

# সি পি এম বনাম সি পি এম মানুষের কী হবে, কমরেড?

সোমনাথ মুখোপাধ্যায়

দীর্ঘ মতাদর্শগত শীতধুম ছেড়ে মুখ্যমন্ত্রী বুদ্ধদেব ভট্টাচার্য এবং পার্টির রাজ্য সম্পাদক অনিল বিশ্বাসের যৌথ উদ্যোগে যখন এক সি পি আই (এম) পশ্চিমবঙ্গকে উন্নয়নের, ধনতান্ত্রিক সংস্কারের গল্প শোনায়, তখনই সেই স্বপ্নস্বর্গ থেকে অনেক দূরে, জঙ্গল পাহাড়-ঘেরা আদিমতায় প্রাচীনতম চাহিদা, খাদ্য-বস্ত্র-বাসস্থান-স্বাস্থ্য-শিক্ষাকে কেন্দ্র করে জ্বলে ওঠে আগুন। উদয় হয় দ্বিতীয় সি পি আই (এম)-এর। অর্থাৎ, মাওবাদীদের। বর্তমান স্তরে মাওবাদীরা দল বাড়িয়ে এবং বাড়িখণ্ডের জঙ্গল দখল করে ইতিউত্তি হানা দিচ্ছে এবং তাদের ভাষায় 'দীর্ঘস্থায়ী জনযুদ্ধে' খতম করছে পুলিশ এবং সি পি এম তথা মার্ক্সবাদী কর্মীদের। মহানগরের উন্নয়নের উড়ালপুলের সীমানার বাইরে কিছু কিছু পোস্টারও দেখা যাচ্ছে ওই জনযুদ্ধের সমর্থনে। বিভিন্ন সংবাদমাধ্যমে গুরুত্ব সহকারে পরিবেশিত হচ্ছে নানা 'অ্যাকশন'-এর গল্প। এবং তার সঙ্গেই ভেসে উঠছে অনাহারক্লিষ্ট গ্রামছবি। আই টি পার্ক, হলদিয়া, ফিকির বুদ্ধবন্দনা, মৌপ্রপাত আর রঙিন রাতরহস্যকে ভেতরে পাঠিয়ে প্রথমে উঠে আসছে কলকাতা থেকে বহুদূরের, যেন তানজানিয়ার উলঙ্গ অভুত মানুষ।

উন্নয়ন নিয়ে সেই সব জনসাধারণও উত্তেজিত, যারা উন্নততর বামফ্রন্টের বহিরঙ্গ ধনতান্ত্রিক কিন্তু মর্মবস্তুরে সমাজতান্ত্রিক উন্নয়নের কল্পনাপ্রসঙ্গে ভেসে গেছে এই সেদিন। পথ দুর্ঘটনায় রাস্তা বন্ধ হলে অরাজকতাকে গালাগাল করতে করতে দেরিতে অফিসে পৌঁছে বসের ধমক খায় যে মধ্যবিত্ত বাবু, 'পুলিশ কেন ব্যাটাদের পিটিয়ে তুলে দেয়নি'— বলে টিফিনে সহবাবুর সমর্থন পায়, সেও দেখি, ওমা! কেমনে বন্ গয়া মাওবাদী সমর্থক, সন্ধের অবসরে বলে ওঠে, 'ওরাই ঠিক'।

অতএব, বাবুদের নিজস্ব পার্টি, একনম্বরী সি পি এম বিচলিত হয়। মাওবাদীরা আহ্বান জানায় বিতর্কের, বুদ্ধবাবু বলেন, অস্ত্র হাতে আলোচনা হয় না, তবু বিচলন বিস্তৃত হয়। কারা যেন গোপনে যোগাযোগ রাখে

মাওবাদীদের সঙ্গে, কারা? পার্টির ভিত্তি কি মদু কেঁপে ওঠে? গরিবদরদি বলে, আর ধনী এবং উচ্চমধ্যবিত্তের স্বার্থ দেখে চলা পার্টি টের পায় ঠিকই, যে এমনটা চলতে দেওয়া যায় না। কেননা, আলিমুদ্দিন আকাশপথে হাঁটে না।

অনিল বিশ্বাস মহাশয় ফলত একটি প্রবন্ধ লিখলেন। শিরোনাম: 'মাওবাদের নামে নৈরাজ্যবাদ'। নানান চিনদেশীয় কমিউনিস্টদের উদ্ধৃতি জড়ো করে প্রথমত তিনি দেখালেন, মাওবাদ বলে কিছু হয় না, যা হয় তা হল বিশুদ্ধ মার্ক্সবাদ। এমনকী স্বয়ং মাও বা তাঁর প্রধানতম ভক্ত চারুবাবুও কখনও 'মাওবাদ' শব্দ শোনেনি! তার পর একে একে সেই প্রাচীন কূটতর্ক—

**মার্ক্সবাদী এবং মাওবাদী  
উভয়েরই লক্ষ্য তো সেই  
এক: সমাজতন্ত্র। কোন  
সমাজতন্ত্র? সব সম্পদ  
রাষ্ট্রের, সব ক্ষমতা রাষ্ট্রের,  
পার্টির বা শ্রমিকশ্রেণির  
নাম করে অল্প কিছু  
ব্যক্তির, সেই সমাজতন্ত্র?**

বিশ্বের প্রধান দ্বন্দ্ব কী? ভারতের রাষ্ট্রচরিত্র কেমন? ভারতের বিপ্লব কোন পথে হবে? শান্তিপূর্ণ, না সশস্ত্র? সংসদীয় ব্যবস্থায় কমিউনিস্টদের অংশগ্রহণ উচিত কি না ইত্যাদি।

বিষয়গুলি নিয়ে সি পি এম এবং নকশালপন্থীদের মধ্যে বিরোধী অবস্থানগুলি সম্পর্কে পশ্চিমবঙ্গের মানুষ কমবেশি অবহিত। সি পি এম বলবে, সাম্রাজ্যবাদ বনাম সমাজতন্ত্র বিশ্বের প্রধান দ্বন্দ্ব, যতই সমাজতন্ত্র পৃথিবী থেকে উঠে যেতে থাকুক না কেন। সি পি এম বলবে, ভারতের রাষ্ট্র দখলে রেখেছে জমিদার আর বুর্জোয়ারা। এবং সংসদীয় ব্যবস্থা এখানে সুদৃঢ় হওয়ায় শান্তিপূর্ণ পথেই এ দেশে সেই আকাঙ্ক্ষিত জনগণতান্ত্রিক বিপ্লব হবে। অন্য দিকে, মাওবাদী তথা পূর্বতন নকশালপন্থীরা বলবে, সাম্রাজ্যবাদ বনাম তৃতীয় বিশ্বের জনগণের দ্বন্দ্বই বিশ্বের প্রধান দ্বন্দ্ব। ভারত নাকি এখনও একটি আধা-

উপনিবেশ। বলবে, সংসদীয় ব্যবস্থা একটি শুয়োরের খোঁয়াড়। অতএব, সেটাকে অচ্ছুত রেখে সশস্ত্র পথে গ্রাম দিয়ে শহর ঘিরে ফেলে এ দেশে নয়াগণতান্ত্রিক বিপ্লব করতে হবে।

এই সব তর্কবিতর্ক, খুনোখুনি মার্ক্সপন্থীদের অভ্যন্তরীণ ব্যাপার। অন্যান্য ধর্মাবলম্বীদের নিজেদের মধ্যেই দলাদলি এবং হিংসার যে ইতিহাস শ্বেতাশ্বর-দিগম্বর, হীনয়ান-মহাযান, শিয়া-সুন্নি, ক্যাথলিক-প্রোটেষ্ট্যান্ট, শাক্ত-শৈব-বৈষ্ণব ইত্যাদির, তারই বিংশ শতাব্দীর রূপ মার্ক্স তথা প্রথম গুরুকে মেনে নিয়ে স্ট্যালিন বনাম স্ট্রিক্স, মাও বনাম দেঙ, গ্রামস্চি বনাম তোগলিয়াস্তির ধর্মভিত্তিক বিসংবাদ। মূল প্রশ্নটি কিন্তু এই সব ধর্মাবলম্বীদের কাছে অধরাই রয়ে যায়। এত ধর্ম, এত মহাপুরুষ, অবতার পৃথিবীতে এল; কত কিছু করল, বলল, দেখল, কিন্তু কেন পৃথিবীর মানুষদের অধিকাংশের মনোজগতে প্রায় কিছুই পরিবর্তন হল না? কেন সেই সম্পদ, ক্ষমতা, যশ নিয়ে লোভ হিংসা যুদ্ধ? কেন এখনও অন্যের দুঃখে আমার সুখ?

মার্ক্সবাদী এবং মাওবাদী উভয়েরই লক্ষ্য তো সেই এক— সমাজতন্ত্র। কোন সমাজতন্ত্র? সব সম্পদ রাষ্ট্রের, সব ক্ষমতা রাষ্ট্রের, পার্টির বা শ্রমিকশ্রেণির নাম করে অল্প কিছু ব্যক্তির— সেই সমাজতন্ত্র? বিরুদ্ধ মতকে আইনি পথেই খুন করার তন্ত্র? তিয়েন-আন-মেনের ট্যাঙ্ক চালিয়ে ছাত্রবিরোধী দমনের ভয়াবহ তন্ত্র? এ কথা এখনও জোর গলায় বলার যে, না, অমন তন্ত্র আমরা চাই না। অমন তন্ত্রের সাধনায় যে বিপ্লব— তাও না।

এ কথাও বলার যে, না— বিশ্বজোড়া পুঁজিবাদ সব রকমের বৈষম্য যে ভাবে বাড়াচ্ছে, আমেরিকান সাম্রাজ্যবাদ যে ভাবে দখল করছে একের পর এক দেশ, এবং তার বিরুদ্ধে বিশ্ব জুড়ে চলমান যে লড়াই, যেহেতু মার্ক্সপন্থীরা সব জায়গাতেই শামিল সেই লড়াইয়ে। অতএব, যারা এই লড়াইকে ন্যায়যুক্ত বলে ভাবে, অবশ্যই মানবে, বামপন্থীরা তাদের সহযোগী।

হ্যাঁ, যত দিন মার্ক্সপন্থীরা ক্ষমতায় যেতে পারবে না, তত দিন তারাই থাকবে ক্ষমতাহীনদের প্রকৃত কমরেড।

এই আলোকে খুব সহজেই, হে পাঠক, বুঝে নিতে পারবেন বর্তমান পশ্চিমবঙ্গের দুই সি পি এমের লড়াইকে, আশা করি।

31 AUG 2007

■ ANIL DHARKER

ON March 12, 1930, Mahatma Gandhi began his March to Dandi. Seventy-five years later we remember that the March was historic, but have lost the rest of the plot, except that the March to Dandi was about salt. As it happens, it need not have happened at Dandi, it need not have been about salt and it need not have been a march.

The genesis of the event goes back to the appointment of the Simon Commission by the British government to look into the constitutional position of its Indian colony. Until its appointment in 1927, Indian nationalists were willing to accept Dominion Status for India, which meant that India would be a self-governing territory of the British Commonwealth. However, the composition of the Commission and the generally hard attitude of Westminster were seen not only as unsympathetic to Indian aspirations, but also as a form of inquisition by empire builders into the fitness of Indians for self-rule.

This led the younger elements in the Indian National Congress to reject Dominion Status and demand, instead, *Purna Swaraj*, Complete Independence. This was formalised at the Lahore Congress Session in the last days of 1929 under the presidency of Jawaharlal Nehru, when January 26 was declared *Purna Swaraj* Day. A nation-wide programme of Civil Disobedience was to be launched and Gandhi was named, in the strange phrase, used then without self-consciousness, 'Dictator' of the campaign.

Did Gandhi have a plan? His reply to Rabinadrath Tagore was: "I am furiously thinking night and day. But I do not see any light coming out of the surrounding darkness." For Gandhi, the problem stemmed from a reality everyone else shied away from. Which was, "It is a gross misrepresentation of the true situation to say that the masses are impatient to be led to Civil Disobedience...I see no such sign." In spite of this gloom Gandhi knew that he had a core group ready and prepared for Satyagraha: the men and women living with him in Sabarmati Ashram. They had been hardened by a routine which was demanding in the extreme.



He walked 25 days and 385 km, through 40 villages and towns

# THE MARCH that became a philosophy

75 years after the Dandi March, a reappraisal of Satyagraha's most powerful symbol

Gandhi knew that any action he planned had to be built around the inmates of Sabarmati Ashram, which is why he rejected all the ideas which were suggested: from Vallabhbhai Patel's suggestion of a mass march to Delhi (too unwieldy, too difficult to control) or Nehru's idea of a parallel government (too debating club), to mass burning of foreign cloth (too wasteful and not broad-based enough)...

Gandhi wanted a symbol which was universal, something the poorest peasant could understand and identify with. He therefore chose salt and the breaking of unjust British salt laws. Having decided that the Salt Tax would be the focus of the campaign, he wasn't sure what form the campaign should take. "I had not the ghost of a suspicion how the breach of Salt

Law would work itself out," Gandhi said. "But like a flash it came." The flash said the campaign should be in the form of a march.

Gandhi's preference for a march can be traced to his South African days when he led a group of Indians who were indentured labourers in a march across the Transvaal border to protest against a whole clutch of highly discriminatory laws. Then again, a march, in Gandhi's mind, would be linked to the idea of a pilgrimage: Kedar-nath, Badrinath, Haji Malang, Vaishno Devi, Ambaji...and Dandi.

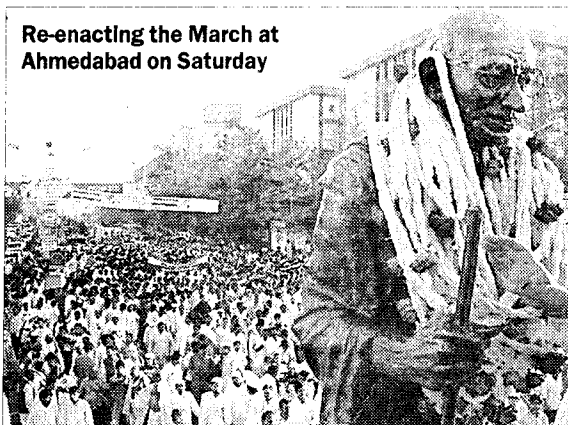
Dandi fits in here, not because of any association with a holy site but because it was a remote, sea-side village, and getting there from Sabarmati would be a hard trek taking 26 days. Pilgrimages are always tough tests of physical endurance and will-power, in their hardship an examination of the worshipper's resolve.

Other people had suggested

**Gandhi rejected all the ideas which were suggested: from Vallabhbhai Patel's suggestion of a mass march to Delhi (too unwieldy, too difficult to control) or Nehru's idea of a parallel government (too debating club), to mass burning of foreign cloth (too wasteful and not broad-based enough)...Gandhi wanted a symbol which was universal, something the poorest peasant could understand. He therefore chose salt**



On Day 26, when Gandhi broke the Salt Law, 5 million others defied British across country



Re-enacting the March at Ahmedabad on Saturday

**When the March began, American journalists had come in large numbers to jeer. A whole lot of them stayed on to cheer and alter American opinion, especially about Satyagraha. Satyagraha, until then seen as a theoretical construct of Gandhi's writings, began to be seen as a philosophy which could actually change the world...The March to Dandi planted the seeds of August 15, 1947, and later for what Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela achieved. And what future generations still might achieve all over the world**

other sea-side towns but Gandhi rejected them because they were too near. To Gandhi the length of the march was important for several reasons: it would be taxing in the extreme, and that would bring about a wave of sympathy and support through the country. The longer period would also help in the build-up of publicity.

When the March did begin, 10,000 people had assembled at Sabarmati to give a send-off, and the number grew enormously at some points of the route: Ellis Bridge in Ahmedabad was so full of spectators that the marchers had to walk on the river bed (the river was dry). The March followed a set pattern: there would be vigorous walking from one halt to the next starting early morning, then a halt for lunch, an evening speech by Gandhi attended by a huge crowd, then sleep under a tent or *shamiana*. In keeping with Gandhi's dictates, the food supplied at each village was extremely frugal (Morning before de-

parture: *rab and dhabra*; Mid-day halt: *bhaki*, vegetable, buttermilk; Evening before March is resumed: Roasted gram, rice; Night: *Khichdi* with vegetable and milk or buttermilk). "Sweets," Gandhi had said, "even if prepared, will be declined. Vegetables should be merely boiled and no oil, spices and chillies, whether green or dry, whole or crushed should be used...The Satyagrahi party is expected to reach each place by 8 am and to sit for lunch at 10 am. No rooms are needed for rest at noon or night. A clean, shaded place is enough."

Something else which was also to become a regular feature of the Long March was even more remarkable. Gandhi was leading a group of young men, most of them in their early 20s. He was 60. He wasn't in the best of health. He was frail and weighed a mere 45 kg. Yet he walked at the head of the column, leading at such a brisk pace that the youngsters found it difficult to keep up. Gandhi asked for no

40 villages and towns, there was a massive change in the mood of the nation. On the 26th day, when Gandhi broke the prohibition against producing salt by picking up a handful from the Dandi shore, his example was followed throughout the country. It was then estimated that five million people had gathered together at 5,000 meetings to defy the British.

By capturing the public imagination, the Dandi Salt March had taken a very large step in changing the freedom movement from one which involved a Westernised middle-class to one which involved the masses. It did so by the magic of Gandhi's salt symbolism and also by showing the rural poor that it was possible even for them to defy the might of the Empire. In this Gandhi was particular about inclusion, whether it was of untouchables or women (many of them in purdah). He refused, for example, to address a meeting which had excluded Dalits till they were allowed

ing world opinion. Until then, the Western world had seen India's aspirations to freedom through the bias of the British press in England and the bias of the British press in India. The American media was sneering too, and when the march began, American journalists had come in large numbers to jeer. A whole lot of them stayed on to cheer and alter American opinion, especially about Satyagraha. Satyagraha, until then seen as a theoretical construct of Gandhi's writings, began to be seen as a philosophy which could actually change the world. It isn't too large a claim to make but the March to Dandi planted the seeds of August 15, 1947, and later for what Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela achieved. And what future generations still might achieve all over the world.

Anil Dharker's book *The Romance of Salt*, to be published next week, has a large section on the Dandi March

## New signs on Arab Street Of petticoat junction, wardrobe makeovers



THOMAS L. FRIEDMAN

FROM Baghdad to Beirut, the Middle East has seen a series of popular demonstrations for democracy. There were, however, two street protests in December that got no coverage, but were just as important. One took place in the Egyptian Nile Delta town of Mahalla and the other in the Suez Canal city of Ismailiya. Both these raucous Egyptian demonstrations were triggered by President Hosni Mubarak's decision to sign the first substantial trade agreement with Israel since Camp David. That decision brought Egyptian workers from both areas into the streets. Why? They were not included in the new trade deal.

That's a new Middle East. On December 14, Egypt, Israel and the US signed an accord setting up three Qualified Industrial Zones (QIZs) in Egypt. The deal stipulated that any Egyptian company operating in one of these QIZs that imports from an Israeli company at least 11.7 per cent of the materials or services can export the finished product to the US duty free. This is a big deal for Egypt which does not have a free-trade treaty with the US. The US named Greater Cairo, Alexandria and Port Said the three QIZs. Hence the protests from the two big Egyptian manufacturing centres that were left out.

According to Rashid Mohamed Rashid, Egypt's impressive new minister of foreign trade, 397 Egyptian companies have already signed up to participate in the QIZ programme, most of them small and medium-size firms. Many have already gone to Israel to forge deals with Israeli suppliers or started work with Israeli partners to identify export markets in the US. Some Israeli companies

are setting up shop in the Egyptian QIZs to provide services right on the spot.

There are a lot of messages in this bottle. One is that if you create a real opportunity for Israeli and Egyptian businesses to interact profitably, not only will Egyptians ignore the protests of the old Nasserites who want to boycott Israel, they will seize the opportunity and protest if they're kept out.

Another message: This "Baghdad spring" will not blossom into sustainable democracy in any of these Arab states without a broader middle-class and civil society institutions to support it. For too long, US foreign policy was based on buying stability in the Arab world by supporting dictators, who destroyed the independent press, political parties, unions, real private sector and civil society — everything except the mosque. Iraq is the starkest example of this.

In the Middle East, democracy will not just spring up because autocrats fall down. It will arise only if these countries develop, among other things, export-oriented private sectors, which can be the foundation for a vibrant middle-class that is not dependent upon the state for contracts and has a vital interest in an open economy, a free press and its own political parties. The development of such a private sector was crucial in democratising Taiwan and South Korea.

That is why, beyond Iraq, America's priorities should be to sign a free-trade agreement with Egypt and get Syria out of Lebanon, which would free the dynamic private sector that already exists there, but has been stifled by Syria. Free Lebanon and free Egypt's economy and they will change the rest of the Middle East for us — for free.

New York Times

IT WAS International Women's Day last week, and the Fourth Umpire (DD) celebrated it in normal style: the lady on the show was a decorative piece but at least she was that: the gentlemen to her left were drab and talked cricket like it was a dead insect. Honestly, the commentary is so tired it yawns: Ravi Shastri conveys a measure of excitement, but the others are talking in their sleep. Rise and shine guys, or give your wicket away.

They say every day is petticoat junction on television. Yo, but what the female characters need are corsets to straighten them out: Jassi's obsession with her perfectly-revolving boss continues even as she is transformed from a wet hen into a shampoo ad (that too against her will), for no other reason than to wow the men. Purab's mouth fell open so that he could say, "You look beautiful, Jassi": the Band of Boys fella, Karan Oberoi, began to sing "Kal hona ho" (why?). Imagine what will happen to Armaan now that he has persuaded himself he loves Jassi for her (old) looks!

Meanwhile, *Kyunki's* Tulusi has been reduced to a jailbird who cannot attend her daugh-

ter's wedding to the wrong man—a marriage her father Mihir and ma-in-law Payal decided for her. *Kalpana's* Parvati is suffering from early menopause or is on the verge of insanity; she was swishing at Krishna like the *Million Dollar Baby* in the boxing ring. *Kasauti's* Prerna is simpering in Mr Bajaj's arms. *Asita's* Simran in Abhi's, Pooja in Ronit's (*Yeh Meri Life Hai*)...

Why, the most compelling and positive female character is rotund Mrs Pandey who ru-



SHAILAJA BAJPAI

TELE SCOPE

her husband, son and *Kareena Kareena* (not necessarily in that order) as efficiently as her business. At least Alicia Silverstone stands up to Daddy. She's a *Miss Match* (Star World) as far as acting goes but there's one man she can handle, so what if it's her father? Actually, when the father happens to be Ryan O'Neal it's not difficult: he's retained that boyish baby-faced look of *Love Story* which doesn't allow you to take him seriously. Alicia doesn't as she flouts his rules in his law firm, and then gets him to say he likes it. More power to her elbow.



**Indian Idol was great fun while it lasted but the grand finale was too much of a good thing. Finalists Abhijeet and Amit were made to sing for their supper—repeatedly. To no one's surprise, Abhijeet won. The first time Abhijeet and Amit made our acquaintance, they were just regular lads; by last Saturday they were unrecognisable. That's what TV can do: rob you of yourself**

When real events are overdramatised, it's time for drama to get real. *tiva* (Zee) has been dealing in realism longer than most. Currently, it explores the virtues of artificial insemination. Spare a cheer for *Rihaae* (Sony), too. It got so realistic, we were treated to the sight of a woman's face after it had been sprayed with acid. What's encouraging about the series is that it mirrors real crimes against women yet manages to convey the impression of artistic invention so that you are involved in the drama more than the incident, largely due to the main protagonists who have defining characteristics that lend them individuality. Good going. *Indian Idol* (Sony) was

great fun while it lasted but the grand finale was too much of a good thing. Finalists Abhijeet and Amit were made to sing for their supper—repeatedly. To no one's surprise, Abhijeet won. If only Amit had sat on his hair. *Idol* was a sociological phenomenon: the first time Abhijeet and Amit made our acquaintance, they were just regular lads; by last Saturday they were unrecognisable. That's what TV can do: rob you of yourself.

Like its name, the comedy *LOC* (Star Plus) is totally out of control. Telecast to coincide with the Indo-Pak cricket series, it's an insult to everything comic. What possessed the producers of the wonderful *Office Office* to attempt such nonsense? In an English restaurant, the history of India and Pakistan is being (re)written by the Indian cook and Pakistani headwaiter. Atrocious idea: the jokes about Pakistanis and Indians are tasteless and to enact the Partition of the subcontinent over a breast of *tandoori* chicken is childish. Whoever thought they could dish out Indo-Pak relations in such a way is a very poor cook. Remind us never to eat at this restaurant.