



## All India Peace and Solidarity Organisation

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### Condemn the Assault on ideas

The All India Peace and Solidarity Organisation (AIPSO) is deeply anguished over the growing signs of intolerance and hate which is raging across the country. The latest expressions of such depraved outlook manifest through the violence to the statues of historic personalities who have contributed significantly in the realm of thought and ideas. Clash of ideas finding their way in the form of intellectual battles and the consequent pluralism has been the recurrent feature of our civilisational past. It is a running thread right from ancient days including the Vedic age leading to remarkable resilience to assimilate diverse ideas and alien civilisational values shaping a syncretic whole and a composite culture.

Over the years, the defining feature of a journey towards absolutism has been the destruction of reason and thought. In that sense, what is playing out in India currently is no different, under the present Hindutwa dispensation of ultra nationalists. It has got nothing to do with religion per se ; but veers around to create a nationhood based on an exclusive religious identity and redefine our Nation –State based on the idea of ‘unity through diversity ‘. The secular democratic Indian Republic founded in the aftermath of independence through the adoption of our Constitution which embraced our civilisational past and the lessons of our freedom struggle.

It, therefore, does not come as a surprise that those who have launched these assaults on the statues of Lenin, Ambedkar and Periyar are precisely those whose legacy did not have the remotest of connection with either our freedom struggle or the secular democratic Republican Constitution that we embraced.

Lenin’s statue which was the first to be vandalized by these forces not only led the Russian people to overthrow the Tsar’s rule for the successful socialist revolution and created the first working class led State , but also inspired nationalists and revolutionaries across the colonies , including India . Apart from the Communists, Lenin’s vision fired the imagination of Nehru, Netaji and Bhagat Singh.

The second one to be attacked was that of Periyar who took up the cudgels against Brahminist tirade against the socially downtrodden. Born in 1879, E V Ramasamy Periyar is remembered for the Self Respect Movement to redeem the identity and self-respect of Tamils. Periyar started his

political career as a Congress worker in his hometown Erode. He quarreled with Gandhi over the question of separate dining for Brahmin and non-Brahmin students at Gurukulam. After failing to bend the Congress to his view, Periyar resigned from the party in 1925, and associated himself with the Justice Party and the Self Respect Movement, which opposed the dominance of Brahmins in social life, especially the bureaucracy. The Justice Party had a decade earlier advocated reservation for non-Brahmins in the bureaucracy and, after coming to power in the Madras Presidency, issued an order to implement it. No wonder that Periyar would come under attack from the Hindutwa lot.

And last, but not the least, Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar; not only as the architect of our Republican Constitution, he continues to be the moving spirit of the contemporary Dalit awakening that we are witnessing on the Indian streets now. He stood rock solid for furthering the idea of social and economic equality and not just freedom, but equality religions. He was a lifelong crusader against the Brahminical myth that Hindutwa propagates that Hindus constitute a single integrated community.

Provoked by these attacks, certain misguided elements desecrated the statue of the Hindutwa icon. We are thoroughly opposed to such irresponsible behaviour and see such misadventure as contribution towards legitimizing of the Hindutwa offensive. Battle we will, but only in the realm of ideas.

Therefore, the AIPSO firmly believes that given our anti colonial legacy and anti imperialist war and solidarity roots that we have to join this battle against the attempts at destruction of reason and plurality of ideas to secure the future of India as a secular, democratic and just society. The AIPSO must redouble its resolve to join this battle of ideas as part of our objective to create a conflict free nation and world and to be in solidarity with all those who have come to face the aggressive against the idea of economic and social justice.

**Already many of our state units have observed birth anniversary of Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar and we hope that the forthcoming birth anniversary of V. I. Lenin on 22<sup>nd</sup> April will be observed in proper way in the background of growing attacks on all progressive ideas.**

With greetings,  
AIPSO Secretariat  
New Delhi