

Resolution adopted by the AIPSN
along with the
“Statement on Scientific Temper Declaration”
in the
“Campaign for scientific temper culmination program and National
convention for declaration on scientific temper”
held on 28th Feb 2024 at Kolkata

28 February 2024

Convinced that India that is Bharat grew for several centuries as Hindostan, and where the people of various religions chose to live together after becoming politically independent from the British Empire and experiencing the partition, is not a society of comparative and competitive religious fanaticism;

Certain that Hindostan is not the land of make-believe demands on Astha (the tradition of belief systems) alone, but that Hindostan is also the land of modern interpretations of religion;

Confident that Hindostan is the land of the rich tradition of syncretism (combining different traditions) and of seekers of the Universal Truths in religions, and that the people cherish civilizational heritage and celebrate the unity in diversity in food, dress and language on everyday basis;

Clear that Hindostan is the land where Nastiks and Astiks coexisted, materialistic philosophical traditions, for example, lokayata flourished, and the revolution of equality through Buddhism appealing to large sections of society took root, and where the traditions of rebellion and resistance grew through the teachings of Basava, Kabir, Nanak, Narayana Guru, Periyar and many more, promoted inclusiveness and syncretism of sufi and bhakti spiritual preachers;

Accepting that the people care for the legacy of the freedom movement, constitutional vision, national unity and integrity, and do not doubt that the majority is concerned about economic, ecological and social justice, and they

continue to think about fundamental rights and directive principles of state policy enshrined in the Indian Constitution;

Recognizing that the people as bearers of historical knowledge, skills and culture, and as social carriers of agro-food diversity, culinary heritage, dietary selections, continue to enjoy variegated range of food, health and fitness practices, and they would be willing to stand up once again against the bearers of sectarian politics trying to take away their economic, social and political freedoms;

Recalling that the contributions to modern science & technology made by J C Bose, M Visvesvaraya, P C Ray, C V Raman, M N Saha, P C Mahalanobis, S N Bose, S.S. Sokhey, SS Bhatnagar, Homi Bhabha, Vikram Sarabhai, Satish Dhawan and by many others who challenged the colonial order in S&T, and the perspective and strategy of Scientific Policy Resolution (SPR, 1958) which cherished self-reliance and, embraced scientific approach to policymaking, the scientific and technological communities would not let the people suffer unreason and eliminate the space for pluralism and diversity from the world of higher education, science, technology and humanities;

Persuaded that as the post-independent India's transformative impulses of self-reliance that accommodated the Gandhians, Nehruvians and Leftists to practice their own S&T heuristics for development in the parallel, gave a place to the ethos of scientific temper and humanism in the Indian Constitution, and in the National Curriculum Framework (2005) and in the Right to Education legislation (2008), the Indian S&T community and the people can be mobilized to defend these gains;

Knowing that the ecumenical (promoting unity among religions), cosmopolitan and modern traditions of scientific and technical practice have deep roots in India, the S&T community can be made to appreciate that the sources of ancient and medieval contributions to science involved multi-cultural interactions, and that the attempts to present mythology as history and fiction as science do not resonate well with the people, the vast majority of Indian people can be made to understand how the latest modern construction of the past traditions is to present an ideology that glosses over and hides the inequalities and exploitation based on caste, class, gender and community;

Recognising that as the people resisted Brahmanism and caste oppression in the ancient and medieval times, the latest attempts to cultivate and impose the irrational and unreasonable ideas on the Indian Women, Youth, Adivasis and Dalits can also be defeated among the people across North, South, East and West of India by mobilizing the people against the assault on scientific temper in the relevant spheres of school and higher education, scientific research and science popularisation;

Feeling alarmed at the Union Government's blatant unconstitutional attempts to impose on the states the National Education Policy (NEP, 2020), that has the potential to damage irreparably the national character and destroy the secular and democratic contributions of Indian education, the Peoples' Science Movements (PSMs) call upon the state governments to resist the efforts that sow the seeds of hatred and conformism deep into the mind of the young under the influence of the idea of Hindutava – a destructor of social progress and universal brotherhood/sisterhood, and rededicate themselves to developing quality education with public purposes of national importance

As PSMs,

We solemnly affirm our constitutional right to defend the integrity of Article 51 A(h), and to ensure that the investments in education, science, technology, humanities and arts are considerably enhanced and directed to work for the realization of the scientific temper/outlook¹, for the cultivation of linguistic and socio-cultural diversity, for the universally cherished message of love (*'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam'* – the world is one family') and for the secular and socialist idea of India and for the reduction of inequalities;

We will contribute to the movements seeking economic, social and ecological justice, and work for the dignified livelihood for the Indian people as a whole through education and research, commit to redouble our own efforts for the promotion of progressive anti-imperialist nationalism, and to strengthen the role and contribution of Indian S&T institutions in the processes of decision making and evaluation of the socio-economic policies under implementation;

¹ The term scientific temper is broadly defined as "a modest open-minded temper—a temper ever ready to welcome new light, new knowledge, new experiments, even when their results are unfavourable to preconceived opinions and long-cherished theories.

We continue with the work started by Dara Shikoh, Savitribai and Jyotri Phule, Ramabai, Rabindranath Tagore, Nehru, Mahatma Gandhi, Periyar, Bhim Rao Ambedkar, EMS Namboodripad, Ashfaqullah, Bhagat Singh, Subhas Bose, Meghnath Saha, S.S Bhatnagar, Homi Bhabha, S.S. Sokhey, Vikram Sarabhai Husain Zaheer and many others who stood their ground and established the edifice of post-independence period modern S&T institutions, and helped the people to realize the idea of India and the legacy of progressive traditions of the freedom movement;

Mobilize the scientific community to stand up for academic freedom, and actively collaborate with the democratic movement and civil society to defend civil liberties and democratic rights, freedom of expression, organization, representation and struggle through constitutional means, and expose and isolate the forces supporting the babas spreading fatalism and unreason,

Collaborate and work with the rationalists, scholars, academics, scientists, technologists, social scientists, teachers of humanities and sciences, and professionals about the way forward for the realization of the above stated goals of social progress, propose policies, build institutions and establish a standing mechanism to pursue the challenge of cultivation of scientific temper, humanism and world peace.

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