

YUVA BHARATI

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**Go from village to village, do good to humanity and to
the world at large.**

-- Swami Vivekananda

प्रार्थना - INVOCATION

ब्रह्मानन्दं परमसुखदं केवलं ज्ञानमूर्तिं
द्वन्द्वतीतं गगनसदृशं तत्त्वमस्यादिलक्ष्यम् ।
एकं नित्यं विमलमचलं सर्वधीसाक्षिभूतं
भावातीतं त्रिगुणरहितं सद्गुरुं तं नमामि ॥

brahmānandaà paramasukhadaà kebalaà jñanamūrtiā
dvandvātētaà gaganasadāçaà tatvamasyādilakñyam|
ekaà nityaà vimalamacalaà sarvadhésākñibhūtaà
bhāvātētaà triguēarahitaà sadguruà taà namāmi||

I bow to the Guru who is the embodiment of the bliss of Brahman, the giver of the greatest beatitude, the absolute, the personification of the highest knowledge; who is beyond the pairs of opposites (like pleasure and pain) and untouched by evil, like the sky, whom "Thou are That" and similar scriptural passages have in views; the One without a second, the eternal, the pure, the immovable, the witness of all mental modifications, abiding ever beyond thoughts and attributes.

--Vishvasaarantra

EDITORIAL



OMKARA: THE GURU

This month brings the solemn Utsava of Gurupoornima. Traditionally Ashadhi Poornima is celebrated as Gurupoornima because Sri Veda Vyasa was born on this day. It was Veda Vyasa who by establishing Guru - Parampara protected the Vedic knowledge. Sanatana Dharma based on the Vedic vision is the life center of Bharat. Thus, this work of Veda Vyasa was a great work in protection of the nation and its ethos. This is the day when we worship our Guru, offer ourselves for the work of Guru, to lead the life in the direction shown by the Guru carrying out Guru-Parampara.

Swami Vivekananda had said, "Each nation has a message to deliver, a mission to fulfill, a destiny to accomplish." The mission of India has been to guide the humanity in spirituality - that is acquiring the vision of Oneness (as enunciated in Vedas) and evolving a social order based on this vision of Oneness. It is the plan of the Divine that mankind should evolve in this direction. In this divine plan of evolution of mankind Bharat has a special role to play. Thus working for national regeneration is working for fulfilling of the Divine plan- doing Ishvara's work. This national regeneration is possible only when the Hindu society is united and aware of its purpose.

Vivekananda Kendra, a spiritually oriented organisation is working for national regeneration. In national regeneration- Ishvara's work- only Ishvara can be the guide, the Guru. Mananeeya

Sri Eknathji, the founder of Vivekananda Kendra did not project either himself as Guru for Kendra or he even asked to consider Swami Vivekananda as Guru. He established Om as Guru in Vivekananda Kendra. Why?

Swami Vivekananda had said, "*The national union in India must be the gathering of scattered spiritual forces whose hearts beat to the same spiritual tune.*" It means bringing those people together whose spiritual view is same. What is the way of bringing these forces together? He further gave his idea, "*We must have a temple, for with Hindus, religion must come first. Then, you may say, all sects will quarrel about it. But we will make non-sectarian temple, having only "Om" as the symbol, the greatest symbol of any sect. If there is any sect here, which believes that "Om" ought not to be the symbol, it has no right to call itself Hindu....Secondly in connection with this temple there should be an institution to train teachers who must go about preaching religion and giving secular education to our people... Then the work will extend through these teachers and preachers, and gradually we shall have similar temples in other places, until we have covered the whole of India. That is my plan. It may appear gigantic but it is much needed. You may ask, where is the money. Money is not needed... Where are men? That is the question. Men, men, these are wanted: everything else will be ready, but strong, vigorous, believing young men, sincere to the backbone, are wanted.*"

It was this message that fascinated Eknathji. So when destiny guided him to the work of Vivekananda Rock Memorial and later Vivekananda Kendra he chose Omkara as the guru of this Punya karyam. Why Omkara is accepted by all? Why is Omkara chanted in every auspicious Karya, before any Mantra? From Omkara come all the names and forms. Some say Omkara is only Pratika - a symbol. But that is not so. Its chanting itself has an impact at all levels whether one knows the meaning of Omkara or not. That way, all forms of God are also pratika till one realizes the Ishvara.

Ishvara is invoked in many names and forms. Generally everything is identified by a name. Name denotes a person and a person is known by his name. In 'name and a person' evolves a Vachya-vachak sambandha - relationship. Vachya and Vachak become one. But this relationship is created by man. The day a child is named, slowly he and others start associating that child with that name. The names of Ishvara are like that. Those names are meaningful only to those who have accepted Ishvara in that particular form and name. Thus the name 'Shiva' means so much for a Shaivaite but it may not produce the same elevating vibrations in the mind of a person who does not have devotion for Shiva or do not know that Shiva is a name of God. Thus in all names and forms of Ishwara this vachya-vachak sambandha is created by man.

The quest of our Rishis was that 'Is there a name of God which can produce the elevating vibrations even if the person uttering that name does not know its meaning? Is there a name of Ishvara where Vachya-Vachak relationship is not created by man but exists on its own?' In other words the quest was for a name of Ishvara which is not man-specific. Our Rishis discovered that such a name is Om. It is the primal sound, the first vibration from which came whole creation. So the Yoga Shastra says- 'Tasya Vachakah Pranava - Ishvara is expressed as Omkar'. Omkar is called as Pranava because it is by chanting of this Omkar that the Ishvara is invoked intensely (prakarshen nooyate iti pranavah) So Bhagavad Gita says, "Pranava Sarvavedeshu - The best in the Vedas is Pranava" It was Vyasa who found ways to preserve Vedas and name of Ishvara which is not bound by time-space or human beings. It is this work of Vyasa - the mission of India to evolve an ideal social order based on the Vedic principles- is to be carried forward in the interest of the humankind.

Even the name 'Vivekananda Kendra' indicates why Eknathji chose Om as guru of Vivekananda Kendra? Eknathji explains in Sadhana of Service, "We have accepted the name of Vivekananda for two reasons. Firstly, on the occasion of

the birth centenary of this noble patriot of our Motherland we have erected the Rock Memorial and this Kendra is just the second phase of the same activity, Secondly, Vivekananda's name stands for universality which transcends all parochialism. His mission is as expansive as the sky. His words of wisdom still ring in our ears though more than hundred years have rolled by. He attempted to unify and utilize the spiritual forces of the monk order. We aspire to make the Kendra as the meeting place for all the multifarious spiritual forces in the country for the cause of the nation. Vivekananda did not preach his own philosophy; he gave the thoughts of the Upanishads. He gave nothing new but he poured the new life and vigour into the age-old thoughts to enlighten the new age." As Eknathji envisaged Kendra as the meeting point of various spiritual forces, he chose Om as our Guru. What was that new life given by Swami Vivekananda to the age old thoughts?

Mananeeya Sri Parameshwaranji President, Vivekananda Kendra wrote very beautifully in the introduction written for the book 'Story of the Vivekananda Rock Memorial as told by Eknathji' that, "During the course of his campaign for the Rock Memorial he had realized that political factionalism and religious sectarianism, had always prevented people from coming together even on issues of national good, about which intrinsically they had no conflicting opinion. Politics being the pursuit of power could be an instrument of division. But Eknathji was painfully aware that even spiritual movements degenerated into rival sects. As a keen student of history, he found that this had become a national defect with the Hindus and unless it was overcome national reconstruction would remain a mirage. Therefore, he encouraged an organization which would be meticulously kept beyond politics and sectarianism.

'That was his vision of Vivekananda Kendra. After a careful study of Swamiji's life and thought, he was convinced that Swami Vivekananda also stood committed to such a non-sectarian ideal.

“Such a non-partisan, non- sectarian organization could be built up only around a great ideal. Perusing the entire thought of Swami Vivekananda, with a thrill in a heart, Eknathji discovered that the magic word will be worship-the worship of Man is truly the worship of God. That was the unique contribution of Swamiji. He did not teach us to seek God “by retreat to the cave, but by a return to the society” So Eknathji wanted to raise an organization around this central theme “worship of man is worship of God”... Spirituality must be made vibrant. It should be selfless action, rather than simple meditation.”

Swami Vivekananda told us to worship Virat in the society. He said, *“What vain gods shall we go after and yet cannot worship the god that*

we see all around us, the Virat (Janata Janardan?) When we have worshipped this, we shall be able to worship all other gods.” The best way to see God around is the Upasana of Omkara. Omkara is all inclusive, everything comes from Om. Like Dattatreya who had 24 Gurus from the nature, Kendra workers by accepting Omkara as Guru strive to evolve themselves by acquiring humility to learn from everything and everyone. Accepting Om as Guru, doing Guru-pooja is thus re-dedicating to the work for national regeneration by making Kendra a non-sectarian and a meeting point of all positive forces.

To sum up, Omkara as Guru or the upasana of Omkara means two things - to seek God in society by doing service and to realize God within by excelling in one's own duty.

B.NIVEDITA



TRUE TEACHERSHIP

○ SWAMI VIVEKANANDA ○

Teacher the transmitter

Those who give themselves up to the Lord do more for the world than all the so-called workers. One man who has purified himself thoroughly, accomplishes more than a regiment of preachers. Out of purity and silence comes the word of power.

Personality of a Teacher

The question was once asked to me in England by a friend, “Why should we look to the personality of a teacher?—We have only to judge of what he says, and take that up.” Not so. If a man wants to teach me something of dynamics or chemistry, or any other physical science, he may be of any character ; he can still teach dynamics, or any other science. For the knowledge that the physical sciences require is simply intellectual and depends on intellectual strength ; a man can have in such a case a gigantic intellectual power without the least development of his soul. But in the spiritual sciences it is impossible from first to last that there can be any spiritual light in that soul which is impure. What can much a soul teach? It knows nothing. Spiritual truth is purity.

With the teacher of religion we must first and foremost see what he is, and then alone comes the value of the words, because he is the transmitter. What will he transmit, if he has not that spiritual power in him? To give a simile : If a heater is hot, it can convey heat vibrations, but if not it is impossible to do so. Even so is the case with the mental vibrations of the religious teacher which he conveys to the mind of the taught. It is a question of transference, and not of stimulating only our intellectual faculties. Some power real and tangible, goes out from the teacher and begins



to grow in the mind of the taught. Therefore the necessary condition is that the teacher must be true.

We hear most splendid orations, most wonderfully reasoned out discourses, and we go home and forget them all. At other times we hear a few words in the simplest language, and they enter into our lives, become part and parcel of ourselves and produce lasting results. The words of a man who can put his personality into them, take effect, but he must have tremendous personality. All teaching implies giving and taking, the teacher gives and the taught receives, but the one must have something to give, and the other must be open to receive.

Function of a teacher

1. Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man.
2. Religion is the manifestation of the Divinity already in man.

Therefore the only duty of the teacher in both cases is to remove all obstructions from the way. Hands off ! as I always say, and everything will be right. That is, our duty is to clear the way. The Lord does the rest.

Negative thoughts weaken man

Negative thoughts weaken man. Do you not find that where parents are constantly taking their sons to read and write, telling them they will never learn anything, and calling them fools and so forth, the latter do actually turn out to be so in many cases. If you speak kind words to boys and encourage them, they are bound to improve in time. What holds good of children, and holds good of children in the region of higher thoughts. If you can give them positive ideas, people will grow up to be men and learn to stand on their own legs. In language and literature, in poetry and the arts, in everything we must point out not the mistakes that people are making in their thoughts and actions, but the way in which they will gradually be able to do these things better. Pointing out mistakes wounds a man's feelings. We have seen how Shri Ramakrishna would encourage even those whom we considered as worthless, and change the very course of their lives thereby ! His very method of teaching was a unique phenomenon.



The question is sometimes raised is a Guru absolutely necessary? Can we not by our own effort move towards the Highest, realize the Supreme without the aid of another person. There is point in this doubt, also a misunderstanding. Swami Vivekananda defined education as the manifestation of the perfection already in man. All knowledge is already within us. Only it has to be brought out.

Dwelling on Uma Devi's education Kalidasa says that when the time came all the Vidyas, all knowledge, was firm like a rock. It lay submerged in the waters. Now it emerged to view. What was potential became dynamic. Uma Devi did not resort to a Guru.

In our own names we have the marvelous example of Sri Ramana Maharshi. He was the embodiment of Advaita, in him we saw the realization of the Absolute. But he did not go to a Guru. His thrilling experience of death rocketed him into identification with the Ultimate. We have to infer that in his previous birth he had already reached just below the summit and in this birth he had only a few more final steps to climb. But when questioned, he always said a Guru is needed. He used to quip, you need a Guru (heavy) when you are laghu (light). We are all laghu, so a Guru is indispensable as far as we are concerned.

The fact is that we are spiritually asleep. We have to be woken up from that *nidra*. By ourselves we will not get up. Some one else must shake us out of our sleep. That person is the Guru. When we are fully awake we can see things correctly, live correctly, and be happy. But we are *Tamasic*, we love sleep. Gently or forcibly the Guru helps us to get out of the sleep. A man may set an alarm timepiece to wake him up early in the morning. At the scheduled minute the alarm rings. But sleep is so sweet. The clever mind finds a trick by which getting up can be avoided. A dream begins. There is a spreading fire. Fire engines rush to the spot. The bells of the engines

GURU-SHISHYA NEXUS
C.S.RAMAKRISHNAN



clang loud. The dreamer watches the dream. He need not get up. It is the alarm time-piece that is ringing, but for the cosy sleeper it is the fire-engine that is giving the alarm-bell. Our spiritual sleep is deeper than physical sleep, more difficult to get out of. Even the alarm time-piece or any other external mechanical aid will not do. The Guru must intervene in person. Without his stimulation we will continue to hug our *tamas*, imagining that we are all right. In this connection Sri Ramakrishna classifies the Gurus into three types. He compares them to physicians. The ordinary physician prescribes a medicine, makes enquiries now and then to see if the patient is following his prescription. But the best physician is he who, when he finds the patient to be different, sits on the patient's chest and forces the medicine down his throat. The best type of Guru like him will not hesitate to be harsh towards the disciple, when the disciple is a little lax in his *sadhana*. But the very next moment he will be all sweetness, fondling the disciple.

Acharyavan purusho veda. Gain the ultimate wisdom with the help of a Guru, says the Sruti. We find even Avatars obeying this injunction. Sri Rama was taught by Vasishtha. Sri Krishna, the miracle-worker, went to Sandeepani. And Sri Ramakrishna underwent everyone of the discipline under an appropriate Guru. He came to revalidate the scriptural truths. So he never went against Vedic

commandments. Actually his Guru was the Divine Mother herself. She sent him specific Gurus for practicing specific sadhanas. This proves two things. If there is Vyakulata, intense yearning, God sends the Guru to you. And secondly for particular training Upa gurus, or subsidiary Gurus can be availed of. The most famous example is the Avadhuta mentioned in the Bhagavata. He had twenty four Upa gurus. He could get spiritual insights from a falcon or an angler, a python or a maid. This was possible because his mind was wide open, highly sensitive to everything around him. He illustrates Sri Ramakrishna's declaration 'As long as I live, so long do I learn.'

Of course, the Guru-shishya combination will yield results only if both of them have the required qualification. In scriptures like Vivekachudamani we get details about the qualifications needed for both. The aspirant must have the *Sadhana chatushataya* – proficiency in the four disciplines—Viveka, *Vairagya*, *Shadsampatti* and *Mumukshutva*. He must be ever alert distinguishing between the Real and the unreal. Brahman alone is ultimately Real, the glamorous world is but a passing show. He must have an intense spirit of renunciation, he must not hanker after pleasures here or hereafter. Of the six attributes *Sama* or calmness implies that a spirit of contentment inspires all his thoughts and deeds. He accepts all that happens as God's will which can never be against his welfare. *Dama* or self-control means keeping the senses under control and not being a slave to them. *Uparati* or self-withdrawal consists in the mind ceasing to be affected by external objects. *Titiksha* or forbearance is bearing all afflictions without protest or anxiety or anguish. Afflictions are messages from the Beloved', stepping stones to happiness. Next comes *Sraddha* or faith, earnestness, which makes for unqualified conviction in the truth of the scriptures and the Guru. The sixth qualification is *Samadhana* or the mind being concentrated ever and anon on the only Reality, Brahman. And the last and most important requisite is *Mumukshutva* or intense yearning for Freedom. The aspirant should long

to be utterly free. Sri Sankara says that out of all these requirements the primary ones are renunciation and yearning for freedom. If they are present the other virtues follow automatically like the shadow following us.

The Gita says the disciple should approach the guru-*pranipatena*, *pariprasnena*, *sevaya*-with humility, doing joyous service to the Guru and questioning him repeatedly till all doubts are cleared. These are but signals that the disciple is eager to be close to the Guru. In turn the Guru also should be sufficiently qualified. He should be well versed in the *Sastras*, he should know how to communicate the subtle truths, how to clear confusions, how to encourage the disciple to scale higher and higher. Sri Sankara says the Guru is *Vasantavad*, like the spring, which brings ever fresh delight. But he may not deal in the same way with all the *Shishyas*. Sri Ramakrishna gives the example of the mother preparing five different dishes with the same material to suit the differing tastes and digestive capacities of her five children. Sri Ramakrishna's Gurubhava itself bears witness to this. If we study the lives of the Direct Disciples carefully we can notice the different ways in which he trained Naren, Kali, Baburam, Latu, Niranjana, Yogin and others. And his very first disciple, the Holy Mother, he not only taught her all household skills but literally worshipped her as the embodiment of the Divine Mother and his spiritual heiress.

Sri Ramakrishna warns us that the aspirant should exercise all caution in choosing the Guru. He should not be carried away by the high talents of the Guru or his miraculous powers. These are red herrings on the path. The crucial test is whether the guru is selfless in his thoughts and deeds, whether he is an *ahaituka dayasindhu*, an ocean of compassion without pre-condition and prejudices. With his charming humour Sri Ramakrishna compares the unwise choice of a Guru to a frog being caught by a water snake. The water snake is not able either to swallow the frog or to release it. So both the snake and the frog continue to suffer. The frog goes on croaking in agony. But if a cobra catches the frog it will kill the frog and swallow it by the time

the frog gives three croaks! With the wrong sort of guru both the *shishya* and the Guru will suffer. But the perfect Guru will lead the *shishya* to the Goal Supreme very easily and surely.

Sri Ramakrishna has said that the disciple must thoroughly test the Guru even as a money-changer tests a coin. In fact Swami Vivekananda questioned and tested Sri Ramakrishna all through the five and a half years he sat at his feet and Sri Ramakrishna enjoyed being questioned and tested. For instance to test the Great Master's allergy to *Kanchana* he placed a rupee coin under his bed. As soon as Sri Ramakrishna sat on the bed he sprang up as if stung by a scorpion. Naren bowed down his head in shame and quietly slipped out of the room. Again when Naren, with his Brahmo ideas, thought it was non-sense to say everything is Brahman and was mocking with Hazra 'This jug is Brahman, this chair is Brahman', the Master just touched him and lo! Naren could see only Brahman everywhere. As he walked in the street a horse carriage was coming towards him, but it was Brahman. At home he could not eat anything as the food was Brahman and even plates were Brahman. It took three days for that cyclonic vision to fade away. Naren disputed every step with his guru and so could declare that he knew the spiritual path minutely.

Sri Ramakrishna was a strict disciplinarian and wanted the minds of the disciples to function at the highest level, but he was also a democrat, allowing them all freedom to think things out by themselves and act out of conviction and not merely on his authority. He would tell them to remove the head and tail and accept only the remainder. This trait is shown by Sri Krishna too in the *Gita*. After instructing Arjuna through eighteen Chapters he tells him, 'Have you listened to all this, O Partha, with undivided attention? Reflect on it fully and then *yathechchhasi tatha kuru*, do as you like'. The Lord has done his part of the job so perfectly that Arjuna can only reply '*karishye vachanam tava*, I shall do as you have told me'. This is the role model of Guru-*shishya* bond.

If the disciple is able to serve the Guru heart and soul no other sadhana is required for him to attain the Goal Supreme. The classic example is Sasi Maharaj, the founder of the Madras Math. He was close to the Master literally, for during the last days Sri Ramakrishna would rest by leaning on his body. After the Master's Samadhi Sasi never left the Barangore Math. He instituted the worship of Sri Ramakrishna on a regular scale and coming to Madras he continued the worship meticulously. He followed no other spiritual practice. Guru Bhakti was his thrilling *sadhana*. When Naren was allotting Sannyasin names to his Guru-bhais he wanted to name himself after the Master, but decided that Sasi deserved that honour better and named him Ramakrishnananda. The *Svetasvatara* Upanishad concludes that only to the aspirant who has as much devotion to the Guru as to God will the Truths reveal their meaning. Sri Ramakrishna has explained this beautifully. The cow contains milk throughout her body, but it is from her teats that we get milk. Similarly God is present everywhere, but for us to attain Him we have to go to the Guru.

The redemptive power of the Divine, the Anugraha Sakti of God, flows through the Guru and from the guru it flows along the lineage of Shishyas. This is what is known as the *Guru-parampara*. We are fortunate in that we can benefit from the *Guru Parampara* of Sri Ramakrishna, the Avatar of this age. Rama and Krishna are mythological figures, so when we meditate on them we have to use our imagination and much guess-work becomes necessary. But Sri Ramakrishna was a historical figure. He walked this earth of ours a century and half back. His words and deeds have been recorded faithfully by 'M' and Sarat Maharaj in the *Gospel* and the *Lilaprasanga*. Plenty of facts are available about the Master and there is no need to make any guesses. Realization of him can be solid. So on the auspicious occasion of Sri Ramakrishna's Birthday let us focus our meditation on the 'Divine Mother's Child' and rededicate ourselves to serve him and his *sangha* heart and soul.



GURUDEV

Dr. K.SUBRAHMANYAM

Guru is God. It is guru who gives us right and righteous upward direction for enlightenment and victory. Not only the individuals and institutions, but societies and nations as well are given a noble and righteous direction by their respective gurus or masters. A guru is a visionary. And at the same time he is highly practical. Neither selfishness nor possessiveness can ever be seen in an ideal guru. Simple living and high thinking, austerity and enlightenment, unselfish love and broad out look, erudition and empathy, unsullied purity and exemplary conduct are but a few of the marks of a good guru. An ideal guru deserves to be called Sri Guru on account of the auspiciousness he embraces, sees and spreads everywhere. Positive outlook and constructive work are the essential and ennobling traits of an auspicious master or guru. India is a land gifted with many an ideal master from times immemorial.

The guru aspect of Siva is Dakshinamurti Vedamurti is none other than lord Vishnu as the master of wisdom. Brahma the creator is himself a guru. In various forms, Gods have appeared on earth as benevolent gurus guiding people on noble lines of culture. All the rishis of India are great gurus. In every walk of life and in every field of study, they have done great research and the precious findings have been placed before mankind for their onward and upward march towards individual enlightenment and social or public weal.

Brahmarishi Vasishta is the Kulaguru of raghuvamsa in which lineage is born Sri Rama. In spiritual science, Vasistha has done remarkable research and so he is a great rishi. Viswamitra has done research in intellectual science and his contribution to society is the peerless 'Gayatri' mantra. Rishi Bharata has done research in music and dance making India matchless in fine arts. Dhanvantari is a researcher



in medical science which is of world renown efficacy even today. Yogic sciences have been thoroughly probed into and the research findings have been brought to lime light by Rishi Patanjali. Vyasa and Valmiki have done great research in the field of human values and they are now available in their immortal epics, the Mahabharatha and the Ramayana. The science of bodily pleasures too has been thoroughly probed into by Vatsayana rishi and his treatise 'Kamasashtra' is meant to be a guide for a happy married life. All the rishis have been generous in guiding people towards a higher and nobler mode of life. Materialism is never neglected, but is given a place next to spirituality. India is a land of spirituality and every aspect of life is expected to progress towards and culminate in spiritual splendour. But, now and then, materialism tries to take the upper hand throwing spirituality to the back seat. It is then that great gurus rise to the occasion and set right the situation intune with Indian ideology.

Vishwamitra was initially a materialistic monarch mad after power, position and possessiveness. But Vasishta the eternal guru of mankind gave him a rude shock and turned him towards spirituality.

Materialism was proved to be insignificant and powerless before the all-inclusive grandeur of spirituality. Vishwamitra took to the path of asceticism and reached the peaks of perfection in spirituality. The change brought in Vishwamitra is but a symbolic forerunner of the metamorphosis that is being worked out by India in the rest of the materialistic world now. Everybody at one point of time has to realize the insufficiency and limitation of materialism. Nothing but spirituality can offer lasting solace and peace. Shadowless bliss is but a product and content of spirituality. India is soaked in spirituality and has therefore been a beacon light of peace to the entire globe.

Guru is supposed to lead us from ignorance to enlightenment, from darkness to light: from the transient to the lasting; from the unreal to the real. What Vishwamitra has done to Vishwamitra has been carried out by the sages. Spirituality is the bedrock of India, backbone of our culture, the very breath of our civilization. Gurus uphold it.

Narada is a guru to many an ignorant and indifferent individual. Ratnakar a dacoit was transformed into a spiritual luminary by Narada. In turn, Valmiki through his immortal epic the Ramayana has changed many a materialistic mortal into a spiritual giant. Thulasidas, Kabir and Ramdas are some of them. Spirituality does not mean escapism or cowardice. Now does it propagate inaction. It is harmonious advancement of action, emotion and intellect for the unfoldment of divinity within. It drives away all ambiguity and clarifies our understanding about all.

The misconceptions about ahimsa or non-violence were dispelled by Maharishi Vyasa in the Mahabharata and we find Sri Krishna in the Bhagavadgita inducing Arjuna to fight for the

elimination of evil. His predecessor Sri Rama tried to put up with the evil and accommodate it till it became unbearable. Sri Krishna the spiritual stalwart preached the philosophy of action. Evil is to be nipped at the bud itself. In the foot prints of Sri Krishna, there arose many a Guru propagating evil eradication.

Gurus do not preach the same philosophy to all the disciples. What is relevant to the age and what is suitable to the recipient will only be taught judiciously for the benefit of both the individual student and the society around him.

Sri Ramakrishna had many disciples. One day a particular disciple was found to be a little dull and gloomy. The master wanted to know the reason for his depression. The disciple said "Sir, while I was coming here a co-passenger was making caustic remarks about you and your way of life. I was unable to swallow his critical comments. In the name of non-violence, I somehow put up with him. His foul words are still ringing in my ears," Sri Ramakrishna scolded the pupil for his passive nature and said "this is not good. Should you keep quiet without hitting back the person who insults your mother, motherland, master or religion? This is nothing but cowardice. Never should you be a weakling. You should have taught him a lesson for life." While the instruction was thus being imparted there were some other listeners. The very next day, one other disciple joyfully reported to the master that he had successfully given blows to a co-traveller who was criticizing him and his Guru. Sri Ramakrishna reprimanded him for his rashness and said "Dogs do bark. We should not take notice of them. You should have kept cool. Never should you react violently hereafter." The disciple replied; "But, sir, yesterday you instructed the other person to be a man of action. I took that lesson and implemented it today".

Sri Ramakrishna clarified: "One's food is another's poison. A person of bare feet cannot take a rugged path. Each has a way to reach the destination. The other disciple required to be improved in one



direction and you in another direction. Mr.Fatty and Mr.Leany can not wear the same coat. Goodness should not be mistaken for weakness. Goodness should not be allowed to be exploited by the evil doers. We have to be judiciously working in the world of selfish people without losing our peace and balance.”

Sri Krishna’s Bhagavadgita requires to be interpreted very cautiously. While its spiritual undercurrent is ever vibrant, the message on its surface is not the same to all people of all times and places. It varies from person to person, place to place, generation to generation. While Sanatana dharma remains changeless, Yuga dharma does change.

Gautama the Buddha preached non-violence. And many people followed it at the cost of individuality, self respect and even personal security. It is not applicable to all.” “Resist not evil” is for a particular type of people seeking salvation in a particular way. In the name of non-violence, we cannot afford to make everybody a weakling.

Adi Shankara propagated the theory of Maya and the Advaita philosophy. Not all are capable of grasping the subtle truth implied in the transcendental terminology of the sage. People

of small intellect mistook the whole instruction for negation of reality and took to escapism and withdrawal from all dynamism and responsibility. Spirituality does not mean psychic weakness. Nor does it propagate laziness or inertia. Strength and truth, health and happiness are the fruitful experiences of spiritual practices.

Fate is but the free word of an escapist. Markandeya, Savitri and Nachiketa conquered fate. Neither the gods nor great gurus have ever been passive weaklings. Even the greatest preachers of non-violence have not confined themselves to their cells or caves. They are never inactive.

An ideal Guru has to take into account the temperament, requirement and ability of the individual before imparting any instruction. Social needs and National goals cannot be ignored. Guru while imparting instruction are cosmic, national, social and then, individual. Individual interests sometimes may have to be relegated to the background, if they are to interfere with social, national and global welfare. A guru has to be judicious.

Swami Vivekananda appeared in the recent past and found us to be steeped in ignorance and inaction, contrary to the dictates of Sri Krishna’s Gita. So he roared “Arise, Awake, stop not till the goal is reached”.

सर्वश्रुतिशिरोरत्नविराजितपदाम्बुजः ।

वेदान्ताम्बुजसूर्यो यः तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः ॥६॥

Salutations to the Guru whose form is radiant with the jewel of Vedanta and who is the sun that causes to blossom the lotus of Vedanta.

सर्वश्रुतिशिरोरत्नविराजितपदाम्बुजः ।

वेदान्ताम्बुजसूर्यो यः तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः ॥६॥

Salutations to the Guru who is the Supreme Spirit, eternal and serene, who is beyond ether, pure, beyond Bindu, Nada, and Kala.

चैतन्यः शाश्वतः शान्तो व्योमातीतो निरञ्जनः ।

बिन्दुनादकलातीतः तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः ॥७॥

Salutations to the Guru who is established in Knowledge and power, who is adorned with the garland of Knowledge and who grants both worldly prosperity and liberation.

ज्ञानशक्तिसमारूढः तत्त्वमालाविभूषितः ।

भुक्तिमुक्तिप्रदाता च तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः ॥८॥

Salutations to the Guru who by setting a fire of self-knowledge burns away the fuel of Karma (resultant of past work) accumulated through innumerable lives.



GURU; THE UNIQUE HINDU INSTITUTION

N. KRISHNAMOORTI

Sumati: Brother, Why do the Guru and the disciple chant together Sahanavavatu - Ma vidvishavahai . . .

Sumanta: The Guru is an experienced spiritual leader. The disciple is a fresh starter. In the course of the lessons, the Guru will say many things that go beyond the comprehension of the student. On those points, the disciple should have absolute faith in the words of the Guru. Only then will the student be able to make those words the basis of his life. Therefore the Guru also takes care that the student loves him; the whole basis of the Guru- student relationship is one of love, not hatred or suspicion.

Sumati: I can understand that. Unless there is perfect love, there can't be perfect understanding. Perfect love leads to good understanding vice versa.

Sumanta: The teachers have to be very cautious about the knowledge system itself. For example in Siddha medicine, varma therapy, etc., the medicines involve the use of poisons! metals, drugs etc. Unless the teacher is convinced that the disciple is perfectly wedded to the public welfare, disciplined by self-lessness is very cautious, the teacher may not teach those techniques to the students.

Sumati: Oh! Is it so!

Sumanta: In Siddha, Varma Vaidya there is a Ganapati prayer. It says that dangerous, martial arts, therapies, etc., should not be taught to those students who are characterless, drunkards, inattentive etc. There are many teachers who would not teach these subjects to their own sons!

Sumati: The caution on the part of the Guru is justified. There is a doubt among the modern-

day-students, especially free-thinkers, that the Guru blocks the growth, the intellectual growth of the students by making them single-track-minded.

Sumanta: That is absolute non-sense. The teacher only invokes the potentialities of the students and shows them the way. The student has to grow according to his own genius. Any amount of irrigating a neem seed with honey and milk will not convert it into a plant of sugarcane, as Swami Vivekananda says. It will only be a neem tree. A Guru understands the tendencies of the student and puts him on the way that suits him.



Sumati: Is it so? That is why Sri Rama Krishna taught different methods to his different disciples?

Sumanta: Yes. The teacher's help is like a training in a language. Using the language you can read any book you want.

Sumati: How can a teacher train a student without teaching him any particular subject?

Sumanta: That is the beauty of Indian system of knowledge. The teacher teaches the student how to learn. Making use of that technique, the student masters various subjects. Sri Aurobindo Ashram at Pondi has such a training institution.

Sumati: In that system, the teacher does not halt the students' growth . . .?

Sumanta: In no honest system can the teacher hurt the student's growth. That is why many of our great disciples are so different from their teachers, masters, Gurus. For example, compare Sri Ramakrishna with Swami Vivekananda. Swami Vivekananda was a scholar of international reputation. But Guru Ramakrishna was never given to scholarly expositions on spirituality. In fact, he was not known for his book learning.

Sumati: Can there be other examples?

Sumanta: Mouna Guru was a great spiritual teacher of Tamil Nadu. His disciple Tayumanawar was a very expressive philosopher poet.

NivrittiNath and Jnaneshwar were so different from each other.

Sumati: Can Gurus inspire great action in the minds of the disciples?

Sumanta: Why not? Samartha Ramadas and Shivaji Maharaj exemplify such a relationship. Swami Shivananda, the direct disciple of Sri Rama Krishna, was called Mahapurush Maharaj. His disciples were many. Swami Ranganathanandaj Maharaj was a great orator. Swami Tapasyanandaji Maharaj was a prolific writer. Swami Chidbhavanandaji Maharaj was a great founder of institutions. C. Subrahmaniyam was instrumental in bringing about the green revolution. Sri Avinashilingam was the education Minister of Tamil Nadu. All of them attribute their success to their Guru's grace.

Sumati: (Smiling) Can a Guru make a talkative disciple silent?

Sumanta: He can do so. Lord Kartikeya came in the guise of saint and told the young prattler

Arunagiri Natha, "Be Silent; Be Wordless". Arunagiri entered a great realm of silence and called that state "Inexpressible experience" and later composed poems on that spiritual experience writing extensively.

Sumati: But generally the Guru prods the disciple into good and positive action for the welfare of the society! We call Shri Krishna, Jagadguru?

Sumanta: Yes. We say Krishnam Vande Jagadgurum. Because He gave us the Bhagawad Gita, the universal scripture. He taught us love, the universal Bonding.

Sumati: We call India the world teacher, Jagadguru!

Sumanta: Yes. Bharat has the great responsibility of teaching Universal Morality to the world. Social spiritual and moral values, true religious consciousness, Yoga practice all have to come from India to the world. The Ultimate Freedom, Moksha is India's hope for the world. That is why India is called the Jagadguru.



Do you hear Swami Vivekananda saying:

"Then only will India awake, when hundreds of large-hearted men and women, giving up all desire of enjoying the luxuries of life, will long and exert themselves to their utmost, for the well-being of the millions of their countrymen".

Are you among those whom Swamiji had in mind? Come, dedicate yourself for the service of the nation as a fulltime worker of Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari - a spiritually oriented service mission.

It is not a career - but a mission. Your Yogakshema would be taken care of by the Kendra.

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Contact at the following address with full biodata and a postal order of Rs. 10/-

General Secretary, Vivekananda Kendra, Vivekanandapuram,

Kanyakumari - 629702

For detailed information, visit us at www.vkendra.org

SHIBIR CALENDAR FOR 2006

Names	Period	Age group	Camp Donation
Spiritual Retreat (English & Hindi)	5 - 11 October	40-70 years	Rs.700/-
Yoga Shiksha Shibir (English & Hindi)	1 - 15 December	20-55 yrs	Rs.1000/-

On day of the Gurupurnima, one may remember the great tradition of Guru-Sisya that our country is having for many centuries now. However, the question also may arise whether this tradition is relevant today? Now that, modern education has replaced Gurukulam style of learning, it may seem that this relationship between one Guru and a sisya is a thing of the past and redundant in present day context.

I would have probably agreed with the latter view a few years ago when I was growing up in a modern Gujarati Brahmin family in Mumbai. All my education was in modern schools and colleges in Mumbai. Coming from a family, which had a lot of value for education, after finishing my B.Com, as a family convention, I went to the United States of America for my MBA. My life seemed to have been made!!!

However, after going to the US and observing the society there, many questions started arising in my mind. I started thinking that, it is true that these people in USA have a lot more money and physical comforts. However, they don't seem to have happiness and contentment that I expected them to have. Neither I could say that in India, where people have to struggle for their daily existence have peace and contentment. Then, the questions started arising in my mind, what is the meaning of life? What brings contentment and fulfillment that one is really looking for.

I was just searching for an answer to this question, which was occupying my mind. Then, one day in October 1986, I met Swami Dayananda Saraswati, a great scholar of Vedanta and Sanskrit that changed my life forever.

When I first met him, I was impressed by his command over Sanskrit, his logic, his clear expression. However, coming from a modern background, I also had doubts about the validity of what was being said. That is why, when I first met him personally, I asked him, "Swamiji how do I know that what Vedanta is saying is the truth?" I was impressed by his response!! He

didn't try to be authoritative or try to convince me that what he is saying is

On Gurupurnima
NEEMA MAJUMDAR

right. Instead, he just smiled and said very softly, "You will know it"!!! "You are a smart girl"!!

Slowly listening to Vedanta, my whole being underwent a transformation. I started understanding that the sense of limitation that I was feeling in wake of which I was looking for answers, is in fact a fundamental human problem. Through Swamiji's teaching, gradually I came to appreciate that Shastra is a means of knowledge to know the reality of I to be limitless Brahman, which otherwise cannot be arrived at. What gave me confidence in Shastra is when Swamiji stated that in order for Shastra to be valid means of knowledge, it can not be contradicted by any other means of knowledge which includes logic. This became a big challenge and I started thinking that until I find some reason or logic that contradicts Shastra, I have no choice but to listen to what it says, as freedom from limitation is desirable by me and everyone else. Swamiji also unfolded the necessity of Karma Yoga and meditations to take care of distortions and distractions of our mind so that it can understand this great vision.

What was striking throughout was the importance that Swamiji gave to our Shastra, the tradition of teaching which starts from Lord Shiva in the form of Dakshinamurti to Vyasa, to Adi Shankaracharya. Swamiji never claimed himself to be the person who realized the truth one fine morning, but clearly stated himself as only a link in the lineage of this teaching (Guru-Shisya parampara).



Moreover, Swamiji brought Iswara in my life. Through out the handling of the teaching, Swamiji emphasized that it is not merely knowing “I am limitless Brahman” but Shastra reveals the equation, “You are that (Iswara)”. The implications of this are big. In any equation, there are apparent differences that finally resolve in non-difference. Like in the equation $3+2=6-1$, both sides look very different but come to the same result “5”. Similarly, there is a difference between I (limited knowledge and capacity) and Iswara (all knowledge and capacity). I as an individual, is totally governed by the laws of Iswara. Even the opportunity for me to know, the teacher I get, my capacity to assimilate the teaching that finally enables me to understand the non-difference is given by Iswara. This highlights the importance of relating to Iswara. As I understood the significance of this, I started relating to Iswara in form of order that governs my whole life. My specific prayers to Iswara slowly evolved into having prayerful attitude in and through every event of my life. Once I relaxed in the order of Iswara, Swamiji’s words that revealed identity of oneself with Iswara started becoming a reality.

The importance of this knowledge and tradition grew so much in my life that I decided to leave

my job with United Nations as Economist and decided to study with Swamiji for 3 and half years. During this course, we covered several Upanishads, Bhagvad Gita, Brahma Sutra and Panini system of grammar. Everyday, I could not but thank Iswara for giving me an opportunity to study our Shastra. Tears used to come when I used to think what Punya must I have done to have the opportunity to know this truth. During the three years, it was a great learning also to see how Swamiji was living what he was teaching. His compassion, care and interest in every student really validated every one of us, let us grow according to our own capacity, and help us discover the truth.

Eight years have passed since I completed my course. Life has become such a blessing. This transformation in me is due to this great tradition of Guru-Shisya parampara. This knowledge, this tradition because of its intrinsic value in solving the fundamental human problem, will continue to bless people of the past, present and posterity. The only thing is that, one has to choose to expose oneself to it.

I have only one prayer left for Iswara now. I pray that, “let me also become the link to this tradition and help others the way I was helped by this great tradition”.

अखण्डमण्डलाकारं व्याप्तं येन चराचरम्।
तत्पदं दर्शितं येन तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः॥१॥

The Guru (spiritual teacher) is Brahma, the Guru is Vishnu, the Guru is lord Shiva, the Guru is verily

अज्ञानतिमिरान्धस्य ज्ञानाञ्जनशलाकया।
चक्षुरुन्मीलितं येन तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः॥२॥

Salutations to the Guru who has made it possible to realize Him by whom this entire universe of

गुरुर्ब्रह्मा गुरुर्विष्णुः गुरुर्देवो महेश्वरः।
गुरुरेव परं ब्रह्म तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः॥३॥

Salutations to the Guru who with the collyrium stick of Knowledge has opened the eyes of one blinded

स्थावरं जंगमं व्याप्तं यत्किञ्चित् सचराचरम्।
तत्पदं दर्शितं येन तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः॥४॥

Salutations to the Guru who has made it possible to realize Him by whom all this world, animate and

In our country, we count our days from every Sunrise. In Muslim countries, the day is counted from each Sunset. In Europe and England, they reckon the day from each midnight. The word fortnight may have been derived from this practice.

We have Solar months and Lunar months in India. Solar months are observed in Tamil Nadu and Kerala, while Lunar months are followed in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and some places in Northern India. Lunar months are calculated in two ways, one from each Amawasya called Amaantha and the other from every Pournami called Poornimantha. Amaantha is followed in Andhra Pradesh and Poorimantha in Bengal.

With the Sowra and Chandramana (Lumi-Solar) differences one can easily follow the Buddha Poornima (Lunar Vaisaka Pournami) which is Solar Chitra Pournami, on which day Gowthama Buddha was born at Lumbini near Kapilavaasthu in Nepal, as the proud son of a proud father, King Suddodhana, a Kshatriya belonging to Sakya Vamsa.

The King named his new born son as Siddhartha, with the roubust joy that the young prince would succeed him as one of the glorious kings of India and never imagined for a moment that he would as a youth, reounce Royalty and become a Sannyasi and a great religious and spiritual teacher of the world!

As the Govt. at the center is arranging for the celebration of the 2550th Maha Nirvana of Buddha shortly at the Capital followed by a series



K.R.KRISHNAMURTHI

of programmes for a period of one year, we can take this as an occasion to put forward some very important historical details relating to Buddha's birth date, on the basis of latest research findings made by some of our eminent research scholars.

From the Media, it is learnt that the 2550th Maha Nirvana of Buddha is to be celebrated in 2006. As it is generally believed that Buddha lived for 80 years, his Nirvana is to be calculated as 544 B.C. Hence his year of birth becomes 624 B.C. (544+80=624 B.C.)

But many research scholars have rejected this theory as unscientific. Late Professor

YUVA BHARATI

Subscription Renewal - An Appeal

Dear Subscribers/Readers,

We quote below the subscription numbers, renewal of which is due. Readers are requested to take note of it and act at the earliest.

YB/12933, 36, 45, 16506-512, 14-17, 19-29, 31-48, 50-59, 61, 63-65, 17007.

(Ends with July '06)

K.Srinivasaraghavan, a distinguished Astronomer and Research scholar has stated in his Book "Chronology of Ancient Bharath" that Buddha belonged to Kritika period, when New Year was counted from the month of Kartika (B.C.2621-1661).

According to Puranic Chronology after the Mahabharatha War (in 3067 B.C) thirty Kings of Suryavamsa dynasty ruled in Kosala for 1504 years (B.C.3067 to 1563). The 22nd to 25th, Kings were Sakya Suddhodhana, Siddhartha (Buddha) and Rahula.

So Buddha was born about 1251 years after the Great Mahabharatha War in 1816 B.C. The learned Professor therefore fixes the birth year of Buddha as B.C. 1816.

British authors have completely failed to do justice to Indian History and Historical Dates!

Siddhartha became a disciple of Maharishi Gautama. Hence he was named Gautama Buddha. Vidisara, the 5th King of Sisunga dynasty of Maghadha was 5 years junior to Gautama Buddha.

Maharishi Gautama flourished in the 19th Century B.C. No Rishi with this name ever lived in the 5th Century B.C.

Buddha lived a full and active life from 1816 B.C. to 1736, covering 80 years and attained Maha Nirvana in B.C. 1736.

So it becomes very clear that this year 2006 A.D. is the 3742nd Maha Nirwana of Buddha and not 2550 as appearing in Media reports, which the Govt is also following in good faith!

Siddhartha left the palace on one night, leaving his wife Queen Yasodhara and son Rahul and went to a forest. After wandering for several months,

visiting many important places, reached Gaya and sat under a peepul tree and went into deep meditation. There he suddenly got Divine light and enlightenment one day! Siddhartha became the Buddha or the Enlightened.

The tree under which he meditated came to be known as the Bodhi tree. A big temple was build later on at this place, which is called the Mahabodhi Temple.

Buddha delivered his first sermon at the Deer Park in Sarnath near Varanasi. He preached in Prakrit, the language of the educated.

Buddha preached that Desire is the main cause of misery and sorrow in this world and it should be given up.

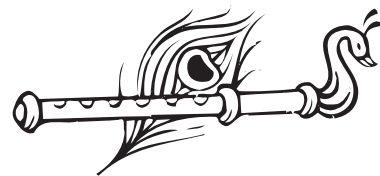
He then preached that people should follow the eight principles of life or the Ashta Marga (Eight-fold Path).

Those principles are Right View, Right Thinking, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Meditation, Right Living, Right Effort and Right Recollection. He further preached Ahimsa to abstain from injuring others. He denounced caste differences, yajnas and yagas. His messages (Buddhism) spread among countries like Central Asia, Tibet, Japan, China, Java, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) Nepal and South East Asia.

But Buddhism declined in India and Nepal (the very birth-place of Buddha).

At the completion of 80 years Buddha attained Maha Nirvana at Kushinagar in Bihar on 1736 B.C.

This year 2006 is the 3742nd Maha Nirvana of Buddha and not 2550th Nirvana as conceived and approved without proper verification of research findings!



WHO IS A 'GURU'?

K.SUBRAMANIAN

It is a truism that every soul is destined to be perfect and every being, in the end will attain the state of perfection. Whatever we are now is the sum total of our acts and thoughts in the past and whatever we shall be in the future will be the result of what we think and do now. But, moulding and shaping our own destinies, does not preclude us from receiving help from outside. Such a help is absolutely essential in the context of our own progress in society. The soul, in its evolutionary process, is awakened to a sense of spiritualism clothed in ethical principles and conventions that need to be evaluated for its moral content and purity. No books could give us the guidelines for this uplift except a spiritual master who is generally called a GURU. Revered in the spiritual tradition as God Himself and taking to spiritual life as a great challenge, he follows the devotional norms laid down for rigid practice and looks up to seasoned saints and seers for guidance and inspiration. No spiritual books could feed him with the requisite knowledge for this spiritual upgradation. Willy nilly, the need for a GURU's education and enlightenment become inevitable as a first step in the spiritual ladder. It is Guru the teacher who trains the student called the Sishya and this Guru-Sishya Parampara runs down the corridors of the spiritual hierarchy without any slide-down. Further, the soul from which it proceeds must possess the power of receiving it. No useful purpose would be served by ploughing an arid ideology or a lonely furrow. The underlying ideal should be to attain the desired objective at any cost and sacrifice without loss of time.

A superb blend of elegance, excellence, and erudition with a messianic vision, the Guru has a vital role to play in the life of a Sishya and should be capable of demonstrating his spiritual potential that should have their psychological sway over the disciples who should be driven to an involuntary feeling that he is offering Paradise on a platter much to their advantage. The demon of pride and prejudice and such vicious qualities are bound to denigrate his image and personality.



Fiery idealism and a pragmatic outlook on the values of human life should, however, govern his life to project him as a model for others to emulate and distil the best of what this noble birth could give him as a unique reward. He should not, therefore, try to render himself into a moral nullity or intellectual sterility. As the human heart is an amalgam of both the benevolent and malevolent elements, the chances for development of the latter should always be curbed with an unflinching bent of mind. He should not get involved himself in emotional entanglements. On the contrary, he should harmoniously blend the various faculties and build a strong integrated character based on right knowledge, right behaviour and right work. He should be an imaginative humanist and objective analyst to understand human nature in its true perspective with a philosopher's vision and outlook. Ethical rationalism should contribute to his progressive march and growing maturity.

The character and personality of a Guru are the two hallmarks of his popularity and a true reflection of his erudition. The *sine qua non* of acquiring spiritual truth for one's self or for imparting it to others is the purity of heart and soul. When both the heart and soul are pure, he is sure to experience the vision of the Almighty. This calls for a preliminary analysis of the qualities of a Guru in whom a worthy vibration of spirituality should

be discernible so that it could leave its impact on the taught. Something real and appreciable in the form of an influence emanate from the teacher and goes to the disciple. In this spiritual process, there is a phenomenal blend of both the human and the divine as a palpable relationship. It may, therefore, be categorically stated that the Guru has almost reached the summit of his spiritual mission by dint of his ceaseless efforts and ingrained ability. Denuded of any selfish motive, the genuine Guru never draws away from the limelight of his profession. The disciple's soul blossoms into full bloom when the Guru nurtures and nourishes the spiritual soil in which the seed has already been sown.

Besides, the ethical factors of faith, humility, submission and veneration towards the Guru lend their magical sheen to the Guru-Sishya relationship in a spiritual ambience that brings them closer on the plane of understanding and study with a sense of abiding enthusiasm and interest. The Guru whose wisdom and truth are intertwined has the distinct characteristic of taking the Sishya to new pastures for an illuminating study of religion and introducing him to basic tenets and conventions prescribed for practice in his daily life. Some, out of sheer vanity, pose themselves as teachers whose real worth takes a little longer for public criticism that takes them fathoms deep in their profession. When the divinely appointed teacher arrives at the right time, the Sishya appears to virtually slip into a state of stupor and congratulates himself for the bestowal of such a privilege on him. He sees before him the panoramic beauty of an oasis in the timeless religious tract,

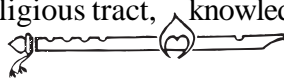


through which the Guru leads him for acquiring more knowledge and wisdom, the two essential concomitants for a study of religion and what it stands for. The disciple's wanderlust in the field of religion is satisfied by the teacher whose versatility is a prime factor to be reckoned with. The food for the aspirant comes like Manna from heaven and such a food has evidently its immortal worth to the blessed. Thus the sanctified role of a Guru is immeasurably superior in all respects. If it could inebriate the disciple with its onerous role in the Bhakthi cult, the distance between the two pales into insignificance and both could move closer on the spiritual plane with independent identities, coupled with an ideological outlook and understanding.

In illustration could be cited the classic cases of Sri Adisankara and his disciples, and Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Swami Vivekananda in the immortal galaxy of that saintly order. Spiritualism may be regarded to have reached its climacteric during their age. All their works, discourses and teachings in the realm of Religion, Philosophy and Vedanta had cast their magical spell on their countless devotees and followers and immersed them in

divine consciousness with their mesmeric character and pulsating rhythm. The spiritual history of Bharath sparkled with such illuminating examples and gave a tremendous impetus to its religious mission and movement at a national level. As long as spiritual Gurus are there, the fountain of spiritual literature would have its steady and incessant flow to quench the thirst of the aspirants without any bias.

Thus the Guru seems to be a divine incarnate in the eyes of the Sishya, as also an embodiment of all round knowledge and learning and wisdom in their entirety.



चिन्मयं व्यापि यत्सर्वं त्रैलोक्यं सचराचरम्
तत्पदं दर्शितं येन तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः ॥५॥

Salutations to the Guru who has made it possible to realize Him who as consciousness pervades the three worlds with their movable and immovable objects.



further – “We should have a look at Vyasa’s background so that we can know the secret of his work”. Shiv Swarupananda continued: “Once while Sage Vasistha was walking along, he heard Ved mantras’ resonance around. He found that the sound was coming from the womb of a pregnant lady nearby. That lady happened to be his widowed daughter-in-law – wife of his son Shakti, who was killed by the anger of Vishwamitra, on account of his differences of opinion with Sage Vasistha. Sage Vasistha then brought up the child— his grandson, so as to groom its genius suitably. This child was later known as Sage Parashara. When young Parashara came to know that his father was killed by the anger of Sage Vishwamitra, he vowed to take revenge. Sage Vasistha then counselled young Parashara that the creative way of taking revenge is to establish a society which will be an ideal society where there will be no place for such conflicts and this world can be a perfect place to live in – “a Swarga on the earth”.

VYAS-GURU PARAMPARA & SOCIETY

SATISH CHOWKULKAR

Parashara meditated on this idea very intensely and identified 10 Sutras i.e. formulae and steps

Once, while I was travelling in a train, I was browsing through one of the Kendra’s publications – *The Goal and the Way*. I observed from the corner of my eyes that a person near me was curiously eyeing the title of the book. After some time, he asked me, “Can I have a look at your book?” I looked at him, he was also browsing through a book on Vyas Maharshi. He offered his book to me and I gave my book to him, exchanging smiling glances at each other. He identified himself as Shiv Swarupananda. After some time, having gone through our respective books, we were set on to exchange our views.

He said, “Your organisation’s thoughts, actions and the goal are in tune with that of Guru Parampara established by Vyas Maharishi. Vyasa’s work is not just otherworldly spirituality- but to establish Ideal Social Order as emphasized in your book. I was curious and requested him to elaborate his statement. He then started sharing

so that such a world can be a reality – an Ideal Social Order. “What are these Sutras – and how to implement them?” I could not resist my urge to ask.

Yes, I am coming to it. “Smiled Shiv Swarupananda and proceeded forth. Sage Parashar knew that identifying Sutras is only a beginning. In order to implement them, there is a need of a real genius plus sincerity and perseverance to take up this task. A person having these qualities have to be groomed. So he addressed this problem to his son – Krishna Dwaipayana, who was brought up in a special and unique atmosphere. This person was later known to the world as Vyasa. ‘Vyasa’ denotes a title befitting the taker of this mammoth task.

When Vyasa sought to know the purpose of his life Parashara taught these 10 Sutras (Dasa Sutras) to him and told he will have to establish this ideal social order. He cannot rest – not even die, till the

task is achieved. He will be a Chiranjeeva for this goal.

Now, what are these sutras:

- Identify and establish basic principles – values of life. These values should be such, which can be conduited through family – an optimum unit of the society.
- Create MEN (selfless persons) who can vow their lives and stand by these principles, in any challenging circumstances.
- Consolidate resources – Intellectual capacity, physical strength and financial power (Trade and Commerce).
- Strengthen the aforesaid basic principles by continuous research and evolve them as per the change of time – (Kal-Chakra).
- Create a team of persons who can implement these principles – creatively and pro-actively (non-reactionary).
- Develop sincere dynamic and selfless leaders (Vijigishu Netrutva)
- Do not ignore women – educate them and involve them in the process, using their unique capabilities and potentialities.
- Build up social wealth for welfare of the Society (Ishwarya & Vaibhav) in all respect.
- Power blocks of society – Intellectuals, Physically strong and enterprising genius should be co-ordinated and should work unitedly, and not against each other.
- Love for God (Astikya Buddhi – Shraddha) unity in diversity, essential divinity of the creation, service – Tyaga and Seva should be the underlying substratum principle for all the aforesaid Sustras.

In order to establish these principles – Sustras, Vyasa Maharishi worked at all the levels and for all sections of the society.

1. He classified Vedas in 4 segments, theme-wise and goal-wise.
2. He presented the cream of the Vedas – Upanishads in a most crystallised way.

3. Basic principles of the Vedanta – were woven in Vedant Sutras to understand the ultimate – The Brahman – final goal of life. These are named as Brahma Sutras.

4. He recorded the Itihasa – Maha Bharat to show to the posterity the pros and cons of following as well as opposing and being indifferent to Dharma and an ideal guide to live purposeful life – Srimad Bhagwad Gita, was embedded in it.

5. He chronicled the lives of the people who met the challenges of life at various places and times in the past, through 18 Puranas, Srimad Bhagwat being the crest-jewel of it.

6. He had established a Parampara by allotting each of the 4 Vedas to competent rishis for continuing research and ensure applicability of the Vedic Truths through Guru-Sishya Parampara. He gave Rigveda to Bhaskala, Yajurveda to Vaishampayana, Samaveda to Jaimini and Atharva Veda to Aruni, and this lineage is continuing. He guided the modern thinkers – Adi Sankaracharya, Ramanujacharya and Madhvacharya and so on. Even today Vyasa guides us personally or impersonally. The goal of this whole effort is to establish an Ideal Social Order as told by Sage Parashara, so that we all can fulfil the purpose of our being born in the human body.

Shiv Swarupananda, pointing at and retuning my book said, “If we look objectively at our spiritual literature, in the light of this background we will know that our spiritual literature – Yoga Sastra, Vedanta, Ramayana, Mahabharat, Puranas, Bhagwad Gita, etc. is not an armchair philosophy but a living dynamic elixir of life.

He smilingly got down at his station giving me a new vision to look at our activities, thoughts and goal–Nija Paramheeta – Ideal Social Order. The very thought that we are working for fulfilling the dream of our Rishis – beamed on us by Swami Vivekananda and Mananeeya Eknathji through the prism of the thought movement – Vivekananda Kendra, gave me a new stream of inspiration.



A Gallant Warrior for Swadharma

H. Onderson Mawrie [April 12, 1920-26 May, 1991]

Shri H. Onderson Mawrie was an outstanding leader of the Seng Khasi Movement aimed at protecting the age old religion and culture of the Khasis and fighting against conversions by foreign missionaries. Born at Laitumkhrach, Shillong, Meghalaya state of North East India his family converted to Christianity when he was only ten years old. After primary education, he passed his B.Sc in 1942 from Calcutta University. During the Second World War he joined the army in 1943 and took early retirement in 1946. His yearning for knowledge led him to join college as a student again and he passed B.A. in 1948 from Gauhati University.

Active with Church:

After the end of the Second World War he started taking active interest in the activities of the Welsh Presbyterian Church. He devoted more and more time to its various committees and as a preacher in congregations. Since 1948, he was a teacher in government High School, Shillong but as the work failed to satisfy his inner urge he resigned the job in 1966 to join Theological College, Serampore for graduation in Philosophy and religious texts. While continuing his study as a private student, he joined the Presbytery High School, Cherapunji as its Headmaster in 1967.

Realization of Swadharma

The subjects of his particular interest during his theological studies were: [i] comparative studies of different Dharma [ii] Original Dharma and [iii] History of church. While studying the first two subjects, he was surprised that the Khasi Dharma [should it be tradition] much maligned by the missionaries has an outstanding place in the religions of the world and is a true Dharma. This discovery of truth led him to take a final decision to leave the church forever and devote his entire energy for the progress of the Khasi Dharma [should it be tradition]. He came back

to his native place and took charge as Headmaster of Nongkirem Raj High School which he served till his passing away in 1991.

Writings

After two years of untiring labour, Mawrie came out with a book Ka Pyrkhat u Khasi later translated into English under the title The Khasi Milieu. This book is a treasure house of the Khasi way of life and tradition. In 1973 another book A Khasi and His Religion was published. Later on many more books and booklets saw the day centering round this very subject, which were highly praised. He also contributed many articles to newspapers on the Khasi language and Culture. He also undertook to write a book on the Khasi philosophy and another on the life of Swami Vivekananda which he could unfortunately

Mass Awakening:

On 6th March 1978, at Nangtalang on the border of Meghalaya and Bangladesh he was initiated into the Seng Khasi and since then was on the move to rouse the conscience and pride of his people in the hills for preservation of their swadharma and to warn them against the dangers of alien conspiracy. He also invited all those who left it by coercion or deceit to come back to their original fold. The Seng Khasi movement spread to the plains. His able leadership brought the Khasi and Jaintia communities together on one platform, the Seng Khlhlang of which he was also the President.

In 1981 Onderson Mawrie participated in the Congress of the International Association of Religious Freedom held in Belgium and Holland. He understood the need to make a common cause to wage a common battle against conversion by Christian missionaries and the need to do proactive work to strengthen the indigenous faith and culture. Hence he was associated with many Hindu organizations including the Vanavasi Kalyan Parishad. Reproduced below is an inspiring poem that he composed during his sojourn of Bharat.

COME TO MY SOUL

Come to my lap, oh my children dear,
 Gater roound my bosom from all far and near
 Rise up now as a Nation of one family
 From over the mountains all round to the sea
 Build up with the spirit of old ancient sage
 Shake off all the shame of this present age
 All the while I thought you were tempered enough
 But now ought you be then a metal still soft
 Over my body you smile at each other's face,
 With the down and the low you temper your
 grace.
 Think now, oh Bengal, that you are not Gujarat,
 As well you, Himachal, that you are not Tamilnad
 Think not Tripura, that you are not Rajasthan,
 You old Punjab that you are not Nagaland.
 From Meghalaya in the East with hope, joy and
 pride
 To Maharashtra in the west – with my soul
 astride.

Diverse be the name mother gives to the children
 But same suckling breast serves them on far ben
 A remorse to my sense that gave vent to sorrow
 A load in my chest that pined for the morrow
 The floods all over were the tears that I shed,
 The quakes that rumbled were the griefs I bred,
 For all that I pondered it could be a shake up,
 For all that I hoped you would then all wake up.

Soil not religion, It is divine and sacred,
 Speak to your own heart, you'd know its spread
 Come to my soul, then, for a regeneration,
 Stand up as one people to glorify the nation
 I have set before you, yon stars of first brand
 To guide you in reshaping your dear Motherland.

- H. Onderson Mawrie

अनेकजन्मसम्प्राप्त कर्मबन्धविदाहिने ।
 आत्मज्ञानप्रदानेन तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः ॥९॥

Salutations to the Guru whose grace completely
 dries up the ocean of this Samsara (relative
 existence) and makes one realize the Supreme
 Wealth.

**SADGURU DATTATREYA
SADGURU SANT KESHAVADAS**

Lord Dattatreya adopted twenty-four Gurus from the nature. He learnt qualities from them by wisdom. Each preceptor being especial in a unique quality as follows he learnt from.

1. The Earth : Forbearance, filaments and forgiveness towards a person deviating from dharma and duty. From trees a man should learn to live a life at selfless service.
2. The Air: One must be unaffected by egoistic pleasure just like the air which is independent of the smell at the object over which it blows. It is detachment from the world which must be learned from air.
3. The Sky: One must realise that his/her soul is all pervasive like the sky even then the sky is untouched by other objects.
4. The Water: A holy man must be like holy water which impure, soft and sweet and purifies people just by their seeing it.
5. The Fire: From the fire the ability to accept good and bad and reducing it to the same state like the ashes must be learnt. But the fire always remains leave and brilliant.
6. The Moon: As the moon has cycles of phase, (from new moon to fullmoon) repeating itself without changing the moon itself. Likewise it is the body but not the which changes.
7. The Sun: The Sun gives us the realization that one must never be affected by his acts as the sun is never affected by his acts all over the universe. Though sun gives his forms of existence in various ways he is one. Similarly it is paramathma distributed allot us.
8. The Pigeon: The lesson is we have to develop detachment while living in the world and strive after God realization unlike the parent pigeon, which throws itself into the net of a fowler to die with its offspring.
9. The Boa Construction: This type of snake does not go in search of food but calmly accepts it as it comes. Like wise acceptance of food in just for the existence and one must neither be elated nor be depressed. It is the action which must be governed.
10. The Sea: The unaffected nature of the sea towards the reception of Volumes of water or lossing it by evaporations must adopted towards gain or loss one must neither lie elated nor be depressed. It is the action which must be governed.
11. The Moth: It is detachment which is the lesson thought by moth which falls in the enchanted fire and dies due to its attraction towards the fire.
12. The Elephant : Just as a weak elephant is killed by more powerful tinkers when it is enamored of the female elephant, similarly a wise man will destroy his spiritual wealth by connecting others women.
13. The Honey-Gatherers! If one spends his time in acquiring wealth, which is going to be enjoyed by some one else like a honey gatheres who collects honey saved by bees, enjoys nothing. So it is by sharing one can bring peace.
14. The Deer: A deer attracted by hunters music is easily caught. Like wise one much avoid sensuous music is indulge himself in Kirtan and Bhagam.



15. The Fish: An uncontrolled tongue is easily tempted by alluring lastes. Then the man becomes a slave to his palate and dies like a fresh allowed by baits.
16. The Courtesan: The moral is extracted from a courtesan named pingala who lived in rathila who wasfrustrated by way And devoted herself to Lord Vishnu realising that he is the one who can give her eternal bliss. This is how one must have vairagya towards untune things.
17. The Osprey: People and detalives rush to one who possess something. But it he drops it like an osprey which is being chased by more powerful birds which drops the flesh to save its life one can save peace in this way.
18. The Child: In this world only two are tree from amenities a child and yogi. It is from child we must learn to make our atma experience the bliss.
19. The Maiden: Like a poor maiden who wears only one bangle in each hand to avoid the jingling same while pounding the paddy one must avoid crowd around and live in estitude to attain peace.
20. The Blacksmith: One must fix his aim, like the blacksmith who fixes his target and hits it with exact force to get the correct product. It is absorption through concentration which must be learnt from him.
21. The Serpent: A Sage should live in a cave like a snake which lives in an anthill. He must be alone like a snake always alert in his spiritual practices.
22. The Spider: It is like the God. It creates a web and withdraws the whole back into its belly like that of the creation of the entire universe by God.
23. The Coash: A worn which thinks about a coasp gets transformed into a coasp. Likewise if we constantly think of god we would become God.
24. The Bee: Among all creatures Dattatreya was delighted by the human beings who are endowed with intelligence to realise the great self. Even though it is perishable it is the best instrument to attain God. When one learns the truth them several sources in nature one is contended and happy.

LESSONS ON LIFE

There was a man who had four sons. He wanted his sons to learn not to judge things too quickly. So he sent them each on a quest, in turn, to go and look at a pear tree that was a great distance away.

The first son went in the winter, the second in the spring, the third in summer, and the youngest son in the fall.

When they had all gone and come back, he called them together to describe what they had seen.

The first son said that the tree was ugly, bent, and twisted. The second son said no it was covered with green buds and full of promise.

The third son disagreed; he said it was laden with blossoms that smelled so sweet and looked so beautiful, it was the most graceful thing he had ever seen.

The last son disagreed with all of them; he said it was ripe and drooping with fruit, full of life and fulfillment.

The man then explained to his sons that they were all right, because they had each seen but only one season in the tree's life.

Then the man told something to his sons? What is that? Can u guess?

Press release: The 2006 International Finalists.

Finalists announced for global green energy awards

Projects from across Asia, Latin America and Africa stand to win a share of over £200,000 of prize money in the world's leading green energy awards scheme

2006 Finalist media summary: Vivekananda Kendra - Natural Resources Development Project (VK-NARDEP)

Slurry from biogas plants boosts productivity and reduces dependence on chemical fertiliser for farmers in southern India

VK-NARDEP has successfully combined the use of biogas as a cooking fuel with a range of innovative applications of the slurry residue, which boost productivity and income for the farmers, while also reinvigorating the land.

Using biogas from livestock waste as a cooking fuel is a well-established technology in India which saves trees, makes for cleaner, quicker cooking, and cuts down on carbon emissions. The slurry from the waste also makes excellent fertiliser.

VK-NARDEP's programme has successfully installed around 2,000 such plants since 1982, mostly in southern India. It has principally supplied a standard 'fixed dome' version, known locally as the Deenbandhu ('poor man's friend'). This is one of the designs officially approved by the Indian government and therefore eligible for subsidy.

After studying biogas plants across India, VK-NARDEP identified various problems. Principally, the plants were often too large for their purpose (thanks to the subsidy system which rewards installers in accordance with size of the plant). This meant the users didn't have sufficient dung to fuel them so the plant failed – and therefore acted as a bad advertisement for

biogas generally.

Based on those studies and with financial assistance from the Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy, VK-NARDEP has designed a biogas plant that takes only 30 days to produce gas rather than the usual 40 days. They have also carried out pilot work on a smaller biogas plant of only 1m³ and have brought out a series of publications on biogas plants to assist both biogas users and those that maintain the plants. These have been distributed all over India.

VK-NARDEP has also developed its own innovative biogas plant design known as VINCAP.

The main difference is that the dome is made not from bricks but from bamboo, strengthened by steel bands and made gas-tight with a thin layer of plaster. This reduces construction costs by around 12 - 20%. The plant doesn't qualify for a government subsidy, (although not due to any technical drawbacks), but it is ready for widespread introduction when current subsidies are removed.

Householders using the VINCAP biogas plants enthuse about their clean kitchens and the ease of cooking by gas. They also report major financial savings. A typical biogas plant costs between INR10,000 and INR35,000 (US\$220 - 780), but the savings from not having to buy firewood or LPG means that they pay for themselves in between one and three years. In addition there is the extra income from increased agricultural production thanks to the slurry.

Paradigm Shift from gas to slurry as manure:

VK-NARDEP's whole emphasis is on linking the direct benefits of biogas (cooking fuel) with the creative use of the slurry by-product. Its strategy is to integrate the two, and promote them as a package to the farmers, training them in the various techniques.

Innovations in this regard include:

Azolla - a small fresh-water based floating fern, which fixes nitrogen through a symbiotic blue green algae called Anabaena Azollae. It is a valuable nitrogen fixer and a rapid biomass multiplier. VK-NARDEP is encouraging farmers to grow it (using slurry as a key part of the growing medium), and either use it as a cattle or poultry feed or sell it to others. As a dairy feed Azolla is found to have increased quality and quantity of milk yield.

It yields its first harvest between one and two weeks after planting. In ideal conditions, a 5 - 6m² crop of Azolla can yield up to an astonishing 2kg per day.

Vermi compost (worm compost): essentially this consists of slurry-treated biomass to which specially selected earthworms are added. It makes a potent fertiliser.

Panchagavya ('five elements of the cow') is a variation on a traditional 'natural' fertiliser mix, based on slurry mixed with cow's urine, milk, curd, ghee and other additions such as sugar cane juice, banana juice and coconut water. Again, this is a powerful fertiliser.

Taken together, technologies such as these can boost yields by up to 30%, increasing farmers' income while allowing them to save on the use of chemical fertilisers. So it is better for their pocket, and for the soil.

This degree of success, along with the rising price of fertiliser, is encouraging a growing number of farmers to either cut chemical inputs or go totally organic. One example is sugar cane farmer Anthony Sami: he has seen his yields rise from 40 tonnes per acre in 1988, when he was using chemical fertiliser, to 60 - 70 tonnes in recent years now that he's completely organic. And his water requirements have fallen by 40%.

VK-NARDEP works with a network of village self-help groups to select households suitable for the installation of biogas plants, and provides training, servicing and support for both the biogas and the farming methods.

They also carry out research into the use of non-edible oils and oil cakes, both as biofuels and as feed material for biogas plants; experiment with using Neem instead of diesel in a conventional diesel generator, which their tests show produces fewer particulates and pollutants, and burns better; and explore the possibility of using waste from plants such as Jatropha and Neem in the form of 'oil cakes' as feedstock for biogas, particularly in urban areas.

In the words of the users..

(Note: photos of most of those quoted are available)

"I have slurry for my farm, I have gas for my kitchen, what more do I need? I consider biogas as the best gift of a lifetime given by my husband after our marriage"

Mrs Sami, Wife of Mr. Antonysami, organic farmer using biogas, Pulliankudi Village, Thirunelveli District, Tamil Nadu

"This is not just a biogas plant but more importantly a bio-fertilizer factory. I am getting Rs 2,250 worth of fertilizer from the biogas plants constructed by Vivekananda Kendra." Gomathi Nayagam, Pulliankudi village, Thirunelveli District, Tamil Nadu

"The Block Development Officer, Kalakkad, once suggested that a biogas plant could meet my energy needs. I declined. Shri Muneeswaran of VK-NARDEP followed it up and explained in greater detail all its advantages. I took it as a pep talk but reluctantly agreed to have one 4 cubic metre biogas plant. But when I realised the advantage, I constructed five more biogas plants having a total capacity of 32 cubic metres. This gives enough biogas to meet the needs of our kitchen. Besides we manufacture Vermi-compost with the slurry. We also produce Panchagavya. Thanks to the biogas plant, now our agricultural produce is through organic manure only." Dr. Jerry, Donavur Fellowship, Donavur, Thirunelveli District, Tamil Nadu, *"All you need is spirituality and slurry."* Swami Jagadishwarananda, head farmer and gardener, Swami

Shivananda Hospital.

"Panchagavya is wonderful. It makes everything grow bigger and better. The rose becomes a lotus!"

Subramanian Pillai, Donavur Fellowship

Ashden Award money would be used as part of a scheme in which 100 households would be provided with biogas plants and trained to incorporate both sophisticated slurry-based agricultural techniques, and biofuel crops (in part as a feedstock for the biogas plants). The village would be used as a living study centre/experimental ground.

VK-NARDEP is an integral part of Vivekananda Kendra, a uniquely Indian combination of spiritual centre and research institute, based at Kanyakumari, the very southern tip of India. VK-NARDEP itself is engaged in popularising rural technologies in energy efficient construction, watershed management, holistic health, sustainable agriculture and renewable energy. It also coordinates networks of self-help groups among the villagers in the region.

Shri Vasudeo, secretary of VK-NARDEP and project leader, will represent the project at the Ashden Awards ceremony in London.