

**Speech of Shri Rahul Gandhi at the 82nd Plenary Session at Hyderabad  
22nd & 23rd January 2006**

Shri Rahul Gandhi participating in the discussion at the 82nd Plenary Session said he was participating in such sessions for the first time. He said he wanted to hear the senior leaders in this session to learn things. But members have expressed their desire to hear him that is why he was standing before them.

Referring to the Political Resolution he said that discussion was going on about the present day political situation. He wanted to raise a very important matter from the Political Resolution. That subject is wherever Congress is weak it is necessary to strengthen the Congress in those areas. Congress was the strong base in Uttar Pradesh. The organization used to derive the inspiration from that. It is therefore, a question that the place where the Congress was the strongest how that has become the weak point today.

The text of his speech is quoted below :

श्री राहुल गांधी : भाइयो और बहिनो, नमस्कार। हैदराबाद जैसे सुंदर शहर में इस ऐतिहासिक सेशन में भाग लेते हुए मुझे खास गर्व हो रहा है। आंध्र प्रदेश की जनता ने हमेशा मेरे परिवार के प्रति प्रेम, निष्ठा और अटूट समर्थन दिखाया है, इसके लिए मैं सदा आभारी रहूंगा। मैं पहली बार ऐसे सम्मेलन में भाग ले रहा हूँ।

मैंने मन में तय किया था कि इस अधिवेशन में अपने से अनुभवी और वरिष्ठ नेतागण के विचार सुनूंगा और उनसे कुछ सीखूंगा। परंतु आप सब ने मेरे विचारों को सुनने की इच्छा व्यक्त की, इसलिए मैं सिर्फ एकाध मुद्दा उठाना चाहता हूँ। जो राजनीतिक प्रस्ताव पेश किये गये हैं, उसमें आज की राजनीतिक स्थिति पर चर्चा हो रही है। इन मुद्दों पर मेरे अन्य बुद्धिमान और अनुभवी एआईसीसी के साथी विचार रखेंगे। मैं रेजोल्यूशन में उठाये गये सिर्फ एक महत्वपूर्ण विषय पर अपनी बात करना चाहता हूँ। यह है जहां कांग्रेस कमजोर है, वहां कांग्रेस को दुबारा ऊपर उठाने की और मजबूत करने की जरूरत है। भारत का उत्तर प्रदेश हमेशा कांग्रेस का मजबूत गढ़ होता था, हमारे संगठन को ज्यादातर वहां से प्रेरणा मिली, वहां से उसे मजबूती मिली, वहीं से वह विकसित हुआ।

तब यह प्रश्न उठता है कि जो हमारी सब से बड़े मजबूती थी वह आज हमारी कमजोरी कैसे बन गई? यहां मौजूद एक-एक व्यक्ति इस देश की जनता का ऋणी है। अगर हम आज यहां खड़े हैं तो यह मौका हमें देश की जनता ने दिया है, देश के हर नागरिक ने दिया है। इज्जत से जीने का हक हर नागरिक को है, परंतु अक्सर उन्हें यह मौका मिल नहीं पाता। कांग्रेस पार्टी ही एक ऐसा संगठन है जो भारत की जनता की है, जो भारत की जनता के लिये है। हमारा संगठन ही मौका दिलाने में मदद कर सकता है। लेकिन अब हमारे सामने एक चीज साफ हो चुकी है कि कुछ राज्यों में हमारा संगठन प्रभावी तरीके से काम नहीं कर रहा है। कुछ लोग इस असफलता के लिए कई कारण निकालते हैं। वे जाति और धर्म के नाम पर क्षेत्रीय पार्टियों को इसके लिए जिम्मेदार ठहराते हैं। मैं इससे बिलकुल सहमत नहीं हूँ।

मेरा विचार यह है कि हम उन्हीं क्षेत्रों में असफल हैं, उन्हीं क्षेत्रों में असफल हुए हैं जहां हमने लोगों की जरूरतों और उनकी तकलीफों के लिए संघर्ष करना बंद कर दिया था। हम इसलिए कमजोर हुए क्योंकि हम लोगों की आशाओं पर खरे नहीं उतरे। हम इसलिए असफल रहे क्योंकि

हम अपनी उस काबलीयत को खो चुके थे जिससे हम अपनी पार्टी के सच्चे कार्यकर्ताओं को आगे बढ़ायें। अब मैं थोड़े शब्द अंग्रेजी में बोलूंगा।

There are a large number of true grassroots leaders and workers in our Party. You know the difference between a true leader and a 'Neta'. You are the first to know that leadership cannot be created, it has to be built slowly brick by brick. There is no fast path to success in creating leaders.

I believe, looking into the future, our Party has a huge opportunity. We have this opportunity because we have three strengths. The first strength is our experience. We have a capable and experienced senior leadership; Team. They brought us to power and is serving our country and our Party.

We have Manmohan Singh ji, our Prime Minister and Sonia Gandhi ji, our President - the President of our Party who make us proud. Our second strength is our grassroots worker. That man and woman in every village and Mohalla, whom we often ignored at times this person, who fights our battles in the field, who carries our Flag, who takes the lathis from the Opposition. He is the backbone of our Party. Our third strength is our youth.

Today, we are the oldest Party in India, but we are also the youngest. Out of all the political Parties today, we have the largest number of young leaders; out of all the political parties today, young are looking towards us. Out of all the political parties today, we have the youngest and the most modern thinking. We must embrace the young of our country; we must use this organisation of ours to unleash the immense energy to build a better India.

With due respect I would like to make two appeals. Let us truly listen to the wisdom of our great people. Let us understand their concerns and aspirations; let us become leader by listening, by learning and working rather than through posts and positions.

To our leaders, I humbly want to say, we are your soldiers.

Provide us with the task you want us to fulfil, identify and reward our success. Open the doors of the Congress Party to the thousands, to the millions of Indians who believe in our ideology and are struggling to make this country great, but most importantly recognise the anonymous mass of workers, who fight our battles, who carry our Flag and give them a voice in our organisation. The Congress Party and the India people have a glorious history together. We struggled together for our freedom; we strived together to become self-reliant in food production. Together, we build India's bridge into the 21st century. We have new challenges to overcome, new dreams to fulfill, new examples to set, and a new reality to shape. Let us cement the Congress Party's unique partnership of youth and wisdom and make it unbeatable. Thank you.

I have one last thing to say. Someone once asked me; what my religion was? I thought about it and I answered that the Indian Flag was my religion. I promised myself after my father died that I would serve the people, this Flag represents, by taking up a job, before I know what our workers and people feel and need. I would be doing a disservice both to my religion and to my Party.

My place right now is among our people; my place right now is to learn and understand so that I can serve my people and my Party better. I appreciate and I am grateful to you for your feelings and support. I assure you, I will not let you down. Thank you.