

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Statement Issued by Shri Randeep Singh Surjewala, In-Charge, Communications, AICC**

1. Former President, Shri Pranab Mukherjee's visit to RSS headquarters today had caused wide ranging discussion, comment, concern and even consternation amongst a large section of Indians, who have an innate belief in our foundational values of democracy, pluralism, diversity- of cultures, of ethnicity, of languages and of religious practices.

**Shri Pranab Mukherjee has shown the 'Mirror of Truth' to the RSS at RSS headquarters in Nagpur by reminding them of India's 'pluralism', 'tolerance', 'secularism' and 'inclusiveness' as an article of faith and soul of the country. He particularly highlighted the imperative need of freeing the public discourse from all forms of violence- physical and verbal, besides putting compassion, harmony and non-violence as the centre stage of our public life.**

**Shri Mukherjee also reminded the present Modi Government of following 'Rajdharm', founded upon our diversity, non-violence, multiculturalism and assimilation of ideas. He particularly reminded the Prime Minister that 'Happiness of people is the happiness of ruler, their welfare is his welfare'. Indicating the unchecked exercise of authority and attack on institutions in garb of a self-professed definition of 'Pseudo Nationalism', he reminded the RSS as also the Prime Minister that, 'Indian Nationalism is Constitutional patriotism'**

2. As Indians and as Congressmen, we encourage and believe in the democratic dialogue and recognize the tight and sanctity of dialogue across different thought processes.

**Simple issue to understand, however, is – Dialogue is possible in democratic order, with an open mind and willingness to change, accept and adapt to the other person's point of view.**

- Is RSS ready to 'listen'?
- Is RSS ready to 'change'?
- Is RSS ready to 'admit' its mistakes – both of 'thought and action'?
- Is RSS ready to 'adapt' to India's foundational values of pluralism, tolerance, non-violence, secularism and diversity?
- Is RSS ready to give up its prejudice vis-a-vis 'women, dalits, backwards, minorities and the deprived'?
- Is RSS ready to accept 'scientific temper' and 'rationality'?

- Is RSS ready to give up its inherent character of ‘subjugation, domination and violence’?

### **3. Time for RSS to answer a few questions to the Nation and all Indians:-**

- Does RSS believe that by merely inviting the Former President to an event will give it the much elusive social and political sanctity?
- Does RSS understand that India’s foundational value is ‘sacrifice’ not ‘pleasure’; ‘generosity’ not ‘frenzy’; ‘non-violence’ not ‘extremism’?
- Does RSS not reject ‘Gandhian thought’, deride ‘Babasaheb Ambedkar’, reject ‘Lohia’s views’; yet seek sanctity in hindsight?
- Does RSS promise to follow ‘Constitutional patriotism’ and accept ‘pluralism’, ‘tolerance’, ‘secularism’ and ‘inclusiveness’ as the guiding articles of India’s ‘Nationalism’ as advocated by Shri Pranab Mukherjee?

Let the RSS and BJP publically commit today to change its character, orientation, thought process and path and accept the sagacious advise of their guest, Shri Pranab Mukherjee today.

We await a reply.