

90 YEARS LATER

1921 to 2011. A long journey indeed! The 90th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China (CPC) was a great event for the Chinese to assert China's prominence in global theatre. Also, it was an occasion for CPC stalwarts to take stock of what they call communist legacy and their success story since 1949 when revolution triumphed. In 1921 the CPC was born in the process of integrating marxism-leninism in a backward Asian country. In reality the Revolution of 1911 led by Sun Yet-sen, that ended the autocratic rule, created an atmosphere conducive to the emergence of progressive and advanced ideology. While addressing a huge gathering in Beijing on July 1 (the foundation day of CPC) this year Chinese President Hu Jintao, also General Secretary of the Communist Party of China, Central Committee, elaborated how China with a population of 1.3 billion, succeeded in building a moderately prosperous society in all respects. They call it socialism with Chinese characteristics. The 'Chinese characteristics' syndrome is a unique ploy to hide capitalist restoration in China. In his mammoth speech Hu divided the glorious 90 years of CPC into three phases—first phase with Mao Zedong at the core, 2nd phase with Deng Xiaoping at the core and the 3rd phase with Jiang Zemin at the core. Though, Mao was recalled many a time but he may become a footnote in history in due season, it was Deng who got special attention and Jiang Zemin as well because under the latter's leadership they see eye to eye with the USA.

No doubt China under CPC steered the country through a planned economy operating under trade blockades from 1949 to 1978, but ushered in a market economy under Deng's banner of reform and opening-up policy that took place immediately afterwards. For all practical purposes the CPC perfected itself from a revolutionary party to a ruling party, paving the way for class differentiation in a major way which was unthinkable in the fifties. The capitalist reform and opening-up drive, the implementation of a market-oriented economy—or what they euphemistically call market socialism—and recent acceptance of some western theories and practices concerning capitalist management and culture and allowing anti-communists, capitalists to be precise, to join CPC, have all reflected glaring changes in CPC itself, many of which might not be on the agenda of Deng when he turned everything upside down.

True, membership of CPC has expanded from a band of fewer than 100 to the tens of million today. Official statistics is fascinating by any standard. The party has 77.995 million members—larger than the total population of France—by the end of 2009 and 23.7 percent of them are 35 years of age. It is quite natural for a system of one-party rule, rather dictatorship. Even rabidly anti-communist forces have nowhere else to go, so they are joining CPC while hoping, not against hope, to transform it radically from within to their advantage.

They restricted Mao to semi-colonial, semi-feudal China and certainly he was no danger to the reformers who were more interested in focusing China's dazzling economic and scientific development which they attributed to Deng.

Not for nothing the Chinese media, otherwise strictly controlled by the CPC, utilised the platform to highlight extensively the achievements in Tibet. Incidentally the 90th anniversary of CPC also coincided with the 60th anniversary of the 'peaceful liberation' of Tibet. Tibetans living in exile know it better how peaceful and painless the so-called liberation was. This liberation (or occupation as Tibetans in exile would like to call it) ended Tibet's age-old semi-independent status and allowed Han domination in every sphere of Tibetan life. Though the Dalai Lama and his people continue to agitate, in their own way of course, against systematic curtailment of Tibet's religious freedom and culture, the Chinese on the other hand maintain that Tibetan people only with adequate food and clothing which the Beijing government has ensured, in any case, could exercise 'genuine' religious freedom. Also, they didn't forget

to inform the world in the wake of the 90th anniversary of CPC how 1,700 monasteries accommodating about 46,000 monks and nuns were literally living in a paradise.

The leaders of CPC were eloquent and quite justifiably, about international support they got from different countries but conspicuously they failed to mention the name of India though India was among many nations that recognised New China under CPC without hesitation right from the beginning and fervently supported their legitimate place in the UN.

It was principally a function of the party—to mark the 90th anniversary of the founding of the CPC—they just avoided the fall-out of a decade-long great debate between the CPC and the Soviet Party, in the international communist movement. They are no longer enthusiastic in opening that chapter of communist history as it may be suicidal on theoretical plane for their hybrid socialism.

At the eighth National Congress of the CPC held in 1956, the first national Congress after the Party came to power, 56 fraternal communist parties and workers' parties attended the meet. And in 1959 at the 10th anniversary of the founding of New China, 61 communist parties and workers' parties sent delegations. Those were the days of Great Debate and the oppressed around the world were pinning too much hope on the possibility of CPC's vanguard role in international communist movement. No, that didn't happen. In truth their silent and calculated withdrawal from the international arena caused severe reversals in communist movement in many third world countries, particularly in Asia.

Today interaction between international and domestic circumstances guide the CPC's overseas exchanges between parties and governments which they say are constantly expanding, developing and deepening, much to the dismay of the broad spectrum of communist tendencies across the globe. Even the Bharatiya Janata Party, a rightist party, politically dependent on obscure religious fundamentalism, gets invitation from CPC to grace eventful ceremonies in China.

But their market socialism as it is with double digit growth euphoria, cannot sustain itself without aggressively exploring global markets. Of late China's foreign direct investment in developing countries is increasing in geometric progression. The former Soviet Union became a rival of America from the very day of its inception in ideological and economic spheres. Now China under the dictatorship of CPC poses a threat to American hegemony in global business and they are doing all this ludicrously though, through their 'socialist' brand. That was precisely the message from the rostrum dedicated to mark the 90th anniversary of the founding of CPC. □□□