



**COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA (MARXIST)**  
**21<sup>st</sup> Congress**  
**Samar Mukherjee Nagar**  
**Visakhapatnam, April 14-19, 2015**

*Resolution*

On Culture And A Scientific Outlook

The 21st Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) resolves to protect, nurture and promote the arts and cultures of India in all their plurality and syncreticism. There has never been a monolithic “Indian” culture, much less a culture defined by only one religion. The plurality of cultures and their interface is what makes it “Indian.”

This plurality is under a concerted and vicious attack today, mainly from the Hindutva brigade. Hindutva now manifests itself in myriad forms. Hindutva forces peddle all sorts of anti-scientific ideas such as that of India having invented plastic surgery or even interplanetary travel in ancient times. They attempt to impose Taliban-like dress codes on women and indulge in vigilantism against various forms of sexual expression. They conduct aggressive moral policing against the simple expression of love by young people with an abusive campaign against “love jihad”. They violently oppose inter-religious and inter-caste marriage. They want to declare the Gita India’s “national book.” The recent ban on beef and campaigns against meat-eating are actually attacks on the lifestyles and culinary cultures of a large number of Indians, including Dalits, Tribals, Christians and Muslims. They force, through harassment and attacks, artists like M. F. Husain and Perumal Murugan into exile or silence. They vandalise auditoria for screening films that are even mildly critical of godmen. The campaign of “Ghar Vapsi” is a particularly vicious attempt to terrorise minorities. The killing of Narendra Dabholkar, a rationalist and progressive intellectual, and Govind Pansare, a veteran Communist and Left intellectual, show that the forces of unreason are willing to go to any length to silence voices of reason. It is a shame that there has not been any progress at all in either murder investigation.

In Pakistan and Bangladesh as well, fundamentalists have been brutal in their suppression of difference, dissent, and free thought. The brutal murders of Avijit Roy and Washiqur Rahman in Bangladesh are recent instances in point. Such retrograde fundamentalist and communal forces operating in the region mutually reinforce each other.

Hindutva forces are also using their position in government to compromise cultural and academic bodies by throwing out reputed and respected professionals and replacing them with cronies and ideologically-driven yes-men. The Hindutva hold on official bodies is being used to rewrite history and peddle unreason. Their idea is to mould future generations in their own twisted image. Most recently, there have also been reports of attempts to subvert the independent functioning of museums.

During the Indian Science Congress in Mumbai, a special symposium on science and technology in ancient India was converted into an unabashed propaganda session for Hindutva advocates. The proceedings showed that, far from highlighting important contributions in ancient India, Hindutva proffers absurd claims, and fails to distinguish between science and history on the one hand and mythology on the other.

What is projected as cultural nationalism by the Hindutva forces is nothing but extremist cultural aggression. Unfortunately, some organisations that believe in casteist politics also sometimes mimic Hindutva forces by calling for bans on different forms of legitimate cultural expression.

While condemning majoritarian vigilantism, the CPI(M) also vehemently opposes the offensive by fundamentalist forces within minority communities to impose strict codes of dress, behaviour, and cultural expression, particularly on women. Fundamentalists of all communities feed and strengthen each other and are equally opposed to the right to free cultural expression as protected by the Indian Constitution.

The role of market-driven mass-produced consumerist culture — whether produced in India or abroad — should also be noted here. A large number of popular movies, songs, music videos, advertisements, etc., portray women disturbingly, as sex objects, house-bound, or vehicles to sell products. Mass produced consumerist culture also glorifies violence and vigilantism.

The Party Congress resolves to assert the constitutional right to peaceful expression of dissent and will work to defend and promote secular and progressive values and scientific temper.

This 21<sup>st</sup> Party Congress asserts the constitutional, democratic and secular values of scientific temper, pluralism, and religious tolerance in place of cultural imperialism, majoritarianism, and communal and fundamentalist politics, jointly promoted by the agents of globalisation, religious fundamentalism, communalism, and other forms of social reaction.

The Party Congress resolves to build up intellectual and cultural resistance against these forces.

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