

Dont Suck Up to Fascists: An Open Letter To the Captain of India's Cricket Team

Saturday 17 February 2007, by [ISLAM Shamsul](#) (Date first published: 7 February 2007).

Dear Rahul Dravid,

Namaskar!

You, presently, lead the cricket team of India and wear the National Flag, Tri-colour while playing for India in different parts of the globe. You must be well aware of the fact that this Tri-colour represents a Secular-Democratic India and team led by you which includes players from different religions and regions of the country, undoubtedly, symbolize the same reality. I hope you are familiar with the glorious heritage which the National Flag and a Secular-Democratic polity represent. These are the products of great anti-colonial struggle and ruthless fight against theocratic politics represented by organizations like the Muslim League, the RSS and the Hindu Mahasabha. Despite the partition of India on the basis of religion mainly forced by Muslim League and dastardly killing of Father of the Nation by persons affiliated to the Hindu Mahasabha and the RSS, India chose to remain a non-theocratic state. That is the significance of the Nation which you and your team represent and the Flag which you display on your costumes.

I am sorry to write that by participating in the birth centenary programme of M. S. Golwalkar (Guruji), the ideologue of the RSS, in Nagpur on January 20, 2007, you have not only violated the trust which this country has put in you but also saddened large sections of your fans who love and adore you because you and your team represent a Secular-Democratic India. According to a report which appeared in the Hindi organ of the RSS, Panchjanya (February 4, 2007, p.11), 'Indian cricket captain inaugurated the Surya Namaskar Mahayagya programme in the Vidarbha region (of Maharashtra)'. This campaign was organized by RSS 'to commemorate the birth centenary of Shri

Guruji' who happened to be the second chief and the most prominent ideologue of the RSS. The cover page of Panchjanya also shows you lightening the lamp before the garlanded photograph of Golwalkar.

I do not know who led you to join this programme of the RSS but I feel duty-bound to bring to your notice few crucial facts about the RSS and Guruji who led it from 1940 to 1973.

The first Home Minister of independent India, Sardar Patel, held the RSS responsible for the assassination of Gandhiji. He in a letter to Golwalkar, dated 11 September 1948, clearly stated that it was communal poison spread by the RSS which was responsible for this tragedy. Without mincing words he wrote: 'As a final result of the poison, the country had to suffer the sacrifice of the invaluable life of Gandhiji. Even an iota of the sympathy of the Government, or of the people, no more remained for the RSS. In fact opposition grew. Opposition turned more severe, when the RSS men expressed joy and distributed sweets after Gandhiji's death.' I hope you know that consequently the RSS was banned for its role in the assassination.

Dear Rahul Saheb! Golwalkar whose birthday centenary programme you inaugurated was a die-hard fascist who rejected any talk of a democratic-secular India. In 1939 he penned a terrible book We or Our Nationhood Defined which ousted minorities like Muslims and Christians from the Indian nationhood. Even after Independence, in another book his Bunch of Thoughts, Golwalkar declared Muslims as enemy number one and Christians as enemy number two of the country. I wish you had boycotted such a programme as you can vouch to the fact that many Muslim and Christian players playing cricket with you have done proud to the nation.

Golwalkar also glorified dictators like Mussolini and Hitler and insisted on adopting their methods for cleansing minorities in India. In his 1939 book while eulogizing Hitler he wrote: 'German race pride has now become the topic of the day. To keep up the purity of the Race and its culture, Germany shocked the world by her purging the country of the Semitic Races - the Jews. Race pride at its highest has been manifested here.

Germany has also shown how wellnigh impossible it is for Races and cultures, having differences going to the root, to be assimilated into one united whole, a good lesson for us in Hindusthan to learn and profit by.' It is really astonishing that a renowned sportsperson like you went to be part of programmes dedicated to such a nasty person.

I also would like to draw your attention to what RSS thinks about the Tri-colour which you so proudly wear. When the Indian Parliament decided to have Tri-colour as the National Flag, the English organ of the RSS, Organizer, ('Mystery behind the Bhagwa Dhawaj', August 14, 1947) denigrated this great choice in the following words: 'The people who have come to power by the kick of fate may give in our hands the Tricolour but it never [sic] be respected and owned by Hindus. The word three is in itself an evil, and a flag having three colours will certainly produce a very bad psychological effect and is injurious to a country'. The RSS has been demanding the adoption of saffron flag as the National Flag of the country. It also needs to be known that when the Constituent Assembly of India finally passed the Constitution on 26 November 1949, the RSS demanded that it should be replaced by the Codes of Manu (Organizer November 30, 1949) which openly glorified Casteism, upheld persecution of Untouchables and denigrated women.

Dear Mr. Rahul! You went to commemorate the birth centenary of a RSS leader who hated democracy and declared (while addressing the top cadres of the RSS at its Reshambagh headquarters, Nagpur in 1940) that Hindu India of his dreams needed only 'one flag (saffron), one leader and one ideology'.

Let me end with the hope that a great cricketer like you who stands as a symbol of Democratic-Secular India will not betray the trust the country has shown in you and fall prey to the designs of Hindu Separatism.

Wishing you all the best.

Shamsul Islam.
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P.S.

* From <http://communalism.blogspot.com/2007/02/open-letter-to-rahul-dravid-captain-of.html>.
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