



YUVA BHARATI

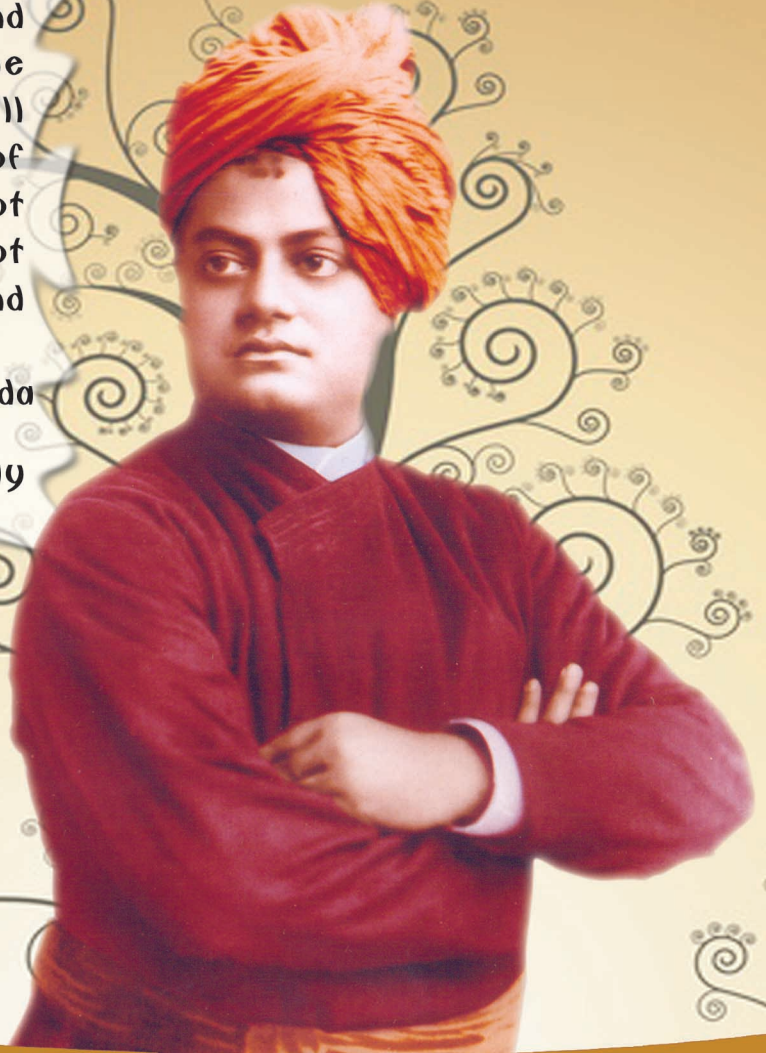
Voice of Youth

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...if anybody dreams of the exclusive survival of his own religion and the destruction of the others, I pity him from the bottom of my heart, and point out to him that upon the banner of every religion will soon be written in spite of resistance: "Help and not fight," "Assimilation and not Destruction," "Harmony and Peace and not Dissension".

-Swami Vivekananda

Universal Brotherhood Day
September 2011





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Invocation



Agajaanana Padmaarkam
Gajaananam Aharnisham
Anekadantham Bhaktaanaam
Ekadantam Upasmahey

I worship day and night that elephant faced Lord Ganesha who is like sun to the lotus face of Mother Parvati. Giver of many boons, the single tusked Ganesh, I salute Thee to give me a boon.



UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD

The welcome and adoration that was given to the speeches of Swami Vivekananda during the Parliament of Religions at Chicago made it clear that world is in need of the message of Bharat, but Bharat has to awaken to its sense of duty. The Parliament of Religions was organized as the part of the celebration of the 400th anniversary of the European discovery of America by Columbus. The purpose of the Parliament was to proclaim the Christianity as the 'Only True Religion.' The exclusive approach considers one's religion as the only true religion. Once this exclusive approach is adopted then others' religions are not tolerated. This intolerance impels the followers of exclusive religion to set out on large-scale conversion of others even by fraud and force.

Swami Vivekananda was aware that it is the exclusive approach of these Semitic religions like Christianity and Islam, which was responsible for so much bloodshed and human massacre in the human history. It is this exclusive approach which is the biggest obstacle in the realization of brotherhood of man. It is well-known that Swami Vivekananda addressed the audience as 'Sisters and Brothers of America' it had an electrifying effect on them. It was not merely a form of address but behind those words was the great spiritual strength of India, which has always practiced the universal brotherhood in her long history of more than 5000 years. Taking pride in this fact Swami Vivekananda said, "I am proud to belong to a nation which has sheltered the persecuted and the refugees of all religions and all nations of the earth." Hindus could have this universal approach because they never claim that, 'the God I worship is the 'Only True God' But they say that there is 'only god'. Everything is the expression of that One.

So we do not say that ours is the only true god and others are false gods we say for others gods that 'it is 'also' the form of God.' Thus our approach is an inclusive approach, an 'also' approach. The exclusive approach says 'this only' whereas inclusive approach says 'this also'. It is because of this inclusive approach – 'also' approach that the Hindus never went destroying other religious faiths. To usher in Universal Brotherhood it is essential that all religions accept this inclusive –'also' approach.

The Hindus have this 'also' approach because they have the vision of Oneness for the whole existence. As Hindus view everything in the existence as the expression of One, all the manifestations are revered, are accepted. There is then respect for the diversity. As everything is expression of the One, the human soul too is not interpreted as the sinner but as immortal, complete wholeness. This is the message that India has to give to the world.

For the first time to that audience which was used to the exclusive claim to religious truth Swami Vivekananda gave the message, "Much has been said of the common ground of religious unity.... But if anyone here hopes that this unity will come by the triumph of any one of the religions and the destruction of others, to him I say, "Brother, yours is an impossible hope"If the Parliament of Religions has shown anything to the world it is this: It has proved to the world that holiness, purity, and charity are not the exclusive possessions of any church in the world, and that every system has produced men and women of the most exalted character. In the face of this evidence, if anybody dreams of the exclusive survival of his own religion and the destruction of others, I pity him from the bottom of my heart, and point out to him that upon the banner of every religion will soon be written, in spite of resistance, "Help and not fight" "Assimilation and not Destruction" "Harmony and Peace and not dissension."

For the first time to western audience, the message of universal Brotherhood and its proper understanding was given by Swami Vivekananda. Therefore Mananeeya Eknathji wanted this day to be celebrated as Universal Brotherhood Day. Homogenizing the humanity or bringing uniformity in the human society will not usher in Universal Brotherhood but it will only bring further dissensions and destruction. Integrating the various faiths and accepting, as 'others' faith also is good for them' will bring in Universal Brotherhood. Homogenizing brings destruction of the identity and also the traditional values in the society where as the integration keeps the identity of the communities intact but binds them in the bonds of Brotherhood. Therefore on this day the message is also for those who are very exclusive in their approach and are undertaking the conversions by destroying the faiths and culture of various tribal and other communities.

Hindus by their philosophy and practice of inclusive approach are destined to give this message of Universal Brotherhood to the humanity. But in order to do that first Hindus will have to understand this unifying and integrating nature of their Dharma. In the Parliament of Religions Swami Vivekananda also gave us the unifying principles of Hinduism. As put very beautifully by Sister Nivedita, "Of the

Swami's address before the Parliament of Religions, it may be said that when he began to speak it was of "the religious ideas of the Hindus", but when he ended Hinduism had been created.... These, then were the two mind-floods, two immense rivers of thought, as it were, Eastern and modern, of which the yellow-clad wanderer on the platform of the Parliament of Religions formed for a moment the point of confluence. The formulation of the common bases of Hinduism was the inevitable result of the shock of their contact, in a personality, so impersonal. For it was no experience of his own that rose to the lips of the swami Vivekananda there. He did not even take advantage of the occasion to tell the story of his master. Instead of either of these, it was the religious consciousness of India that spoke through him, the message of his whole people as determined by their whole past." Thus on the Universal Brotherhood Day we have to study, absorb and highlight the message that Swami Vivekananda gave in the Parliament of Religions. Not just the lecture given on the first day of the parliament, which is very well known, but the main lecture that he gave in the Parliament of Religions - " The Paper on Hinduism" needs to be studied. It is the study and application of this lecture, which will make us capable of giving the message of Universal Brotherhood Day to the world.

Nivedita Raghunath Bhide



The Protector of National Mission

Nivedita Raghunath Bhide

Swami Vivekananda had faced many opponents in America. But he never publicly talked about it. While some of his friends had stood up in his defense, he had personally kept aloof from it as he followed the principle that 'a monk does not defend himself'. Swamiji's heart was limitless where everyone a friend or a foe had a place. But while giving a talk "My Plan of Campaign" in Madras, Swami Vivekananda was very forthright in exposing what all the opponents had done to him. One wonders why Swami Vivekananda chose to speak like that. Even though, Prof Subramania Iyer and others had counseled silence as the theosophists of Madras held Swami Vivekananda in highest regard, yet he chose to speak about not just theosophists but all his opponents in his first public speech at Madras.

The reason was very simple. Swami Vivekananda was not just a monk he was a monk with a national mission. As he was being given unprecedented welcome and whole India was looking up to him, many wanted to take credit for his success. Some tried that he joined their rank. Some wanted to create impressions in society that they were very close to Swami Vivekananda. Swamiji knew that the work that was to be done for national regeneration would get sidetracked or deviated and even destroyed if it went in wrong hands. His disciples and followers should be the core of



the work and not his detractors. Thus, as a nation builder Swamiji wanted to establish his sincere followers and credit his success to them and not to his critics. He saw to it that it was put on record so that even in future no false claims would be made, and Swamiji would not be appropriated by his opponents, nor his work would go in wrong hands. Swamiji started forthrightly in his speech,

“As the other day we could not proceed, owing to the crowd, I shall take this opportunity of thanking the people of Madras for the uniform kindness that I have received at their hands.With all my faults, I think I have a little bit of boldness. I had a message from India to the West, and boldly I gave it to the American and the English peoples. I want, before going into the subject of the day, to speak a few bold words to you all. There have been certain circumstances growing around me, tending to thwart me, oppose my progress, and crush me out of existence if they could. Thank God they have failed, as such attempts will always fail. But there has been, for the last three years, a certain amount of misunderstanding, and so long as I was in foreign lands, I held my peace and did not even speak one word; but now, standing upon the soil of my motherland, I want to give a few words of explanation. Not that I care what the result will be of these words -- not that I care what feeling I shall evoke from you by these words. I care very little, for I am the same Sannyasin that entered your city about four years ago with this staff and Kamandalu; the same broad world is before me. Without further preface let me begin.

First of all, I have to say a few words about the Theosophical Society. It goes without saying that a certain amount of good work has been done to India by the Society; as such every Hindu is grateful to it, and especially to Mrs. Besant;But that is one thing ... There is a report going round that the Theosophists helped the little achievements of mine in America and England. I have to tell you plainly that every word of it is wrong, every word of it is untrue. ...There are others, again, who have their own axes grind, and if anything arises in a country which

prevents the grinding of them, their hearts burn, any amount of hatred comes out, and they do not know what to do. What harm does it do to the Christian missionary that the Hindus are trying to cleanse their own houses? What injury will it do to the Brahmo Samaj and other reform bodies that the Hindus are trying their best to reform themselves? Why should they stand in opposition? Why should they be the greatest enemies of these movements? Why?-- I ask. It seems to me that their hatred and jealousy are so bitter that no why or how can be asked there.”

It was claimed by the theosophist that they who had paved a way for Swami Vivekananda to America. To put the records straight, Swamiji continued,

“Four years ago, when I, a poor, unknown, friendless Sannyasin was going to America, going beyond the waters to America without any introductions or friends there, I called on the leader (Col Olcott) of the Theosophical Society. Naturally I thought he, being an American and a lover of India, perhaps would give me a letter of introduction to somebody there. He asked me, "Will you join my Society?" "No," I replied..."Then, I am sorry, I cannot do anything for you," he answered. That was not paving the way for me.

I reached America, as you know, through the help of a few friends in Madras. Most of them are present here. Only one is absent, Mr. Justice Subramania Iyer, to whom my deepest gratitude is due. He has the insight of a genius and is one of the staunchest friends I have in this life, a true friend indeed, a true child of India. I arrived in America several months before the Parliament of Religions began. The money I had with me was little, and it

was soon spent. Winter approached, and I had only thin summer clothes. I did not know what to do in that cold, dreary climate, for if I went to beg in the streets, the result would have been that I would have been sent to jail. There I was with the last few dollars in my pocket. I sent a wire to my friends in Madras. This came to be known to the Theosophists, and one of them wrote, "Now the devil is going to die; God bless us all." (This letter was written to a Buddhist monk who gave it Swamiji's gurubhai. At Madras on his return Swamiji's Gurubhai showed that letter to him. Thus Swamiji was speaking with full proof. That letter is in archives of Belur Math as per the book 'Comprehensive Biography of Swami Vivekananda' by Sri SN Dhar) Was that paving the way for me? I would not have mentioned this now; but, as my countrymen wanted to know, it must come out. ...After I had got name and fame at the Parliament of Religions, then came tremendous work for me; but at every turn the Theosophists tried to cry me down. Theosophists were advised not to come and hear my lectures, for thereby they would lose all sympathy of the Society, ...Thus they prepared the way for me all over America!"

After this Swami took on Christian missionaries and the converted Christians in India and the Brahmos,

"They joined the other opposition -- the Christian missionaries. There is not one black lie imaginable that these latter did not invent against me. They blackened my character from city to city, poor and friendless though I was in a foreign country. They tried to oust me from every house and to make every man who became my friend my enemy. They tried to starve me out; and I am sorry to say that one of my own

countrymen took part against me in this. He is the leader of a reform party in India. This gentleman is declaring every day, "Christ has come to India." Is this the way Christ is to come to India? Is this the way to reform India? And this gentleman I knew from my childhood; he was one of my best friends; when I saw him -- i had not met for a long time one of my countrymen -- i was so glad, and this was the treatment I received from him. The day the Parliament cheered me, the day I became popular in Chicago, from that day his tone changed; and in an underhand way, he tried to do everything he could to injure me. Is that the way that Christ will come to India? Is that the lesson that he had learnt after sitting twenty years at the feet of Christ? Our great reformers declare that Christianity and Christian power are going to uplift the Indian people. Is that the way to do it? Surely, if that gentleman is an illustration, it does not look very hopeful."

Then was the turn of reform societies who had again tried to be very patronizing with Swamiji,

"Now I come to the reform societies in Madras. They have been very kind to me. ...Some of these societies, I am afraid, try to intimidate me to join them. That is a strange thing for them to attempt. A man who has met starvation face to face for fourteen years of his life, who has not known where he will get a meal the next day and where to sleep, cannot be intimidated so easily. A man, almost without clothes, who dared to live where the thermometer registered thirty degrees below zero, without knowing where the next meal was to come from, cannot be so easily intimidated in India. This is the first thing I will tell them -- I have a little will of my own. I have my little experience

too; and I have a message for the world which I will deliver without fear and without care for the future. To the reformers I will point out that I am a greater reformer than any one of them. They want to reform only little bits. I want root - and - branch reform. Where we differ is in the method. Theirs is the method of destruction, mine is that of construction. I do not believe in reform; I believe in growth. I do not dare to put myself in the position of God and dictate to our society, "This way thou shouldst move and not that." I simply want to be like the squirrel in the building of Rama's bridge, who was quite content to put on the bridge his little quota of sand - dust. That is my position."

After talking thus which was very uncharacteristic of Swamiji, he very effortlessly entered in his topic about "My Plan of Campaign". The audience must have wondered at the equanimity of Swami Vivekananda. He had brushed aside the fake claimants to his success, established the sincere Karykarts and then unfolded his plan for the regeneration of India. This talk stirred the patriotic souls but his criticism gave rise to some prolonged controversies in the press but as less and less people took interest in it, the controversies came to an end but the people continued to take inspiration from the rousing call of Swami Vivekananda. The feelings with which he ended his speech touched the hearts of all and continued to motivate men forever,

"This national ship, my countrymen, my friends, my children -- this national ship has been ferrying million and millions of souls across the waters of

life. For scores of shining centuries it has been plying across this water, and through its agency, millions of souls have been taken to the other shore, to blessedness. But today, perhaps through your own fault, this boat has become a little damaged, has sprung a leak; and would you therefore curse it? Is it fit that you stand up and pronounce malediction upon it, one that has done more work than any other thing in the world? If there are holes in this national ship, this society of ours, we are its children. Let us go and stop the holes. Let us gladly do it with our hearts' blood; and if we cannot, then let us die. We will make a plug of our brains and put them into the ship, but condemn it never.

Surely, the people must have wiped their tears while listening further from the lips of Swami Vivekananda these words drenched with love of Bharat,

"Say not one harsh word against this society. I love it for its past greatness. I love you all because you are the children of gods, and because you are the children of the glorious forefathers. How then can I curse you! Never. All blessings be upon you! I have come to you, my children, to tell you all my plans. If you hear them I am ready to work with you. But if you will not listen to them, and even kick me out of India, I will come back and tell you that we are all sinking! I am come now to sit in your midst, and if we are to sink, let us all sink together, but never let curses rise to our lips."

to be continued...

Was Tatya Tope Really Hanged By British in 1857?

The reality revealed by the War documents

Dr. K.M.Rao Ph.D., D.Litt

After Veer Savarkar's book on "1857—First War of Independence" - another book entitled 'The 1857' by Srinivas Balaji Herdikar was published by Satshitya Prakasan in the year "1957". In its third edition Sri Srinivas Balaji Herdikar allotted a separate chapter with the title "Tatya Tope was not hanged."

A similar title appeared in "Swatantra Bharat" a daily from Lucknow on April 13 by A.R.Gokhale, He wrote in his letter in that paper quite authentically that Tatya Tope was not hanged and that he miraculously escaped from captivity and that in his place, Narayan Rao Bhagvat, was hanged.

Another authentic source of information was published in Calcutta in "Naya Samaj" in its "Centenary of 1857" issue. It has published very valuable information in its special issue on Tatya Tope. It quoted a book as its source titled. "The other side of the Medal" by Edward Thomson, published in London in the year 1926 in which he expressed his apprehensions regarding the execution of Tatya Tope by the British military court martial. Tatya tope's nephew and niece participated in the centenary celebrations at Bombay. Prof. Tope and the elderly niece of Tatya Tope were honoured on that occasion.

WHO IS HE?

While responding to the honour showered on them they announced in public that Tatya Tope

was not hanged by the British Army after that fake court martial.

They declared that Tatya Tope died in exile in the year 1909 and that all his family members had participated in the traditionally prescribed last rites accorded to every Hindu in those days.



In Gwalior a headmaster of Janakganj High School used to discuss with friends that his grandfather Narayan Rao Bhagvat was actually hanged in the place of Tatya Tope. He kept the illustration of that great soul Sri Narayan Rao Bhagvat in his puja room:

A lot of literary evidences are available at present regarding Tatya Tope's military adventures in the 1857 war as one of the greatest Military Generals of Warfare. Major Mead wrote extensively in his diary about Tatya Tope. Brigadier Smith mentions about a Book written by Mrs. Henry Duberly, wife of a captain who campaigned in the War. The title of the book is "The Campaigning Experiences". This book was published in London in the year 1859. Mrs. Henry Duberly also participated in the campaign. Being the wife of a captain in the campaign she was able to present in that book a lot of factual

information full of facts and incidents that happened from an entirely new perspective and revelation of true history of that period. Many incidents were described by her very elaborately in that with many a detail. She allocated a separate chapter for Taty Tope. She described in that chapter Taty Tope's new techniques of war. He used the technique of surrounding the enemy with lightning speed to score victories against the enemies in the battlefield in Guna District, Madhya Pradesh. How he specially made use of guerilla warfare was also described in that chapter.

Indore University has published another book in the year 1957 entitled 'Hamara Desh' written by Dr. Ramachandra Billore. In page no.49 he has brought some more facts of research on the tumultuous war life of Taty Tope in 1857. According to him Raja Man Singh has not betrayed Taty Tope. He intrigued the British army and it indirectly helped Taty Tope to escape from being captured. The person who stood at the gallows was not Taty Tope but another person who sacrificed his life at the gallows to save the life of Taty Tope to enable him to continue the war of independence with the British.

SOME NEW EVIDENCES

Dr. S.N.Sinha's research work "The revolt of 1857 in Bundelkhand" deals exclusively with the revolution in Bundelkhand and the key role it played in the revolution (Page No.315)

The Government of Uttar Pradesh published 'The Fierce War for Independence in Uttar Pradesh'. Chapter Eight of this voluminous work is devoted to unravel the distorted versions of fake and make believe stories regarding Taty Tope's capture in the

midst of fierce war against the British and the widely published war rumour of court martial of Taty Tope spread like wild fire by the British army officer and detailed false account of his being hanged in the open and in public gaze of people staring aghast of the tragedy enacted in front of them at Siprion 18th April, 1859.

In Bhopal Taty Tope Smarak Samiti has acquired a bag containing letters of correspondence written by Taty Tope himself. The Samiti has published all his letters in a volume entitled. 'The letters of 1857 revolutionaries.' These letters are kept very safely in the memorial museum in Native infantry being disarmed Barackpore Bhopal. Among the collection of letters two letters written in the years of 1917 and 1918 were proofs showing evidently that Taty Tope was alive.

Sri Ramacharar Prachya Vidyapitth and its museum of Jaipur has kept safely an English Monthly named "The Literary Friends". In its Feb-March 1861 issue an article was published on Taty Tope with the title 'The last of Pindarees'. This article gives a profile of Taty Tope, his personality and his deeds which revealed his marshal character. While describing his physical appearance it published an illustration of Taty Tope.

But it was the photo (Illustration) of Narayan Rao Bhagvat who was hanged and not that of Taty-Tope.

As recent as 1992 January, sardar S.Ch.Angre of Gwalior brought to light a letter belonging to that revolutionary period. This letter highlights the strong bonds of patriotism and loyalty to the king that existed between Jiyaji

Rao Sindhia the Maharaja of Gwalior and his Diwan Raoraja Dinkar Rao Rajwada. A letter was addressed to Sri Chaturbhuj in which it was conveyed that the keys to the treasury of Gwalior were being sent through Diwan Sri Rajwada to the treasurer Amarchand Bhatiya (Kosadhyaksha).

The Gwalior Maharaja gave instructions in that letter to him ordering him to release funds liberally to the commanders of the revolutionary army. He gave specific instructions in that letter that his armies should not fight against the revolutionary army.

Another important aspect of this letter was the revelation of the secret regarding the person who was really hanged in the place of Taty Tope. It was mentioned very discreetly that it was one of the family members of Sindhia Diwan Sri Dinakar Rao Rajwada who stood at the gallows as General Taty Tope.

Some Anecdotes of Taty Tope after that mockery of Hanging.

That Taty Tope was alive and was seen by people had been widely discussed in many parts of our country, in Pune, in South India a popular saint was considered as Taty Tope himself by the people especially in Marthwada region. In Navasari area in Gujarat, the local people claimed that they have seen Taty Tope travelling disguised as a Sadhu. Dr. Wakankar narrates that the famous temple of Ambaji was built by Taty Tope. In one corner of the temple there is an illustration of a Sadhu. Dr. Wakankar identifies it authentically as that of Taty Tope. That he was seen as a gardener

was also doing rounds in Bikaner.

TATYA TOPE'S BAG OF LETTERS

Due to Sri Anand Singh, member of Taty Tope Smarak Samiti relentless efforts a lot of materials related to Taty Tope were collected.

It brought out a volume with the title "1857 Kranti Ke Patra' (the letters of 1857 Revolution), of these 125 were in Hindi and 130 were in Urdu. There were other records and diaries related to Taty Tope and other leaders written on various occasions. All the Hindi letters were written in 'tundeli' dialect. These letters were obtained by Dr. Parasuram Sukla "Virahi" in Tikmagad from Abdul Majid Phoujdar.

He was the son-in-law of the Son-in-Law of Nathe Khan Diwan of Oorcha-Kingdom. This bag of Taty-Tope was given by a soldier to Nathe Khan.

It was mentioned in the same volume of letters "Swatantra Samgram 1857-1859" (The 1857-59 War of Independence) that when Taty Tope and his army stationed at Tikmagad were drawing plans of war strategy, the English Army launched a surprise attack on him which he successfully repelled with the lightning speed of cavalry charge covered by his infantry. But the British have spread the war-rumour that they have captured him, when he was marching with his army towards Tikmagad to camp at Asthone village, 10 miles away from there in the Kingdom of Voorcha in Madhya Bharat.

to be continued...

Of India For Ever

Anirban Ganguly

At a public meeting held on 23rd March 1912 at Calcutta to commemorate the services rendered to India by Sister Nivedita, Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866-1915), made an interesting observation on Sister's attraction for India and her dedication to her people. Gokhale's observation is also significant because it comes from a man who constantly championed and upheld moderatism and constitutionalism, both of which were near anathema to Sister's political belief and action. And yet this did not prevent Gokhale from speaking movingly while making a true evaluation of Sister and her love for India. Gokhale's expression thus remains relevant today and continues to inspire and guide, especially those who wish to truly dedicate themselves to national work in a spirit of self-forgetfulness. Missionaries looking to harvest souls in India and Asia may take some lessons from these words, as can those who talk ad infinitum about the "Saint" who came to Calcutta and saved forsaken souls from its streets. Sister Nivedita did much more, with greater intensity and with such a true self-effacement that her efforts are mostly forgotten or blacked out and the memorial to her, which this particular public meeting decided to erect, remains unfulfilled even today. The usually un-emotional Gokhale's words require to be quoted at some length:

"Sister Nivedita came to us not to do good to us as some people somewhat patronizingly put it; she came to us not even as a worker for humanity, moved to pity by our difficulties,



our shortcomings and our suffering; she came to us because she felt the call of India. She came to us because she felt the fascination for India, she came to India to give the worship of

her heart on one side and to take her place among Indian sons and daughters in the great work that lies before us all. And the beautiful completeness of her acceptance of India was indeed what no words can express – not merely her acceptance of the great things for which India has stood in the past or of those for which God willing she shall stand again in the future – but of India as she is today with all her faults and shortcomings undeterred by the hardships or difficulties of our lives, unrepelled by our ignorance, superstition and even our squalor. How few there are among us who realise fully how hard, how difficult, how nearly impossible it must have been for her to live our life completely in this manner. Even those among us born of India and nurtured in her lap, if they get out of the old life owing to foreign travel or other causes find it by no means easy to go back to that life. What must have been then to her, born thousands of miles away and brought up amidst environments largely different from ours, to achieve their complete identification with us and live the life that she lived for us...” (Speeches of Gopal Krishna Gokhale, G.A.Natesan & Co., Madras, 1916)

It was true that Sister did not think at all of her physical comfort and unconditionally identified with her Indian surrounding. She exuded a positive energy and determination when she set foot in the Hindu quarters of the city to begin her work. “When I first discovered that my work would mean living in the Hindu quarter of Calcutta”, wrote Sister, “the usual protests were forthcoming on all sides. One would have supposed that the chances of immediate death from cholera or typhoid were to chances of safety as fifty to one. I have not seen this alarm justified, however. I have been here now for some months without finding any reason for a day’s illness.” She had totally identified with her surrounding, everywhere she heard “the happy laughter of children in the sunlight...” And it was in this “Eastern Home” that Sister witnessed over the years the many hues of Indian life and aspirations and participated in

the perennial Indian life. She became part of the celebrations that have over eons defined the Hinduness of this country, she participated in the Dol-Jatra, revealed during the observance of Janmashtami – the “Day of the Great Birth” she saw the “band of simple worshippers” who sat and listened in rapt attention to an elderly priest give instruction on the preliminary stages of the celebration, she sat on the steps on a Kali temple and looked across far into the Ganges, she celebrated Saraswati Puja, Durga Puja and the Ras and also confronted the dreaded plague when the doctor knocked at her door and said “I have a case for you Sister.” She cared for the stricken, sitting by their bedside, arranging for their comfort and roamed the locality monitoring relief and sanitation work. Even in this she discovered the strength and the resilient spirit of the people and the young men who went about with a gusto trying to clean and sanitise the locality. Everywhere and at all times she strove to discover the essential spirit of India, the spirit that upheld the nation and her people and to identify herself with it. (‘Studies from an Eastern Home’, CWSN, vol.2) Sri Aurobindo with whom she had closely collaborated in the nationalist work wrote that she had “the power of penetrating by an intense sympathy into the ways of life of the people around her.”

It was in 1903 that the Vivekananda Boarding House was established in north Calcutta for young boys. One of the boys, Pramatharanjan Pal, later recalled their interactions with Sister Nivedita who would organise support for the boarding’s upkeep. One evening during Sister’s visit the conversation veered round to the Indian word Dharma, and Sister asked each of the boys present to describe this unique word. The boys having given their lucid replies, Sister made a deep intervention with words that still inspire the spiritual and political worker of Mother India.

“...my dear young boys, besides all your conception or knowledge of DHARMA I shall now tell you something of a higher, nobler and

more sacred factor in your lives which I would urge most honestly and emphatically to you all to follow or act as your sublimest and greatest DUTY, the first and foremost obligation. You are all required first to know your Motherland – your great MOTHER!

MOTHER BHARAT BARSHA!

You must not discriminate, distinguish, or differentiate between them – Mother Country or Mother.

I would advise you to see Her, go round Her, to know Her people, their religion, culture, literature, language, customs and traditions, in one word their history thoroughly to meet them and mix with them intimately often

whenever such an opportunity occurs to love them. Just as a son or daughter behaves or mixes with his or her mother freely and intimately, so you should love Her, serve Her, worship Her with most reverential salutations! BANDE MATARAM! (*Sankariprasad Basu, Nivedita Lokmata, vol. 2.*)

Not once, recalled Pal, did she use “It” while addressing India, She always addressed India as 'Her” and asked them to do the same. That afternoon, as twilight neared, the boys could see in her the Swami's presence and hear his voice through hers.

to be continued...

Come Be a Veeravratī like Swami Vivekananda

Mukul Kanitkar

"My dear sisters and brothers of America" said Swami Vivekananda on September 11, 1893 in Columbus Hall, Chicago. 3000 odd audience gave a spontaneous standing ovation. Some even jumped up on stage to touch him, shake hand with him, some how be near him. Some wanted to touch him. It was not just the novelty of the words as some people tend to simplify. Research suggests that in the same hall 4 speakers who spoke before on the same day Swami Ji had used the address. Swamiji's words won the hearts not only of the audience there but of all the Americans. Sister Nivedita writes that he became the epitome of brotherhood.

The secret of this historic victory is in the experiences Swamiji had in the United States for about a month before the parliament of religions. What pain and humiliation Swamiji had endured. suffering Hunger and cold after losing his luggage did not help in any way. The shelter he got in Boston was also not without humiliation. Though the food and lodging was comfortable, he was surprised to know that he had to pay for his food every week. He was presented by his host to her friends as some novel clown from the east. His attire, his way of speaking and his stories all were an amusement of the tea parties. Swamiji in his letters to the disciples and Gurubhais describes the unbearable misery. But all this could not distract him from his goal. He faced all the difficulties with great patience, keeping complete faith in God.

Even the day before the Parliament of religions he did not get any shelter or even one full meal the whole day. He had lost all his luggage and

with it the address to the venue of the conference. The whole day on 10th September he kept knocking the doors & asking the directions without any success. What he

received was constant abuses for his dress and colour. He was ridiculed as a nigger. No one helped him or even gave him any assistance. In the cold night he had to take shelter in wooden parcel boxes at the railway station. In the morning again he again set on his way to find the address but again no success. Then as he sat at the roadside giving up all hope and putting himself at the mercy of divine mother, window of the house across the road opened. The lady of the house inquired if he was one of the delegates to the parliament of religion. She invited him to join herself and her husband to the venue. That is how he could reach the Columbus hall to be part of the historic moment.

Even after receiving so many insults and ridicules at the hands of American people he swallowed everything like the poison swallowed by Lord Shiva. What flowed from great eloquence was the nectar of love and universal brotherhood. He not only pardoned



those who abused him but also expressed affection from the bottom of the heart towards the young nation by addressing them as sisters and brothers. What greater example of valour you can find anywhere? In fact this gallantry of Swami Vivekananda is even greater than Buddha facing the fearsome Angulimal and converting him or even Christ forgiving those who crucified him. Both these Legends faced challenge to their life. Swamiji faced the challenge not only to his body, mind, soul but even his race and culture were attacked and abused but nothing could break his resolve. That is real bravery.

He was named Veereshwar after the Lord Vishvanath of Kashi. All his life overcoming every struggle he stood up to the name. More important is that he kept his cool and the generosity of heart even in all this adverse situations. In the present context when the sons of Bharat Mata are poised to conquer the whole world with their achievements in all the fields, inspiration from Swami to hold the veeravrat will help a lot.

To practically put to practice this resolve of valour- veervrata let us understand all the dimensions of valour.

1 Setting the Goal: Sitting at the last tip of Mother Bharat on the mid-sea rock at Kanyakumari Swami Vivekananda hit upon a plan. His life's mission- to awaken the very soul of the Hindu Nation; to arouse the youth of Bharat to fulfill its destiny to be the Guru of whole humanity. The Chicago campaign was part of this mission of renaissance of Bharat. Let us also be brave and choose a grand noble cause as our own life's mission, a national goal of life rather than just individual.

2. Not Giving up the goal even in gigantic challenges: Right from the collection of money for his travel to the parliament of religion to the very day of the parliament there were hundreds of difficulties, so hopelessly arduous that any tender hearted person would have

given up. Swamiji kept going without giving up. This is what it means by a man with mission- Vrata. Even a common man can be brave momentarily in a demanding situation but what we need today is the veervratis- men of undaunting mission who will not bog down in any situation. Swami Vivekananda was never overcome with the insurmountable difficulties he faced. In the same letter in which he describes the miseries he is going through, he exhorts hundred thousand youth of Bharat to give up their life for service of the country and go to the length and breadth of the vast nation to preach the gospel of service and salvation.

3 Shraddha: Swami Vivekananda used to say some phrases in samskrit can not be translated in any other language. Shraddha is the greatest example. Faith can not express the almost paradoxical mixture of seemingly opposite virtues of faith, trust on one hand and obedience, respect and humility on the other and much more, in just one word – Shraddha. It is this shraddha that gave Nachiketa courage to face the death. Swamiji personifies this death challenging shraddha to win over impossible circumstance. Atma-Shraddha that is faith in one own divinity, Shrastra_Shraddha that is faith in the scientific knowledge of scriptures and Isha-Shraddha that is the faith in the omnipresent divine spirit are the three corner stones of Swami Vivekananda's personality. These three are the essential ingredients of valour. Swami Vivekananda believed in the scientific content of Hindu Dharma so much that he never tolerated any abuse of Hindu scriptures. He replied effectively the misinformation campaign of the missionaries. He attacked them directly, telling that Bharat has enough religion and philosophy of its own and do not need the foreign missionaries. His message was so effective that some reports say that the donations to missionaries from America dropped by 90% as a fall out of his lectures.

Newspaper editorials wrote, "A Great land and philosophy which has produced a Monk like Swami Vivekananda does not need any missionaries."

4 Large Heartedness: Veereshwar Vivekananda's life is an example how large and accommodative heart one can have. He accepted without even a mention the narrow minded Americans who abused him personally. A fakir had given him food when he fainted of starvation at a place called Kakadighat in Himalayas. After his triumphant return from the west he was given a massive welcome at many places in Bharat. When he reached Almora a large crowd had gathered and they were having a procession in his honour. Swamiji saw this old fakir standing in the corner and he got down from the Horse cart and went to the fakir and embraced him and told the crowd that this is the man who had saved his life once. In Rasthan he left the court of Prince when the singer was asked to sing, thinking it was not proper for the sanyasi. The singer sang a Bhajan written by Surdas which conveyed the meaning that no one should be judged on the external qualities. Swamiji was so moved he beg pardon of the singer calling her as mother who has taught him a great lesson.

5 Compassion: Swamiji's Love for Bharat and its people surpassed everything else. Even at the height of his popularity in the west he never forgot his fellow countrymen. Standing of the terrace of his residence in Chicago he would dream when His motherland will once again glitter with all the material abundance that he saw in America. There are accounts that he use to weep whole night remembering his poor and downtrodden countrymen even when he was in all the best comforts of the world. This empathy was one of his great

driving force behind his life of a mission-Veervrata. Today, our youth badly need this power of compassion. On one hand we are producing the world's most wealthy people by thousands on the other hand; lacs of farmers burdened with debt are forced to commit suicide. We have plenty of resources what is required is profound compassion of brave hearts. Mere lip service will not do. Swamiji's gives a clear call, "I call him a Mahatma whose heart cries out for others, and otherwise it is a Duratma."

6 Organization: All such brave men need to join together and form a strong organization. To give up personal ego, comfort and prestige in the interest of good of others is another essential characteristic of bravery. Swamiji himself did the arduous task organizing monks in his own lifetime. He gave himself totally to build up the organization.

Veereshwar Swami Vivekananda speaking at Rameshwar gave this call- "The longest night seems to be passing away, the seeming corpse appears to be awaking and a voice is coming to us — away back where history and even tradition fails to peep into the gloom of the past, coming down from there, reflected as it were from peak to peak of the infinite Himalaya of knowledge, and of love, and of work, India, this motherland of ours — a voice is coming unto us, gentle, firm, and yet unmistakable in its utterances, and is gaining volume as days pass by, and behold, the sleeper is awakening!and only the blind cannot see, or the perverted will not see, that she is awakening, this motherland of ours, from her deep long sleep. None can desist her any more; never is she going to sleep any more; no outward powers can hold her back any more....."

Let us all by performing intense penance in our own life make his dream comes true.

In quest of a Samadhi

Dr.Pratibha Athavale

It was Sunrise of the October 13, 1911, when Sister Nivedita left her mortal coil to integrate with the Ultimate, her last words being “This frail boat of life is sinking but I shall see the Sunrise”.

This year, 2011 marks the centenary of final offering of the dedicated Miss Margaret Nobel, a daughter of Ireland, at the feet of the Bharat Mata. Being inspired by Swami Vivekananda,



she left behind her nation, relatives, people and career and came to Bharat to serve her children. She adopted the Indian culture, tradition, freedom movement, her problems and what not. With the blessings of Sharada Maa she started a school

for girls – a first of its kind in modern times. But undauntedly took up to cleanse the streets and by-lanes of Calcutta, when plague broke out in 1899. She spear-headed the relief work of Sri Ramakrishna Mission. She unflinchingly followed the path shown by her Master-Swami Vivekananda. Miss Margaret Nobel did the noble work of “dedicating herself” to become Nivedita the dedicated. A saga of 13 years 8 months came to an end, as she dropped her mortal coil in the shelter provided by Mrs. & Mr. Basu at Darjeeling. A blazing personality on the land went up to cosmos to become a guiding star in the galaxy

of Bharat's innumerable patriots. She had preferred the final rites as per Hindu tradition, which were performed in the cremation ground of Darjeeling, where a modest memorial stands today.

This year being the centenary of her final dedication, I had an ardent desire to offer my humble pranams to her dedicated memory. While passing through the Kalimpong-New Jalpaigudi towards Darjeeling, I was all along trying to visualize her unseen Samadhi. A tinge of disappointment and surprise surfaced as none in the vicinity of Darjeeling-Kalimpong was able to guide me as to the location of the Samadhi. However Susri Aparna Didi of Vivekananda Kendra Kanyakumari with the guidance of Sri Sharada Math Sanyasinis



zeroed-on on a spot between Darjeeling Railway Station and Victoria Falls.



On May 12, 2011, I ventured out of Kalimpong by a taxi. After cruising through the enchanting tea-gardens on the hilly slopes, enjoying the cool



breeze and the mist-laden zig zag narrow roads, I reached the Darjeeling Railway Station. As guided by the local persons I proceeded to Vedant Mutt by taking a narrow track, Vedant Mutt is situated near 125 years old building,

housing a government high school.

The Vedant Mutt was founded by Swami Abhedananda-Gurubhai of Swami Vivekananda, in 1925. His Samadhi is also there in the Mutt premises. The Mutt has preserved the room and the articles used by Swami Abhedananda such as type-writer, pen, spectacles, dresses, Kamandalu, a miniature of Bhagavad Gita and Vyaghra-Charma. (Tiger-skin) besides the furniture like table, chair and a wooden cot. Swami Purushottamanand Maharaj, in-charge swamiji, welcome me. He was happy to know that someone from Ahmedabad has come all the way to offer pranams at the Samadhi of Sister Nivedita. He asked Brahmachari Akshay Chaitanya to take me to the Samadhi.

After climbing down the hilly track for half an hour we reached the cremation ground, where Sister Nivedita was cremated. On that place, under a blue octagonal canopy, on a pedestal stands a bluish 2 ½ ft. high statue of Sister Nivedita with a plaque. I saw the peaceful but determined expression on the face, laced with compassion, over-flowing with love for India and everything that is Indian. Nothing but the streams of tears came down to give way to the churning within. At last the wish to offer my pranams at her Samadhi became reality. I could have offered nothing more than the tears, had it not been for the accompanying Brahmachari, who had thoughtfully brought incense sticks and flowers. I chanted all the

slokas which I had learnt and performed the puja. As I was bowing down my head only one wish was flowing-let me also do what little I can for the people-the Narayana Seva. The statue being East-facing, the sunrays peering through the towering dense trees were illuminating the whole Samadhi area. Surrounded by the mountain ranges around and overlooking the deep valleys down, covered by the greenery, there was no tinge of moroseness, though the place is a cremation ground. Everything was inspiring and auspicious hallowed with enlivening peace. One must only personally visit this place to understand the full purport of this description. As we were returning to Vedant Mutt. Akshay Chaitanya Maharaj asked



“Having come this far would you like to visit the house – “Ray Villa” where Sister Nivedita spent her last days? Who will say no!

The “Ray Villa” is situated on a small hillock beyond Sherpa Tenzing Mountaineering Institute past Darjeeling Railway Station. This place has become historical and spiritual as it has witnessed the life of Sister Nivedita during the last phase, 3-4 months, of her life. I returned from the “Pilgrim place” duly re-charged for service to the fellow Indians.

Shodasa Samskara Refining Human Beings

N.Krishnamoorthi

Sowmya: Guruji! What are Samskaras?

Guruji: Samskaras are rituals performed by the Hindus. Their purpose is to secure maximum welfare for the recipient and develop her / his personality fully so that a raw, uncultivated human being blossoms first into a total human being, then into a Deva and is ultimately helped to realize the Paramatman in him.

Sowmya: What are the scriptures that authorize a Hindu to practise these samskaras?

Guruji: (1) Some Hymns of the Vedas
(2) a few Brahmanas (Portions of Vedas)
(3) the Grhyasutras
(4) the Dharma Sutras
(5) the Smritis and
(6) the later treatises.

Epics like the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the puranas including the Bhagavata record how Avatara purushas such as Sri Rama and Sri Krishna too underwent the samskaras.

Sowmya: At what Periods of a Person's growth are the Samskaras performed?

Guruji: We can classify samskaras on the basis of the different stages of a person's growth.

- (1) Samskaras before a person is born
- (2) Childhood Samskaras
- (3) Educational Samskaras
- (4) The marriage Samskaras
- (5) Funeral Ceremonies

Sowmya: There is a tradition of counting 16 Samskaras!

Guruji: Yes. They are

- (1) Garbhadhana (conception)
- (2) Pumsavana (engendering a male Child)
- (3) Simantonnayana (Parting the hair)
- (4) Jatakarman (natal rites)
- (5) Namakarana (naming)
- (6) Niskramana (first outing)
- (7) Annaprasana (first feeding with boiled rice)
- (8) Cudakarana (tonsure)
- (9) Karna-Vedha (Piercing the ear lobes)
- (10) Vidyarambha or Aksararambha (learning the alphabet)
- (11) Upanayana (holy thread ceremony)
- (12) Vedarambha (first study of the Vedas)
- (13) Kesanta (cutting the hair)
- (14) Samavartana (graduation)
- (15) Vivaha (marriage)
- (16) Antyesti (funeral)

But this is only one way of counting. Gautama Dharma sutras list 40 Samskaras four – Prebirth Samskaras, four post birth Samskaras, five of Vedic studies, Vivaha

- (1) Daily Mahayajnas (Five)
 - (2) Pakayajnas household Sacrifices minor ones, performed around an individual and his family (Seven)
 - (3) Haviryajnas (Seven)
 - (4) Elaborate offerings, somayajnas (Seven)
- the most elaborate yajnas charting Samaveda

Sowmya: Guruji, What exactly do we do when we perform a Samskara?

Guruji: There are

- (1) Fire Worship,
- (2) Prayers, appeals and blessings
- (3) Offerings in the fire
- (4) Lustration or sipping water, Sprinkling water, Bathing
- (5) Orientation with reference to sun, moon or stars facing at a particular direction for performing worship
- (6) Symbolism – mounting on a stone to become firm like a stone, looking at the polestar for becoming steady - fast, offering til and rice to mark fertility and prosperity, applying oil/ghee to mark love sneha, eating together as a symbol of union, touching the heart to mark union of hearts, grasping the hand to mark taking of responsibility.
- (7) Taboos or avoiding certain days, months, places, food, dress, objects etc.
- (8) Mantra / magic for safety, avoiding danger, pain, risk.
- (9) Divination or knowing the will of God.
- (10) Cultural elements such as social customs, usages, religious beliefs, rules about eugenics, ethics, hygiene, medicines,
- (11) Commonsense elements such as invitations, mirth, decoration, dress, garlands.
- (12) Spiritual atmosphere.

Sowmya: Oh! I did not know that the rituals of samskaras have physical, psychological, social and religious and spiritual significance and ethical, moral and medical advantages.

Guruji: Yes. Samskaras systematically, slowly, continuously, painlessly, elevate, enlighten and cultivate a person.

Sowmya: What is the role of women in Samskaras?

Guruji: Among the Samskaras Garbhadhana,

Pumsavana, Simantonnayana are performed exclusively for women. Jatakarman, Namakarana, Annaprasana and Cudakarana are for the new born child with the mother. Upanayana, Samavartana and Vivaha rites were performed for both men and women in ancient times. The Aryasamaj is trying to revive the samskaras for all. Antyesty is for both men and women. Even when a married man performs any samskara, his wife is to stand by him, touching him by a kusha grass, offering water etc. All the Samskaras for married men have to be performed, including pilgrimage and temple donation, dana, and atithisatkar in the presence and with the whole hearted support of, his wife.

Sowmya: How do samskaras help the social cause?

Guruji: Samskaras strengthen the family, community, improves in inter- personal relations and make the children remember their fore fathers even after a generation. In the beginning up to upanayana, the parents perform the samskaras for the Child. After upanayana the person performs some samskaras for himself. At the time of vivaha, through Nandi Shraddha, the parents entrust the responsibility of running the household to the son. After Vivaha, the Couple perform the samskaras for themselves. After the sixtieth year of the father, the son performs all the samskaras including celebrating 60th, 81st birthdays of his parents. The son also performs the funeral. In this manner, samskaras link generations of people.

Sowmya: What are the moral worth and spiritual worth of samskaras?

Guruji: The purpose of Samskaras in a person's personal, social and spiritual life is very great. They are based on faith and weave the individual into the fabric of the society. The performance of samskaras removes the evil influences and invokes the beneficial ones. The samskaras serve a cultural purpose by getting for the individual, wealth, health,

intellect and all that he could desire for, within the framework of dharma. The samskaras also help a person in forming and developing one's personality. It is a process of consciously moulding the character of the individuals instead of letting the people grow in a haphazard way. Samskaras also systematize the social language of self-expression at the time of joy or sorrow. Finally, samskaras confer on a man a higher religious sanctity by removing the impurities and enabling him to practise those divine virtues which separate a man from animals and take him to the Gods.

The samskaras do not ask an uninitiated man to throw away his body. Instead, they ask him to use it as a valuable possession to be made holy and pure so that the body may become a fit instrument of expression for the indwelling spirit.

Sowmya: But atman does not require any samskaras. Atman is pure. The atman does not require samskaras. The Atman is Pure and Morally Perfect!

Guruji: True! the pure Atman does not require samskaras. The Atman under a cloud of maya is called Jiva. The Jiva carries the burden of karma and has to be purified by samskaras and practice of eight Atmagunas.

Sowmya: Naturally I shall ask what are the eight Atmagunas?

Guruji: The Upanishads the Gita, the yoga texts and the Dharma Shastras describe the virtues of the perfect human being Mukta Purusha. They are

(1) Daya (2) Kshanthi (3) Anasuya (4) Soucham (external and internal Cleanliness) (5) Anayasam (light-heartedness) (6) Mangalam (auspiciousness) (7) Akarpanyam (generosity) (8) Aspruha (detachment).

Sowmya: How frequently are the samskaras performed?

Guruji: There is a clear time table / calendar for

performing the samskaras. Samskaras upto Vivaha are to be performed once in a life time. Sandhya / Gayatri Japa are to be performed 3 times a day. Agnihotra, Aupasana and panchamaha yagnas are to be performed daily. Darsa purnamasa and sthalipaka are to be performed once in a fortnight. Parvani is a monthly ritual. The rest are to be performed once in a year or once in a life time.

Sowmya: Your said pancha maha yagnas. They do not come within shodasa samskaras!

Guruji: Pancha maha yagnas come within the expanded list of 40 Samskaras. The five maha yagnas link a man with the Devas, the unseen forces of Creation. The Pitr yagna is a daily requirement asking man to remember his forefathers from whom he has inherited the family tradition, wealth, honour, culture and virtues. The Manushya yagna asks man to treat a guest as God. Bhuta yagna encourages man to consider the entire creation as his kin. Offering food to the dogs, crows, ants, snakes, cows and watering the trees planted in public places are all rites of great social merit. Here religion, dharma, environmental awareness and social responsibility become one. The Brahma yagna is a daily ritual of thanksgiving to the great Rishis who left us an inheritance of spiritual wisdom, civilization and personal ethics.

Sowmya: Why do we attach so much significance to antyeshti (funeral)?

Guruji: It is the most sentimental moment of one's life, when a beloved father or mother passes away. The funeral samskaras systematically separate the soul from the body and send the soul (Atman) on its spiritual journey to join the Paramatman. Kaushitaki Upanishad, Chhandogya Upanishad and Samkara's commentary on the Brahmasutras describe the Atman's last journey. For a righteous (Dharmic) person, who has spent his whole life as a yajna, his cremation is the last yajna 'ANTIMISHTI'.

Sowmya: Do the Hindu samskaras have any scientific approval?

Guruji: Our rishis are more far sighted than the scientists. The samskaras have great influence on the growth of a person. A new born child's skull is very soft. Chudakarana, tonsuring ceremony marks the thickening of the skull which can withstand shaving by a knife. Anna prashana is what modern science calls weaning food, the child being taken away from mothers milk and put on solid food. Nishkramana marks the child crossing psychological barriers and coming out of its home. The importance of proper care for a pregnant women and its effect on the future of the child are being appreciated more and more by modern science.

Sowmya: Do other countries and other cultures practise the equivalent of samskaras?

Guruji: Roman, Iranian, Parsi, Greek, Christian and Islamic civilizations have some samskaras like BAPTISM, NAMING, BATH, and INITIATION (DIKSHA) which can be compared to Hindu samskaras.

Sowmya: In total how will you sum of the effect and usefulness of Hindu Samskaras!

Guruji: The word samskaras on the basis of our discussion can be taken to mean the following

(1) Education (2) Cultivation (3) Training (4) Refinement (5) Perfection (6) Grammatical Purity (7) Polishing (8) Embellishment (9) Decoration (10) Ornament (11) Impression (12) Form (13) Mould (14) Operation (15) Influence (16) Connative tendency giving rise to recollected knowledge (17) A Purificatory rite (18) A Sacred Ceremony (19) Consecration (20) Sanctification (21) Hallowing (22) Effect of Past Work (23) Merit of action.

Sowmya: Naturally, a person going through such an effective path of "MANMAKING" will come out as a GEM of a Human Being!

Guruji: That is how our country was able to give birth to great Human Beings again and again.

For our national welfare, we must first seek out at the present day all the spiritual forces of the race, as was done in days of yore and will be done in all times to come. National union in India must be a gathering up of its scattered spiritual forces. A nation in India must be a union of those whose hearts beat to the same spiritual tune.



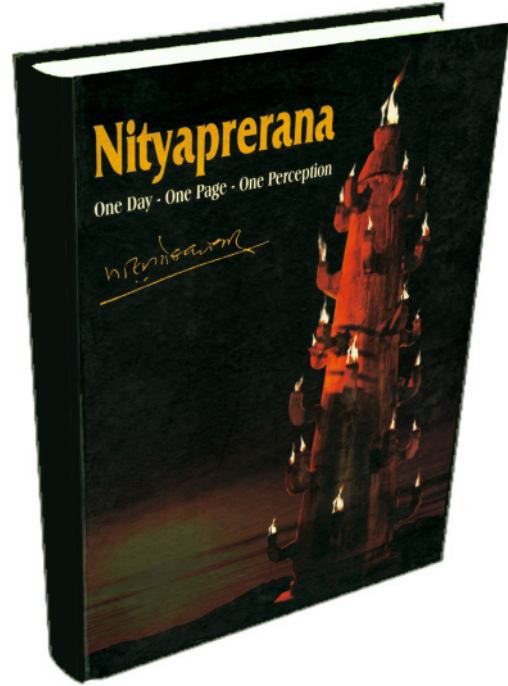
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A new genre of Books condensing the writings and utterances of sages and savants has emerged in India to suit the readers of the fast-paced age. Swami Paramananda's (a monk of Shri Ramakrishna order) Thought for the day set the trend. Shrimat Swami Chidbhavanandaji's Daily Divine digest, Gita press's Dainandin Gita, are very popular publications having been sold lakhs of copies. Brahma Chaitanya Gondawalaker Maharaj's writings have been selected and published for daily study. J. P.Vasvaniji has published stories for daily reading.

This kind of books places an onerous responsibility on the editors because, each passage should be self-explanatory even if it is prised out of the context in which sage uttered them originally. And more so, if the original is well known among the readers, because the selections have to contend with well-read clientele and have to win their approval.

Shri Guruji, the revered patriot-saint who walked the path laid out by Shri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda and Swami Akhandananda was a unique Karma Yogi, whose essays and letters are treasured by our people. That he found time to pen 30,000 letters and gave out literature that could fill 12



volumes speaks of the importance he attached to building men of character as a part of his Nation-building Yajna through his SAHITYA.

Shri Guruji's centenary gave the Nation an opportunity to bring out new editions of his writings and speeches as standard collected editions in almost all Indian languages.

His erudition and clarity of thinking and precision of expression were legendary. Coming out his soul's conviction, his words were law to number of workers and left a scripture like impact on the readers/listener.

The writings of saints have a contextual relevance as well as eternal validity. They continue to inspire people to positive action, to purity of thought.

The team of editors and translators (whose

names we are lucky to get from the appendix of the book) are all veterans of standing, having compiled, the Hindi and Marathi volumes of this book. The English rendering is smooth, readable and inspring.

Content wise, the writings touch upon Bharat's eternal culture, its vision of a complete Human being, the need for unity of our people, the idea of power for peace, the importance of building a rejuvenated Bharat as the first step to build a rejuvenated world and the ideal of Adi Shankaracharya interalia. There are inspring references, to Swami Vivekananda, the all inclusive Nature of Hindu Dharma and a stern warning against the converting and divisive religious forces.

Many facets of Hindu Dharma are invoked - cow protection, respect for woman, village democracy – the specialty of our Nation, all come in for study.

Encyclopaediac in its approach, pithy in its statements, this book stands on the strength of Shri Guruji's Tapasya – his life and thoughts were perfectly matched.

Neatly printed, well-bound with a plastic wrapper, this book is bound to reach a wide section of our people-Patriots, workers, students of our culture and all those who try to position Mother Bharat in Her proper place in the contemporary world. The somewhat high price (Rs.300/-) will come down certainly when more copies are printed in the future. A couple of proof readings misses could have been avoided.

In all, a product of the labour of love and reverence, this book will be a companion for daily Sadhana for patriot-workers.

N.Krishnamoorthi

Clusters are significant to Indian economy

Prof.P.Kanagasabapathi

A cluster is a geographical area or a location around which a number of enterprises engaged in the same or related industry or business function. Usually there may be tens or hundreds of similar or interconnected enterprises in and around an area. Sometimes there may be thousands of units in a particular cluster and it may be spread across a few kilometers also.

Surat, Namakkal, Ludhiana, Agra are examples of clusters. Clusters exist in different parts of the country, though their presence varies across states and regions. The clusters are of different sizes and types, as also their products and services. The nature and reach of the clusters also vary. There are completely village based clusters and there are urban clusters. Some of the village based clusters even supply their products to different states. Due to the unique background of the clusters in the country, the state agencies find it difficult to identify them properly and collect details.

The United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) had

noted earlier in the late 1990s that “there are approximately 350 small scale industrial clusters and around 2000 rural and artisan based clusters contributing to almost 60 per cent of the manufactured exports and 40 percent of the employment in the manufacturing industry.” Later the Ministry of Small Scale Industries, Government of India in its All India Census of Small Scale Industries 2001-02 had estimated that there were 2042 clusters functioning in the country.

Due to reasons such as the smallness in size of the enterprises, lack of contact with institutions and the state apparatus and operations from remote and underdeveloped areas, many of the enterprises and clusters remain not formally registered with the government. As per the official details, 1223 clusters were in the registered sector functioning across 26 states and 819 in the unregistered sector covering 25 states and union territories.

There were more than 15 lakh units in clusters contributing to a gross output of Rs.42, 169 crores in the small scale industries sector during 2001-02. As a result these clusters have with them, more than one third of the total enterprises functioning in the country, covering 521 different products. Uttar Pradesh has the largest number of clusters with a total of 288 clusters, having more than 3



A borewell being erected

lakh enterprises. One could notice clusters that are engaged in the same or similar activities throughout the country. For example, there are more than 150 furniture and fixture, wooden clusters with 100 or more units in 22 states from Tamil Nadu in the south to Jammu & Kashmir in the north, and Gujarat in the west to Mizoram in the east.

Studies on clusters reveal important facts that are relevant to the understanding of our economy and businesses. Almost all these clusters are the initiatives of the local people, largely without the support from the governments and their mechanisms. Many surveys, including those by the international agencies, vouchsafe this fact. About a decade back Chadha noted this: "A recent UNIDO survey of 138 industrial clusters in India shows that only 13 of these clusters were induced by government policy while the remaining 125 grew spontaneously at the initiative of entrepreneurs themselves."

So the efforts of the governments and their expenditure to develop the industrial and business centres called clusters are almost nil or very minimal, especially during the initial stages. On the contrary, most of the time the clusters undertake the responsibility of the state and creates the facilities required by people who live in and around them. As a result schools, colleges, temples, marriage halls, recreational centres and such other facilities needed for public utility are developed by the people belonging to the clusters.

Coimbatore is a multi-cluster centre with different clusters such as pump



Borewell rig on lorries

manufacturing, foundries, wet grinders etc., It is entirely home grown, without any investments worth mentioning by the state. Its entry and growth in several fields, connected to each other in different ways, is truly amazing. In the recent years, Coimbatore has emerged as a

major educational centre in the south attracting students from different parts of the country. What is the background to it? Earlier some of the philanthropic people from among the entrepreneurial class from this cluster took up the responsibility of establishing institutions to provide education to their own local population. What were started as polytechniques to train youngsters as mechanics and operators for the local workshops and foundries, have over the years become reputed engineering institutions turning out graduates for bigger organizations across the country.

It is interesting to note that some of the clusters have been promoting their organizations to take up tasks that the governments have failed to do for decades. For example, Siruthuli in Coimbatore has been taking steps to preserve water resources, while Valam in Tirupur is undertaking public infrastructure development. There are numerous initiatives at the family and the society levels in many of

A Cycle manufacturing unit in Ludhiana



these clusters across the country, to provide what best they could to the society.

Most of the clusters are major players at the state and regional levels, while many of them have emerged at the national level and a good number at the international level. Namakkal and Sankagiri, situated in the rural backgrounds, are the top two transport clusters in the country, while the neighboring town of Thiruchengode is known across the length and breadth of the country for its rig industry. Clusters such as Surat and Tirupur have already become established global business centres.

There are two clusters namely diamond and textiles in Surat. The turnover of Surat diamond business alone exceeds Rs.80,000 crores. The contributions of different clusters in Gujarat to diamond business have helped the Indians to dominate the international diamond market in Belgium. Ludhiana is the largest centre for bicycles and spares in the world, while Bastinow in Jullundar is one of the biggest sports lanes frequented by sports personalities from all over the world.

It is important to understand that the economic development of India, to a significant extent, is driven by the clusters. Contribution of clusters is one of the major reasons for Gujarat emerging as an economically advanced state growing at a higher level. Clusters such as Rajkot, Morvi and Jamnagar, apart from Surat, have been contributing enormously to the economic and business development of the state. Studies conducted in states such as Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Punjab show that they owe their economic progress due to the successful functioning of clusters.

What is more striking is that the regions where clusters function successfully are economically advanced, while the other regions in the same state remain without much development. The



Namakkal - a Lorry hub

western part of Tamil Nadu is the most prosperous region of the state as it has many well functioning clusters. Parts of the state in the southern region are also richer as there are well known clusters such as Sivakasi and Virudhunagar. The regions that do not have successful clusters have not come up economically.

It is hence no exaggeration to state that the contribution of clusters to the development of economy and businesses in different parts of India is noteworthy. In most of the places it is the clusters that have driven the local economies towards progress. Therefore the clusters remain critical to the effective functioning of the Indian economy.

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The Prevention of Communal and Targeted Violence (Access to Justice and Reparation) Bill 2011 - A Review

Dr. M.N. Buch

Ever since the riots in Gujarat post Godhra the so-called civil rights groups have been gunning for Narendra Modi and the Gujarat Government. The allegation is that the riots which targeted Muslims were instigated and supported by the ruling party, BJP, with encouragement by government which ensured that the administration failed to react positively and suppress the riots. It is alleged that, for example, in Ahmedabad the Police Commissioner allowed politicians, especially two ministers, to take over the Police Control Room, who then prevented the police from taking effective action against the rioters. These groups state that the existing laws do not permit intervention by the Central Government and, therefore, it is necessary to have a new law aimed specifically at communal riots. It is in this context that the National Advisory Council has prepared the draft of a Bill bearing the title "Prevention of Communal and Targeted Violence (Access to Justice and Reparation) Bill 2011".

At this stage perhaps it is necessary to set the record right and place the post Godhra riots in

perspective. Gujarat can be divided into distinct regions, starting with Kuchh and Saurashtra, North Gujarat, including Sabarkantha and Banaskantha Districts, Central and Eastern Gujarat consisting of Ahmedabad, Mehsana, Khera, Baroda, Panchmahals Districts and South Gujarat starting from Bharuch and including Valsad, Navasari and Surat Districts. Even under British rule South, Central and Eastern Gujarat had a history of communal tension. Even in the



2002 riots North Gujarat, Kuchh and Saurashtra remained peaceful, or if there was any trouble the DMs and SPs acted firmly and did not allow an ugly situation to develop. The Police Commissioner of Surat also acted with firmness and with the assistance of the

district administration was able to ensure peace. The main problem arose in Ahmedabad, Mehsana, Khera, Baroda and Panchmahals Districts. Incidentally, the worst communal riots in the history of Gujarat occurred during the Congress regime when Hitendra Desai was Chief Minister. Therefore, to target Narendra Modi alone for communal violence in Gujarat flies in the face of the record.

The neighbouring state of Maharashtra has had far more number of incidents of communal riots when the BJP was not in power, but because the object of this paper is to not to make a comparison of guilt, no more than a passing reference is made to this fact. In the explanatory note on key provisions of the proposed Bill prepared on 19th May, 2011, the persons who drafted it define vulnerable groups as consisting of religious and linguistic minorities, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and go on to state, " Tragically it is for these very groups that the existing provisions of law fail because of a similar systemic bias in the administrative and criminal justice machinery against these most disadvantaged groups. Thus their vulnerability stands twice enhanced. These are the groups that this Bill seeks to protect". However, underlying the draft of this Bill is the belief that the Central Government should have the powers to intervene where communal rioting occurs and where the state administration does not react effectively and positively. The constitutional scheme is that under Article 1, "India, that is, Bharat shall be a Union of States". It is a fact that the Constitution is heavily weighted in favour of the Centre, especially because under Article 248 residuary powers of legislation vest in Parliament. Nevertheless, the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution, which gives the respective jurisdictions of Parliament and the State Legislatures, reinforces the federal structure of India and the autonomy of the States on which the Centre can encroach only at the cost of making federalism weak. Public order and police are within the exclusive legislative competence of the State Legislatures as per Entries 1 and 2 of the State List of the Seventh Schedule.

Both constitutionally and as a practical proposition it is the state administration which is required to maintain order. If the State Police finds itself unequal to the task government can

call for assistance from the Central Government by way of making available Central Armed Police Forces. Under List 1 of the Seventh Schedule, Entry 1A, such forces can be deployed in any state in aid of the civil power. The requisition, however, has to come from the State Government and this cannot be altered by a specific law dealing with communal violence. Incidentally, section 130 Cr. P.C. goes further than anything contained in the proposed Bill because any Executive Magistrate may call upon the armed forces of the Union, including the military, to come to his aid in dispersing an unlawful assembly and to restore order. Under the Constitution this power cannot be made available to a federal officer unless under Article 356 of the Constitution the President has issued a proclamation taking over all or any of the functions of the State Government, including law and order. It might be worth mentioning here that the very civil society groups who are pushing this Bill are the ones which have also been the loudest in proclaiming the need for greater state autonomy and have decried the encroachment of the federal government in state affairs. The definitions given in the Bill are such that federal intervention in state affairs is built in if it can even be remotely shown that the law and order situation is targeting a group defined as a minority under the proposed section 3 (e) of the Bill.

If the objective of the Bill is to protect the minorities, then it should have a provision that the minute a so-called communal riot begins the Central Government can step in. This could even be done by invoking Article 356 of the Constitution, clause (1) (a) of which reads, "(The President may) assume to himself all or any of the functions of the Government of a State..." The State Government need not be dismissed nor the legislature dissolved. Only for the limited purpose of restoring order the Executive Magistracy and Police may

temporarily come under Central control. The fact is that after the partition of India in 1947 all communal riots have ultimately been suppressed within about a week or ten days, which means that by the time the Centre can step in the riot would have ended, either because of police action by the State or by sheer exhaustion of the rioting parties. In the 80s of the last century Meerut was the prime example of communal riots in which the State Government repeatedly called upon the army for aid. Even in this situation the riots lasted till such time as the Hindus started feeling the pinch of the properties being destroyed and the Muslims the pinch of its community members being killed. At that stage the rioting stopped. If the purpose of this Bill is to allow the Centre to step in, then it does not fulfill this purpose and instead it opens the doors to dangerous interventions which are politically motivated and strike directly at the autonomy of the States.

To come to specifics, the Bill is fundamentally flawed. Section 3 (e) defines a group as a religious or linguistic minority in any State, or scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. All scheduled castes are Hindu for the very simple reason that caste is a function of the Hindu religion only because no other religion recognises the existence of castes. Therefore, to state that a member of the scheduled castes is a minority despite the fact that he may profess the Hindu religion would be a contradiction in terms. That is why there is a special Act called Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act. How can this new Bill subsume that Act? On the question of definition, what about the fact that though the Muslims are a minority in the State of Kerala, there are perhaps four districts in the State where they are a majority. This means that despite the fact that within a district the Hindus may be in the minority and prone to attack by the majority community within the

district, violence against the Hindus would not be deemed to be communal or targeted violence. One can refer here to the Mapilla riots in the 1920s which specifically targeted Hindus in the then district of Malabar. Would the attack on the train in Godhra really come under the definition of communal violence? Not in the eyes of this Bill.

The Code of Criminal Procedure and the Indian Police Act of 1861 clearly lay down that it is the duty of the police to maintain public order, prevent the commission of offences, disperse unlawful assemblies and use necessary force in order to restore order and tranquility. The Executive Magistracy has a decisive role in this behalf. Nonperformance of duty is also actionable. For example, under section 29 of the Indian Police Act a police officer who fails to do his duty is liable to both imprisonment and a fine. So far as the All India Service officers are concerned, the ultimate cadre controlling authority for IAS and IPS officers is the Central Government and if a member of these Services is guilty of dereliction of duty and the State Government does not take action, the Central Government can always take him on deputation to the Centre and charge-sheet him. We do not need a separate law for this purpose.

The Indian Penal Code already defines and provides for penalty for rioting, giving provocation with intent to causing a riot, promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, etc., doing acts prejudicial to the maintenance of harmony, making any imputation or assertion prejudicial to national integration or imputing that a class of persons, however defined, is working against the integrity of the nation. The Code defines offences against person and property, including causing hurt, committing culpable homicide amounting to murder, wrongful restraint, rape, mischief by arson or

otherwise and similar acts which cause hurt to a person or damage to his property. If these provisions of law are not enforced, why is it expected that a new law will lead to better enforcement? If it is a question of the quantum of punishment, then suitable amendments can be brought about in the Indian Penal Code and penalties enhanced if there is a communal riot.

There are major lacunae in the proposed Bill. In the district of Jhabua ninety-four percent of the population is tribal and incidents of attack by non-tribals on tribals are nonexistent. Supposing a tribal group attacks non-tribals? If the magistracy or the police are derelict in their duty does it mean that they will not be called to account because this riot does not fall within the definition of communal violence? Supposing one minority group attacks another? In the Panchmahals District in 2002 Muslims were targeted by the Bhils. Will they be treated as Hindus who attack Muslims or would they be part of one minority group attacking another minority group, thus taking the riot out of the ambit of communal violence? The Bill raises more questions than it answers.

The Bill proposes the setting up of the National Authority for Communal Harmony, Justice and Reparation (National Commission in short). It also provides for setting up of an equivalent State Authority. In both cases the composition of the Authority is a Chairman, Vice Chairman and five other members. At least four of these would have to belong to a group defined under section 3 (e), that is, a minority. In other words, the National Authority and State Authority would be heavily weighted against the majority community, that is, the Hindus. What the Bill virtually states is that a community which comprises about eighty-two percent of the population of India will in perpetuity be deemed to be anti secular, communally oriented, given to violence against the minorities and not to be trusted in any matter

relating to the minorities. The Bill could have gone further and stated that no member of a majority community will be appointed to the Executive Magistracy or the police because by definition such a person would be a communalist at heart. The real target of this Bill is not the protection of the minorities. It is a public statement that in this country the majority cannot be trusted to be secular and, therefore, an authority which is weighted in favour of the minorities will decide on all issues relating to inter-communal relations. Have the persons who drafted this Bill completely lost their sanity? Do they expect that the majority community will sit quiet whilst it is tarred with the stigma of communalism? This is a totally unacceptable position in democratic India.

There are any numbers of issues on which one can comment. For example, the District Collector is trusted to assess damage in a natural calamity and to fix compensation. Even under the Delhi Police Act he is the person who determines the cost of employment of additional police, the charges imposed by way collective fine on the inhabitants of a disturbed area and such other matters. It is he who determines the compensation in case of injury by an unlawful assembly. Under the Communal Violence Bill the Collector is not trusted and instead the work has been given to a state and district assessment committee. Which officer serving as a Collector and District Magistrate, Superintendent of Police or Commissioner of Police would ever accept such a situation? The provisions in the Bill are an affront to every D.C., in the country and this reduces the efficacy of the District Administration.

Under Entry 3 of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution criminal law and criminal procedure are in the Concurrent List. All that is needed is an amendment in the Code of Criminal Procedure whereby under a given set

of circumstances, to be prescribed in the amendment, which would include communal violence, the Central Government would acquire the power to give suitable directions to the District Magistrate, the Superintendent of Police or the Commissioner of Police. Virtually this would place the law and order machinery in a district under central control for the period for which a notification is issued under Cr.P.C. Under the Representation of Peoples Act all officers and departments of the State Government dealing with elections come under the direct control of the Election Commission and, therefore, Central control in matters of law and order is feasible under law.

If the purpose of the Prevention of Communal Violence Bill is to ensure effective action, prevent and suppress communal violence, then a simple amendment of Cr.P.C. would be adequate, especially if this is accompanied by firm action by the Central Government against All India Service officers serving as DMs and SPs if they are derelict in their duty. If the objective is to humiliate the majority community by dubbing it as the only community capable of communal violence, then the Communal Violence Bill is just fine. Actually it should be scrapped and thrown into the nearest dustbin.

Obituary

Smt. Indirabai Wagle, a well-wisher and a big donor of Vivekananda Kendra, expired on 12th August 2011. She was 96. Smt. Wagle, known as Wagle Mavashi, in Kendra was associated with Kendra since last more than 12 years. Shri Shripadji Wagle, her husband was serving with A.C.C. After retirement, Shri and Smt Wagle settled in Pune. They were introduced to Vivekananda Kendra, by Shri Satishji, our Life worker. Smt Wagle was maternal Aunt of Shri Satishji. At the suggestion of Shri Satishji, both of them visited Vivekananda Rock Memorial. They also visited our Kendra at Kanyakumari and got information about various activities of Kendra. Both of them were so much impressed by Kendra work, that Shri Wagle instantly declared that he would donate all his shares to Vivekananda Kendra.



After the demise of Shri Wagle, Smt Indirabai expressed that she would donate and transfer all shares to Kendra immediately and accordingly completed all formalities and handed over the shares to Kendra authorities. The value of shares donated by her amounted to a big amount of more than Rs. 50 lakhs. She wished that these funds should be utilised for the activities of Kendra in the tribal area of Nasik Dist. for the benefit of Tribal people. Accordingly, the funds are being used for the activities of our "Vivekananda Kendra Prashikshan and Seva Prakalpa, at Pimplad, Dist Nasik.

Wagle Mavashi was so enthusiastic that she personally, at her age of 90 years, visited the Prakalpa and saw the work being done there.

All our kendra karyakartas were welcome to her house. Till the last moment Mavashi was absolutely normal, had a strong memory and an appreciable balance of mind.

Wagle Mavashi will be remembered by Vivekananda Kendra, for ever.

May God bestow peace on the departed soul.

Vivekananda Kendra Samachar

VIVEKANANDA KENDRA MATRIC HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL, VALLIOOR – NEW BLOCK INAUGURAL CELEBRATION

New Block inaugural celebration of Vivekananda Kendra Matric Hr. Sec. School, Vallioor went off well on Monday, June 20 at 10. a.m. The New Block was inaugurated by Poojya Swami. Chaitanyananda Maharaj from Vellimalai, Vivekananda Ashram and Su. Nivedita, Vice President of Vivekananda Kendra Kanyakumari. Also adjoined and blessed the inaugural function.



In that fine occasion Swamiji delivered a declarative speech which inspired the students to study with aim and asked the students not to loose their confident on attaining their aim.



Swami. Chaitanyananda Inaugurating the new block

Sister Nivedita, Vice President of Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari delivered perspective speech on that pleasant occasion. She quoted that the development of school is not based on building more blocks and rooms, but really it is based on the expansion of intellect and improvement of knowledge of the students. The specialty of Computer is as per the rapid work of the parts in computer to fulfill the target. As like the real development of the

school in based on the students knowledge improvement. Thus sister Nivedita provided a lot of information to the students through her speech. The presence of sister really decorate the function very special.

Su. Aparna, All India Vyavastha Pramukh, Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari also participated in the function and made the celebration very beauty.

The Correspondent of Vivekananda Kendra Matric. Hr. Sec. School, Vallioor, Shri. S. K. Subramanian has arranged all the needful to the function in order to make the function in a grand level.

Vivekananda Kendra Vidyalaya, Kanyakumari celebrates the twin festivals Rakshabandhan & Gokulashtami on 20th Aug 2011 at 2.30 P.M. Sethulakshmi of class XI welcome the gathering. Man. Krishnamoorthy, Secretary, RDP, Vivekananda Kendra was the Chief Guest. While he was speaking, he explained the Guru Bhakthi of Lord Krishna. Also Krishna asked his mother Devaki a Boon, that His life fully he wants eat food from his mother's hand. So many Krishna songs were sung by our Vidyalaya Children (Gopikas). Uriyadi was also performed. Krishna & Gopika dance was given a feast to all our eyes. At the end of the program rakhi was tied to our chief guest and all our students. After getting the divine blessing from Krishna, prasadam was given to all our students.



Sri Krishnamoorthy addressing the audience

