A Study on Socio-Cultural Democratic Ideas of Netaji Sobhas Chandra Bose

Ranjit Bordoloi

Associate. Prof. of Political Science, Dhing College

Abstract

In this article I would like to explore about Indian freedom fighter Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and his *distinct architect* of the Indian Democracy for future free society. Indian *political culture* has deep roots in pre-colonial history, however it is also a product of Western-style democracy, which has shaped and even created the nation. Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose had put forward a blue-print of the future for India in his famous Haripura Address as president of the Indian National Congress in February 1938. In the Haripura Congress Meeting Subhas Chandra Bose as the president spelt out the fundamental rights of the people of India – rights that every citizen of India would enjoy once India was free of British rule. He had set out a plan for reconstruction by eradicate poverty, granting freedom of expression, association, assemble, conscience, freely to profess and practice religion, culture, language; and equal before the law, irrespective of caste, religion, or sex. He explained the importance of India's foreign relations developing by *cultural organizations* and Indian chambers of commerce to raise India's profile across the globe. During British Colonial rule, he was thinking of democracy as the political framework for free India. According to him, "democracy by no means a western institution; it is a human institution. Wherever man has attempted to develop political institutions, he has hit upon this wonderful institution of democracy. Again the early history of India is replete with instances of democratic institutions." Again when he went to say, "among the Khasis as well as numbers of tribes in Assam, for it is still the custom to select the *ruling chief* by a vote of the whole clan; and this custom has been handed down from time immemorial. The principle of democracy was also practical in India, in the government of villages and towns." During crisis of democracy in many part of the globe we need to remind ourselves of the faith that Netaji placed in Democracy. Netaji designed Democracy by multiparty system also in place of one-party state, an electoral system that allows voting express in secure and transparent way, well-functioning legislature and independent judiciary and finally we need an effective checks and balances among the same.

Key Words: Social, Cultural, Architecture, Democracy, Bose

Introduction:

India as a nation is very old and her political, *culture and traditions* has deep roots in pre-colonial period however, she eventually a product of Western-style democracy which has to make into particular form and developed. India's democratic idea emerged as a part of anti-colonial

struggle which claimed that colonial rule was violation of the principle of self-determination and claimed democratic right to self-rule. Subhas Chandra Bose, is an excellent charismatic leader of the Indian National Movement, a great leader and legendary figure who was influenced by Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, Aurobindo Ghose, Lenin etc. and impact of American war of Independence, Liberation Struggle in Czechoslovakia and Irish struggle for freedom. Bose developed his ethical approach to life based on sacrifice, renunciation and self-rejection which is in a way the core of social as well as cultural democratic way of life. Again his ethical and spiritual ideals of political philosophy is based on *Indian culture*, generosity, kindness, patience, tolerance, cooperation and sympathy, the very ingredients of democracy.

Subhas Chandra Bose explained and deep believed in *freedom* of thought and action also in larger social cultural context. His most famous quote is "Give me Blood and I will give you freedom". As Spencer's theory he too expressed 'He is free to think and act so long as he does not infringe on the equal freedom of any other individual', he also claimed that "nobody has really the right to interfere in anybody else's individual philosophy of life or speak or express against it but.. the basis of that philosophy has got to be sincere." Later in changing form of freedom he expressed that the concept of human freedom has changed i.e. in ancient times, by freedom people of India meant *spiritual freedom* which was included freedom from political and social slavery. He given emphasized on individual is dignity, and identity did never allow him to accept the toleration doctrine where State is the master, the individual the servant. In democratic state he meant a *State*; it will work as an organ or as the servant of the common peoples i.e. the *servant* of the people.

Influence by Swami Vivekananda, Bose used to say that India's progress shall be achieved only by the peasant, the washer man, the cobbler and sweeper. The theory of democracy expresses on the common individual as the agent of changes, evolution and progress and recognizes potentiality of the individual to participate in the political process. He believed that like Brahmana, Ksatriya and Vaisya the Sudras, the poor and down-trodden classes should be come up and be a significant agent of our development. Subhas Chandra Bose therefore, his Political idea can be categorized from spiritualistic, nationalistic, secularistic, democratic and socialistic characteristics.

Review of Literature:

On 19th October 1929 while delivering the presidential address at Punjab Students Conference held at Lahoren Netaji had claimed that by freedom implies not only emancipation from political bondage but also equal distribution of wealth, the abolition of caste barriers and social inequalities (A. Gopalan, 2016). The political foundation of a democratic philosophy is the supremacy of the people as a source of authority (R.C. Roy, 2004). Netaji's deep concern for spirit of unity in India made him understand the situation of excluded North East region in the late 1930. He felt that Northeast region has an important geographical boundary with neighbouring countries and plays a significant role in unifying India (A. Niumai, 2022).

Methodology:

This piece of study basically is to be historical as well as analytical one. The data of this research work is to be used primary and secondary sources including books, journals, newspaper etc.

Objective of the Study:

The objective of the piece of research is proposed to endeavor and highlight the social and cultural democratic idea of Subhas Chandra Bose, the freedom fighter of India. In this study I would also like to focus on his political philosophy, economic reconstruction of India and why the North East Indian should remembered him as a great and secular leader.

Subhas Chandra Bose & his Biography:

Subhas Chndra Bose, by name Netaji a revolutionary prominent in the independence movement against British rule of India was born in January 23, 1897, Cuttack Odisha, India and died

August 18, 1945. He was born into wealth and privilege in a Bengali family during British Raj and studied at Prsidency College, Kolkata and expelled in 1916 for nationalist activities. However, he was sent to the University of Cambridge to prepare for Indian Civil Service and cleared civil service examination in 1920. Bose joined the Noncooperation Movement a powerful nonviolent organization led by Mohandas K. Gandhi. During the Civil disobedience movement Bose was in detention for his associations with an undergoing revolutionary group, the Bengal Volunteers. Nevertheless, Bose was elected mayor of Kolkata while in prison. He condemned Gandhi's conservative economics toward independence. Subhas Chandra Bose was elected as President of Indian National Congress and formed a National Planning Committee in support of big industrialization policy. However, the 'rebel president' felt bound to resign on ground of lack Gandhi's support. Later he founded the Forward Bloc with radical elements, but regain imprisoned in July 1940. In January 26, 1941, though closely watched, he escaped from his Kolkata residence in disguise and traveling via Kabul and Moscow, in the end reached Germany in April.

Bose and Nazi Germany:

The central design which motivated Bose was explore all practicable means for achieving the cherished goal of India's independence. It looks that he had adopted the concept that the 'enemy's enemy is your friend' therefore he looked at Nazi Germany solely from that perspective. It followed the approach taken by Indian revolutionaries towards German during World War I. However, the Germany of the II World War was very different, even with respect to India. After the defeat of Germany in the World War I, the ambition of Germany was to bring about a global redistribution of colonies with the goal of establishing German supremacy on the world stage. In regard to India, a plan was conceived to form an 'Afghan Army' to invade India after the possible defeat of the Soviet Union in order to snatch 'the jewel of the British Empire'. The idea of India's independence was nowhere in German strategic consideration. As a matter of fact, Germany had a long standing acquisitive eye towards India and sympathy and support for India's struggle for independence.

Netaji was submitted a draft proposal on April 9, 1941 with (i) the Axis powers would sign a treaty with 'Free India Government in Exile' guaranteeing India's independence from British rule once the war was won; (ii) the Indian Army would consist of 50,000 soldiers of Indian origin and (iii) after liberating India, Germany would hand over responsibility to the Government in Exile headed by Netaji himself. He also prepared and sent a draft declaration of India's independence to the German authorities on May 13, 1941 and wanted it published. India would themselves decide on future constitution, a liberated and Germany would accept this absolute right.

Social and Cultural Democracy:

Subhas Chandra Bose being a *Secularist*, had an attitude of impartiality towards all *religions* and *culture*. To him, free India must have an absolutely neutral and impartial attitude towards all religious faith and *cultural expression*. Bose was of deep opinion that economic issues cut across communal divisions and barriers. The problems like poverty and unemployment, of illiteracy and of taxation and indebtedness affected the Hindus and Muslims and other sections of the people as a whole. He was also firmed believed that Hindu, Muslim and Sikh soldiers in the Indian National Army were made to realize that they were sons of the same soil. Bose stated in his autobiography, "In fact I cannot remember even to have looked upon Muslims as different from ourselves in any way except that they go to pray in Mosque." In public meeting he expressed and advocated emphatically the *abolition of caste* system and supported intercaste marriage in India. As a political mentor and socialist he imbibed the ideals of women education and emancipation. He has given a very elevated position to the women in a family and society. Bose again proposed in the free India, there must not be any discrimination on ground of caste, race, sex, wealth and place of birth.

Political Philosophy:

Political philosophy of Subhas Chandra Bose can be categorized from *spiritualistic*, secular, democratic and socialistic point of views. As a spiritualist he was influenced from many religious reformer and social activists across India. He was more idealistic as well as spiritualistic to state, "I had a new ideal before me now which had influenced my soul to affect my own salvation and to serve humanity by desert all worldly desires and breaking away from all undue restraints." Meditation, sex control, Brahmacharya, welfare and uplift of humanity were his primary concern.

Bose was very loyal of *Swadeshi*. Aurobindo's synthesis of spiritualism and *nationality* had immense impact on him. In order to supplement the freedom movement from outside India he even approached Nazi and Fascist powers to enlist their support. He proceed that *Secularism* is not anti-religious but tolerance of each other's faith, mutual understanding, peaceful co-existence and accommodation. To him secularism originated from faith in a philosophy of synthesis of Indian culture and civilization.

In his free India, Subhas Chandra Bose had the aim of constructing an *egalitarian* society i.e. principle of all people are equal based on deserve equal rights and opportunity, economic benefits and social status without any distinction on grounds of caste, creed, and birth. Freedom he implies not only *emancipation* from political slave but equal distribution of wealth, abolition of caste and social inequalities. As a true Socialist, he wanted emancipation of all type slaves. While stating the objectives of *Samyabadi Sangha* visualized by him, and again said that, "The party stands for the interest groups of the masses that are of peasant's workers etc. and not for the interests that is the landlords, capitalists and money lending classes." Stating to *democracy* Bose finally emphasized on individual is dignity, and democracy should work as an organ or as the servant of the common peoples i.e. state is the servant of the people.

Economic Idea:

Another important idea of Subhas Chandra Bose is suggested to be set up a Commission for drawing up a *comprehensive plan* of reconstruction of free India. He spoke about the abolition of landlordism and liquidation of agricultural indebtedness. For rapid industrialization he was with Jawaharlal Nehru and constituted a Planning Commission however, later he was too with Mahatma Gandhi who also not favour of big industrialization in India. He claimed that liberty broadly signifies political, economic and social freedom. But economic freedom was the basic of social and political freedom. According to him maximum poverty, high level of unemployment and low standard of living were due to the foreign domination. Bose again said, "The problem of giving bread to our starving millions-the problem of clothing and education them-the problem of improving the health of the nation-all these problems cannot be solved so long as India remains in slave. To think of economic improvement and industrial development before India is free; politically is to put the cart before the horse."

Conclusion and Remembered in North East India:

Subhas Chandra Bose along with other leaders of was one of the nationalist leader who visited North East India, Golukganj, Guwahati Assam 1938. Birth anniversary celebration to construction statue, parks are offered honour in his name and memory. He brought the attention on the North East region in the Indian national movement. The government of Manipur constructed the Subhas Chandra Bose Memorial Museum and his statue at Moirang town in Manipur, where some of the arte facts of Indian National Army are well preserved. Bose INA aka Azad Hind Fauj reached North East India particularly Kohima in Nagaland on 18th March 1944, just before the famous "battle of Kohima". In the end, he changes position to Manipur from Kohima with his INA troop. However, not only his visit to North East India, but his vision and mission to free India from the British rule including his strategy to include all tribes and communities from North East India to India attracted some people of North East to join his INA.

We the students of social sciences and humanities remembered him for his political, economic and cultural ideas and reform during independence India. While Subhas Chandra Bose came and got experienced to Northeast India he claimed that among the Khasis as well as numbers of tribes in Assam, for it is still the custom to select the ruling chief by a vote of the whole clan; and this custom has been handed down from time immemorial. To him the principle of democracy was also practical in India, in the government of villages and towns also. During crisis of democracy in many part of the globe we need to remind ourselves of the faith that Netaji placed in Democracy.

References:

1. Bose. Sisir Kumar, ed. (1973): A Beacon Across Asia, A Biography of Subhas Chandra Bose. Orient Longmens, New Delhi

2. Bose. Subhas Chandra, (1981): Netaji's Collected Works Vol. II (The Indian Struggle 1920-1942), Netaji Research Bureau Calcutta

3. Chattopadhyay, (1989): Subhas Chandra Bose: Man and Mission and Means, Minerva Associates Pvt. Ltd. Calcutta

4. Majumdar. Sisir K.; Subhas Chandra Bose in Nazi Germany, 'South Asia Forum Quaterly', Vol. 10, No. 1, 1997, Chery Chase, Maryland

5. Niumai. Ajailiu, (2022): Subhas Chandra Bose: Remembered in North East India, Mainstream, VOL LX No 6, New Delhi

6. Patil. V.S., (1988), Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose- His Contribution to Indian Nationalism, Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd,, New Delhi

7. Roy. R.C., January- 2004 "Orissa Review"

8. Sahoo. Sudhir Charan., (1997): Subhas Chandra Bose: Political Philosophy, APH Publishing Corporation New Delhi