

Long Live National Unity Congress

– Basanta

Preamble

The National Unity Congress of the Revolutionary Communist Party of Nepal that was inaugurated on November 28, 2024 concluded on December 8. It was not like a regular Congress of a certain party, but a Congress held after the unification of the Communist Party of Nepal (Mashal) and the Revolutionary Communist Party of Nepal, which was formed, one year earlier, of the unity between the CPN (Revolutionary Maoist) and the CPN (Bahumat). So, this Congress was, in essence, a unity Congress between the parties divided into three different streams. These three communist parties' common concern was a proletarian revolution, but had serious differences in some important theoretical questions. In the context of the Nepalese communist parties that used to split due to minor tactical differences in the past, the question of how long this unity between the three parties with different working styles and practicing separate lines for years, would last was smouldering among the people. Some people even launched a campaign to break this unity. Having digested all these challenges, Congress has adopted a revolutionary line and constituted a united party as an alternative revolutionary party of the country. This unity based on struggle was possible due to the positive understanding of the leaders involved in the unity process.

At the time of unity with CPN (Mashal), there were mainly three ideological and political differences in the party. They were Maoism, or Mao thought, federalism with the theoretical acceptance of the right to self-determination, or national and regional autonomy, and a review of the people's war. Apart from these major issues, there was no common position in the party on what the program of the Nepalese revolution should be, new democracy or scientific socialism, and how to understand the interrelationship between them. Focusing on the above three main issues, the party held an open debate before the congress, studied the socio-economic condition of the country and sorted out the character of the revolution. Apart from these, there were many questions, suggestions, and criticisms within the party regarding the different understandings of some other issues. Overcoming all these problems and building a unified party was like chewing on an iron flake for this Congress.

Investigation of the socio-economic condition

The party formed a five-member investigation team under the leadership of Comrade Sitaram Tamang and four other headquarters members and carried out an investigation in 22 different districts of the country with diverse characteristics to analyse the socio-economic condition of the country. The report submitted by the team has concluded that the socio-economic condition of the country is neo-colonial with semi-feudal and semi-colonial characteristics. Besides, the report has suggested that though the neocolonial condition has led to a significant development of comprador and bureaucratic capitalism in Nepal, it is necessary to pass through a step of the new democratic revolution before entering scientific socialism, because the feudal relations of production continue in Nepal, and scientific socialism cannot be built on the base of comprador and bureaucratic capitalism developed under the grip of imperialism. This report was helpful in developing a unified understanding in the party on whether it is a new democracy or scientific socialism appropriate programme for Nepal and the interrelationship between them. It is an important achievement in developing the party's political line.

Document writing and debate

The party carried out document writing, discussion, and debate in a new way in this Congress. The practice of sending documents from the party centre as those of the majority and minority in the past was changed in this Congress. The documents were sent down as the personal positions of individual leaders, not those of the minority and majority. This meant no delegates to Congress had to debate under the emotional push of the majority and the minority. The entire delegation was free to agree or disagree with the views of a certain leader. This practice developed such a situation that they could confidently debate based on their understanding of the line struggle and not under any emotional influence of the majority or minority. This is probably the first practice in the history of the Nepalese communist movement.

Sixteen official documents were presented for discussion on behalf of headquarters members in this Congress. In addition, various supplementary proposals, including dissenting opinions, criticisms, and suggestions put forward by comrades working in different committees, including the party secretariat level, were published, and extensive discussions were held within the party. A heated debate took place on all these documents in the party, including the Congress Hall. This type of debate created an environment among the delegates to positively accept the arguments of comrades with different views and to review their past. This is a very positive aspect of this Congress.

Adoption of documents

After the debate, the process of finalizing the party's main draft proposals began. No one disagreed with the main trend of the draft documents named the political report; party's policy and program; military line; party constitution; review of the international communist movement and the Nepalese communist movement; organization; science, technology and Marxism; climate change; and religion and culture. These draft documents were adopted with minor amendments, incorporating suggestions from the supplementary proposals and those of the delegates present at the Congress. There was no unanimous position on the main trends of the drafts on state restructuring, Maoism, and the review of the people's war. These issues became the subjects of further discussion.

Management of dissent

The three questions on which no unity could be reached were not the ones that hinder the execution of the party's plans of action. State restructuring is a policy that will be implemented after the revolution in Nepal is accomplished. When the party's military line has been determined as the mass struggle, resistance struggle, and armed people's insurrection, the reviewing of the people's war is not an issue that will prevent the party from waging struggles in compliance with the present military line. Likewise, our party does not have any difference in grasping Mao's contributions as universal, and there is no dispute on creatively applying those contributions in the specific context of Nepal; on the other hand, in the context of Nepal, those who call themselves Maoists have transformed into reactionary forces, and those who follow Mao thought have turned revolutionary. Hence this issue needs to be viewed with new eyes and not old ones. In this sense, the unity Congress has concluded that among the above three issues, state restructuring and the debate on Maoism or Mao thought can be taken even outside and that the debate on the review of the people's war would be correct to take inside the party. Congress has agreed to debate these questions but it has been decided that the party's official line position will be federalism with theoretical acceptance of the right to self-determination, and Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and the Great People's War, as stated in the draft documents.

At first sight, this conclusion seems to be an eclectic one. But it is not so. Rather than making hasty decisions by voting on theoretical issues that do not hinder immediate implementation, the correct approach is to achieve a higher level of unity undergoing debate and discussion for some time. This is why Lenin talked about freedom of expression and unity in action. What needs special attention here is that no such debate can be held on policies under implementation. If that is done, the party will become a debating club and gradually move towards dissolution. Thus, the decision to openly discuss Maoism and federalism which do not hinder the immediate implementation of the party decision adopted in the Congress is correct. Such debates help parties to strengthen and consolidate further by creating unity in understanding the dissenting issues.

Unity and struggle of opposites

Although there is unity on the basic questions of the Communist Party, it is not that there is always unity within the party on all issues. It is true for our party also. Everyone's way of thinking is different, and it is influenced by the external environment. The characters and tendencies keep changing, and yesterday's unity does not continue today, and today's unity will not exist tomorrow. The struggle between characters and their tendencies goes on ceaselessly. That is why unity in the Communist Party is relative and struggle is absolute. However, instead of seeking unity in the party through struggle, a monolithic trend that seeks to find unity only among those who have a common position on all issues or through compromise dominates the party leaders owing to the constant interference of the peasant and petty bourgeois mentality in them. As a result, this tendency leads to

the formation of factions that weaken the ideological and political unity of the party, and the conflict between the opposing interest groups becomes more important than the struggle for the sake of unity at the higher level. It has been a great disease for the communist movement. Only by defeating such tendencies can a party be built by truly uniting the opposites. The sooner we defeat the monolithic and factional mentality, the sooner we can build a genuine revolutionary party based on the unity of opposites. Its positive signs have started appearing in the Congress. The party needs to pay special attention to developing this further.

Unity-struggle-transformation and new unity on a new basis

This Congress had an intense ideological struggle between the three streams and various tendencies existing within them. The objective of the struggle was positive transformation and new unity on a new basis. The ideological and political unity that the party has achieved in this Congress is not an absolute unity attained after the complete transformation. Both transformation and unity are relative. One-time transformation is not enough, and unity also is like this. The unity-struggle transformation and new unity on a new basis is a recurring process in the party. This process goes up and up spirally. Amid this process, the inter-party two-line struggle gradually weakens, and ultimately the party itself withers away with the attainment of communism. This is the process of class, class struggle, party, two-line struggle, class dictatorship, and ultimately the withering away of the state power in the classless society.

The intra-party unity developed in this Congress is the result of transformation to some extent, some consensus, and some realisation of the need for unity. This unity is not the final one; it is only the first step towards ideological unity among revolutionaries in today's context. Stepping at this unity, the party should systematise further the ideological and political struggle and lay special emphasis on unity-struggle and transformation and a higher level of unity. This is how the former group mentality vanishes and new unity develops in the party.

Limitations and weaknesses

There were many limitations and weaknesses in various aspects, including the timing of the Congress, its management, and allotting sufficient time for debates and discussions. Though important, they were secondary aspects. Our major limitation was in organization building. While we could solve the ideological and political problems positively, we could not solve the organizational problems in the same proportion. The party's Central Committee should have been small, agile and active, but that did not happen. The former group mentality did not let us be free to prepare a panel list for the central committee members in an unbiased way. In the coming days, we must emphasize correcting this weakness and electing a relatively small and active central team formed of revolutionary cadres.

Conclusion

As the quote “the correctness or incorrectness of the ideological and political line decides everything” means, we have made this Congress a grand success by developing a correct line. This is our main aspect. By breaking the tradition of splitting the party no later than a minor difference emerges in the tactical line yesterday, we have moved forward today by protecting party unity even when we had big differences in important theoretical issues. This is our ideological success. Stepping at this success, we must emphasize going ahead as a unified party by breaking the boundaries seen in the field of organization yesterday. This Congress has accumulated considerable subjective strength to raise the Nepalese revolution to a new height. If we move forward by abandoning old prejudices, we will be able to take the revolution to a new height in a short time. This is where the success of the National Unity Congress will be expressed.

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