary orders for a stake against self financed courses and his own son whom he sent to Birmingham for higher education. No word or phrase is available to describe this double stand. The internal conflict among the communist leaders is another issue that is drubbing communism. The communist party in Kerala is polarized with senior communist leader and former chief minister VS Achudanadan who represents the common man of Kerala and Mr. Vijayan who is representing the elite class. The nuances of difference between the two leaders hindered the development and digressing the party from social issues. In short communism has become a corporate company India. Former CPIM leader Berlin Kunjanathan Nair said: "Pinarayi Vijayan, after reaching the top post became an adopted son of the corporate mafias. The party secretary post has been reduced to that of a CEO of a private sector company".

Final Comments

A corporate carnival was arranged recently in Kozhikode district of Kerala- CPIM's Magnum Opus 20th Party Congress Meet. There was an allegation that it was outsourced to an event management agency contrary to the routine process of organized by its cadres. Close to 40 crores were spent to make the function grand. It is widely believed that money has collected from various industrialists especially non resident Indians. Many leftist thinkers raised their eyebrows as where this party is going? The ideological myopia shut in CPIM ostensibly digressing it from focusing on classical theory and communism has become a commodity. CPI (M) has to wake up from the hibernation and accept the reality. It has to either change its stand or practice what it is preaching. Hence Communism cannot work if the original rules are applied. It has to redefine the theory to cope up with changing socio-economic and political scenario and declare its stand publically. The party must make its theories flexible and embrace Globalization. Research should be done to explore the possibilities to evolve a new theory Neo-liberal communism to cope up with their challenges and prospects. The emerging younger leaders obviously can bring at least some changes in this regard. If the CPI (M) fails to do so, soon the Marxist theory and the party will become only part of history text books.

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