



YUVA BHARATI

Voice of Youth

Vol.39 No.10

Vaishakh-Jyestha 5114

May 2012

₹.15/-



The remedy for weakness is not brooding over weakness, but thinking of strength. Teach men of strength that is already within them.

Swami Vivekananda

Youth are not useless, they are used less...

Swami Chinmayananda



Mass Suryanamaskar Programme at Kovilpatti





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Vol.39 No.10 Vaishakh-Jyeshtha 5114 May 2012 ₹.15/-

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CONTENTS

Editorial	03
The Call to the Youth	05
His spirit lives on...	11
India does not depend on foreign investments	14
Sayajirao Gaekwad- the king who assisted Ambedkar and others	17
Visionary Swami Vivekananda -a Realist par Excellence	19
Understanding "The Family" Various approaches	30
The War Inside	35

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Invocation



Aayur yajnena kalpataam
Fraano yajnena kalpataam
Cakshur yajnena kalpataam
Srotram yajnena kalpataam

May we gain all power to our life through sacrifice, all power to our life-breath through sacrifice, all power to our eyes through sacrifice and all power to our ears through sacrifice.

Yajurveda 9 - 21

BEEF FESTIVAL IN HYDERABAD



UNIVERSITY CAMPUS

Recently University of Hyderabad saw some deadly clashes over a 'beef eating' feast. Students clashed and fought against each other. Those who conducted the 'festival' claimed that eating beef was part of Dalit culture and hence attempt to suppress it was anti-democratic and anti-Dalit. Soon the media and the 'progressive' elements joined the chorus on expected lines. Eating beef is our cultural right they said. In a Pavlovian reaction Marxist historian D.N.Jha's book that claims that Vedic Brahmins sacrificed and ate cow, was dusted out and got quoted like a scripture by 'intellectual' debaters. Another attempt has been made at different levels to condition Dalit culture with beef eating.

This raises a lot of issues. Beyond the political rhetoric is it true that beef eating is part of Dalit culture? Many 'scholars' at once bounce upon Dr.Ambedkar's book 'The Untouchables' in which he states that the resurgent Brahminism used beef eating as a tool to suppress Dalits who were actually those who refused to reconvert to Brahminism. Debatable as they are, Dr.Ambedkar's theory nevertheless rejects the racial origins of untouchability propounded by Dravidianists and Marxists. For example, Dr.Ambedkar says: "If the Brahmins are Aryans, the Untouchables are also Aryans. If the Brahmins are Dravidians the Untouchables are also Dravidians. If the Brahmins are Nagas, the Untouchables are also Nagas. " With regard to ban on cow slaughter Dr. Ambedkar states that Buddhists were the first to campaign against cow slaughter: "The Buddhists rejected ... animal sacrifice, particularly of the cow. The objection to the sacrifice of the cow had taken a strong hold of the minds of the masses as they were an agricultural population and the cow was a very useful animal." He further notes that ban on cow-slaughter by Gupta kings, in itself is not the cause for untouchability. Further he associates refusal of Dalits to taking the carrion for meat as a symbol of social reform and rebellion against caste system. So associating of Dalit culture with meat eating as its core feature is against the vision of Dr. Ambedkar.

Dr. Ambedkar also recognized the civilizational rationale of cow veneration by Hindus. In his PhD thesis he stated: "The Hindoo devotion to the Cow has been an enigma to

most of the foreigners and above all has been an efficient lore in the hands of those half-baked theological failures who go to India to conduct their missionary propaganda for blackmailing the Hindoo. The origin of cow worship is as much economic as that Roman practice of not offering wine to the Gods from unpruned vines. The cow and for that matter all draft animals, is the soul of the farmers. The cow gives birth to oxen which are absolutely necessary to the cultivation of the farm. If we kill the cow for meat, we jeopardize our agricultural prosperity. With full foresight, the ancient Hindoos tabooed cow-flesh and thus prevented cow killing.”

In resonance with this rational basis of Hindu cow veneration, Dr. Ambedkar made cow protection part of the Directive Principles of Indian constitution. The Directive Principle -Article 48 of the constitution says: "The State shall endeavor to organise agriculture and animal husbandry on modern and scientific lines and in particular take steps for preserving and improving the breeds and prohibiting the slaughter of cows and other milch and draught cattle. In 1971, Justice Gajendragadkar, who was a Supreme Court Judge, stated regarding this directive principle thus: "The truth of the matter is that in providing for a ban on the slaughter of cows and calves, and other milch and draught cattle in the last part of Article 48, the Constitution, in effect, treated the Hindu sentiments as both relevant and valid in laying down the directive principle." It is interesting to note that Dr. Ambedkar made cow protection part of the scientific obligation of Indian nation rather than a religious edict to be followed. The same approach has been used by Marxist cultural anthropologist Marvin Harris when he explored the rationale for cow veneration by Hindus. Seen in this context, what happened at Hyderabad University campus, instigating students to violent clashes by peddling beef eating as a core Dalit cultural element, is nothing but sheer hate propaganda and dissemination of negative stereotype community relationships. Cow veneration based on rational scientific secular considerations is part of Modern India as envisioned by its architects including Baba Saheb Ambedkar. This is a shared legacy that belongs to Dalits and other Hindus.

Aravindan Neelakandan
YB-ET

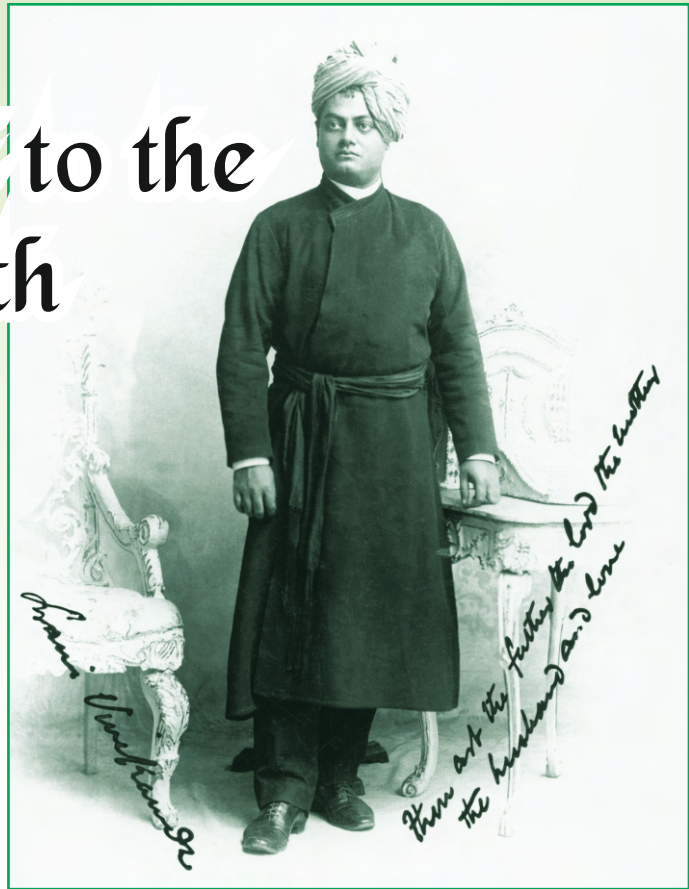
The Call to the Youth

Nivedita Raghunath Bhide

The gigantic plan of Swami Vivekananda for the regeneration of Bharat could be actualized only if hundred thousand men and women came forward to offer themselves for the work. Thus on his return wherever Swami Vivekananda went, his call was to the youth of Bharat. He felt,

Nothing will avail in our country without setting a glowing and living example before the people. What we want are some young men who will renounce everything and sacrifice their lives for the country's sake. We should first form their lives and then some real work can be expected. (Volume V 352)

As an ardent devotee sees only Gods' grace wherever he goes; Swami Vivekananda saw only the youth in his audience whether he was addressing the gathering in the South, East, or North India. He being the master communicator he addressed the youth at different places as the Young men of Madras, Young men of Bengal or You young men of



Lahore or You young Alwaris etc. While appreciating their unique characteristics and pinning his hopes on them, he exhorted them for national cause as his ultimate aim was that the whole humanity should get the spiritual light from awakened India. As the ultimate area of work was the arrogant West, he wanted to 'work among the English educated young men'. (Volume VI 276) He told his followers,

Act on the educated young men, bring them together, and organise them. Great things can be done by great sacrifices only. No selfishness, no name, no fame, yours or mine, nor my Master's even! Work, work the idea, the plan, my boys, my brave, noble, good souls -- to the wheel, to the wheel put your shoulders! Stop not to look

back for name, or fame, or any such nonsense. Throw self overboard and work. (Volume V 34)

Swami Vivekananda addressed the 'young men' in his speeches as we can imagine that in those days only men must be coming for the public lectures. But Swamiji's call was for both - men and women. He wanted,

...fiery young men intelligent and brave, who dare to go to the jaws of Death, and are ready to swim the ocean across. Do you follow me? We want hundreds like that, both men and women. (Volume VI 296)

Youth came in thousands to listen to him. Here was a man who gave them dreams, far more loftier dreams than just becoming a clerk or lawyer. Here was a hero for them who gave them a call to become heroes.

The chains that bind youth

For a decrepit society which had been under foreign rule for many years, there were many chains which bound the youth disabling them to come forward to sacrifice for the good of many.

Family: For some it was the familial affections which tied them up from jumping for the work of a bigger family like motherland. Swamiji himself had faced such dilemma: the need of the family and the need of the nation. But it was his love for masses which made him give up his nearest and dearest, though he was the eldest in the family which was passing through a difficult period. He wrote in one of his letters,

You had been to see my poor mother and brothers. I am glad you did. But you have touched the only soft place in my heart. You ought to know, Diwanji, that I am no hard-hearted brute. If there is any being I love in the whole world, it is my mother. ...on the

one hand, my vision of the future of Indian religion and that of the whole world, my love for the millions of beings sinking down and down for ages with nobody to help them, nay, nobody with even a thought for them; on the other hand, making those who are nearest and dearest to me miserable; I choose the former. ...Many and many in India could not understand me; and how could they, poor men? Their thoughts never strayed beyond the everyday routine business of eating and drinking. ...But appreciation or no appreciation, I am born to organise these young men; nay, hundreds more in every city are ready to join me; and I want to send them rolling like irresistible waves over India, bringing comfort, morality, religion, education to the doors of the meanest and the most downtrodden. (Volume VIII 297)

Thus out of his own experience and example Swamiji exhorted the youth,

Come, be men! Come out of your narrow holes and have a look abroad. See how nations are on the march! Do you love man? Do you love your country? Then come, let us struggle for higher and better things; look not back, no, not even if you see the dearest and nearest cry. Look not back, but forward! India wants the sacrifice of at least a thousand of her young men -- men, mind, and not brutes. (Volume V 10)

Career, a 'respectable' job is another hook that does not allow youth to jump for the greater good. Always the contention is first 'one should settle in life and then can think for others.' In those days becoming lawyer was the greatest dream of career a youth would have. Swami Vivekananda in one of his lectures said,

"This is the time to decide your future --

while you possess the energy of youth, not when you are worn out and jaded, but in the freshness and vigour of youth. Work -- this is the time; for the freshest, the untouched and unsmelled flowers alone are to be laid at the feet of the Lord, and such He receives. Rouse yourselves, therefore, for life is short. There are greater works to be done than aspiring to become lawyers and picking quarrels and such things. A far greater work is this sacrifice of yourselves for the benefit of your race, for the welfare of humanity. What is in this life? You are Hindus, and there is the instinctive belief in you that life is eternal. ...Life is short, but the soul is immortal and eternal, and one thing being certain, death, let us therefore take up a great ideal and give up our whole life to it. (Volume III 304)

One's own Mukti: There is another chain which binds some. This chain is more deceptive as apparently the person is extricating oneself from all chains. This chain is - the striving for one's own Mukti. Swamiji asked candidly, "If you want to give up everything for your own salvation, it is nothing. Do you want to forgo even your own salvation for the good of the world?" (VI 280) At Lahore he said,

Therefore, young men of Lahore, raise once more that mighty banner of Advaita, for on no other ground can you have that wonderful love until you see that the same Lord is present everywhere.At the present time there are men who give up the world to help their own salvation. Throw away everything, even your own salvation, and go and help others. Ay, you are always talking bold words, but here is practical Vedanta before you. Give up this little life of yours. What matters it if you die of

starvation -- you and I and thousands like us -- so long as this nation lives? (Volume III 430)

"The young, the energetic, the strong, the well - built, the intellectual"-- for them is the task."

Though his call was for youth, it was not for any youth - a weakling, lazy or a dull person. He often quoted the Upanishad saying, "The young, the energetic, the strong, the well - built, the intellectual"-- for them is the task." His call to the youth was not only for joining hands with him in his work of national regeneration but his call was also for 'forming their lives'. It had to be the offering of the strong and mighty and not of a refuse. It had to be the surrender of the best. "The earths bravest and the best have to sacrifice for the good of many". From place to place his call went forth to the youth to develop these qualities in them.

Be strong

First of all, our young men must be strong'. Religion will come afterwards. Be strong, my young friends; that is my advice to you.You will understand the mighty genius and the mighty strength of Krishna better with a little of strong blood in you. You will understand the Upanishads better and the glory of the Atman when your body stands firm upon your feet, and you feel yourselves as men. (Volume III p 242)

Be fearless

Be not afraid, for all great power, throughout the history of humanity, has been with the people. From out of their ranks have come all the greatest geniuses of the world, and history can only repeat itself. Be not afraid of anything. You will do marvellous work. The moment you fear, you are nobody. It is fear that is the great

cause of misery in the world. It is fear that is the greatest of all superstitions. It is fear that is the cause of our woes, and it is fearlessness that brings heaven even in a moment. Therefore, "Arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached." (Volume 321)

Love your fellow men

I do not believe in a God or religion which cannot wipe the widow's tears or bring a piece of bread to the orphan's mouth. ...The eye is in the forehead and not in the back. Move onward and carry into practice that which you are very proud to call your religion, and God bless you! Love shall win the victory. Do you love your fellow men? Where should you go to seek for God -- are not all the poor, the miserable, the weak, Gods? Why not worship them first? Believe in the omnipotent power of love. (Volume V 50)

Be Unselfish

Who cares for these tinsel puffs of name? I never keep watch of what the newspapers are saying. Have you love?-- you are omnipotent. Are you perfectly unselfish? If so, you are irresistible. It is character that pays everywhere. It is the Lord who protects His children in the depths of the sea. Your country requires heroes; be heroes! God bless you! (Volume V 50)

Do not lead, Serve

Do not be afraid of a small beginning, great things come afterwards. Be courageous. Do not try to lead your brethren, but serve them. The brutal mania for leading has sunk many a great ship in the waters of life. Take care especially of that, i.e. be unselfish even unto death, and work. (Volume V 36)

No jealousy

Let us wipe off first that mark which nature always puts on the forehead of a slave -- the stain of jealousy. Be jealous of none. Be ready to lend a hand to every worker of good. Send a good thought for every being in the three worlds. (Volume IV 350)

Manifest the Divinity

Manifest the divinity within you, and everything will be harmoniously arranged around it. Remember the illustration of Indra and Virochana in the Vedas; both were taught their divinity. But the Asura, Virochana, took his body for his God. Indra, being a Deva, understood that the Atman was meant. You are the children of India. You are the descendants of the Devas. Matter can never be your God; body can never be your God. (Volume IV 351)

Swami Vivekananda while talking at Madras asked,

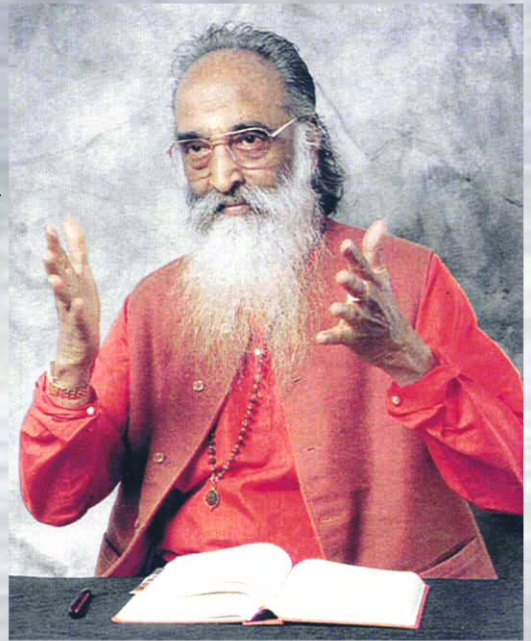
Young men of Madras, my hope is in you. Will you respond to the call of your nation? Each one of you has a glorious future if you dare believe me. Have a tremendous faith in yourselves ... that eternal power is lodged in every soul -- and you will revive the whole of India. Ay, we will then go to every country under the sun, and our ideas will before long be a component of the many forces that are working to make up every nation in the world. (Volume III 303-04)

On the eve of the 150th Birth Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, His Call "Wake Up Bharat Enlighten the world" still rings in our ears. It is time we respond to it.

to be continued...

His spirit lives on...

Anish Shankar



The nation was reeling under a bout of low self-esteem and depression due to 400 years of foreign rule. With a forgotten heritage, misunderstood and exploited, the stage was set for a cultural and spiritual renaissance. A leader was required to awaken in the hearts and minds of people, a sense of pride and understanding of their own culture.

About this time, an inquisitive journalist was on his way to the Himalayas with an intention to expose the 'fake' sadhus of the country. But, staying there and observing their life, he was inspired to take sannyasa himself. And so, Balakrishnan Menon became Swami Chinmayananda. A strong urge, then, took over him to share what he had learnt with the masses. Thus were sown the seeds of the Chinmaya Movement, which began with his first talk series in Pune in 1951.

Balakrishnan Menon was born on the 8th of May, 1916 to Kuttan Menon and Parukutti Menon, an aristocratic family in Ernakulam. A pampered boy and a naughty teen, he grew up

to be a self-assured youth with a modernistic outlook, shunning tradition. After he had acquired degrees in Law and English Literature, he joined the Indian Freedom Movement against the British rule. These activities got him into trouble and eventually led to his imprisonment. In jail, he caught typhus and was thrown out by the authorities, who left him for dead. However, as luck would have it, an Indian Christian lady passing by saw the young Balan lying there and, reminded of her own son, took him home to care for him. After recovering, Balan left to Baroda to be with his cousin Achutan Menon, and later on joined The National Herald as a journalist. While working for The National Herald, Balakrishnan decided to write an exposé on what he believed to be the bluff of the swamis in the Himalayan regions. To investigate and uncover such veils of alleged sanctity, he travelled to Ananda Kutir, the ashram of Swami Sivananda in Rishikesh.

However, this was not to be so. Balakrishnan's journey to expose others ended up in exposing

himself to his own spiritual revolution and evolution. Swami Sivananda's divinity, love, and teachings of Vedanta overwhelmed the young sceptic. A striking inner transformation unfolded within Balakrishnan. He began to question and reflect on the purpose of life, and the secret of permanent happiness. In the company of saints, and through the clarity of their teachings, he soon chose to become a renunciate himself. On the holy day of Shivaratri (February 25, 1949), Balakrishnan was initiated into sannyasa by Swami Sivananda, as Swami Chinmayananda Saraswati. Chinmayananda means 'filled with the bliss of pure Consciousness'.

Swami Sivananda then guided the young ascetic to the most renowned master of Vedanta at the time, Swami Tapovanam, who lived in Uttarkashi. Swami Tapovanam, who rarely took on disciples, put forth strict conditions to his new student, and all of the terms were readily accepted. As Swami Tapovanam's disciple, Swami Chinmayananda led an austere life and underwent an intense study of scriptural texts. Spiritually awakened through Swami Tapovanam's tutelage and grace, and inspired by Mother Ganga's continuous flow of purity and service to mankind, Swami Chinmayananda sought and received his guru's blessings to spread the knowledge he had gained to the masses. Having seen widespread spiritual and social degradation in India, he felt the urge to share with others the knowledge that had brought fulfilment in his own life.

Thus, Swami Chinmayananda conducted his first 'jnana yajna' (a series of spiritual discourses) in December 1951, at a small temple in Pune, Maharashtra. Jnana yajna—a term he coined from Lord Krishna's teachings

in the Bhagavad Gita—refers to the student who through scriptural studies performs the ritual of worship (yajna) at the altar of wisdom (jnana). His teachings were based on the authority of the Vedas and his direct experience. They were highly appreciated, and the number of devotees eager to learn from his discourses increased rapidly. An inspired band of devotees thus formed 'Chinmaya Mission' in 1953 at Chennai.

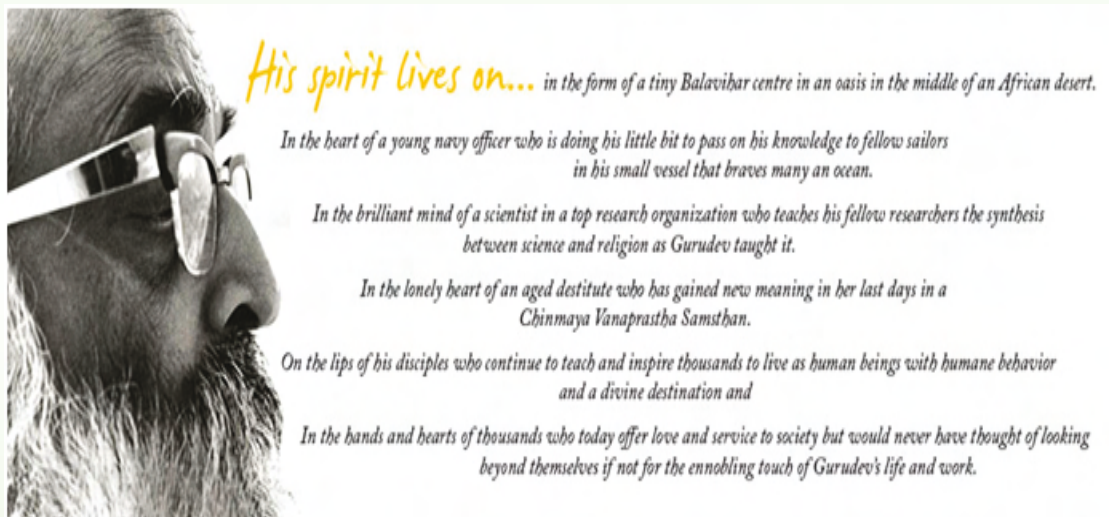
From pulpits and platforms throughout India and the world, Swami Chinmayananda taught tens of thousands who came to listen and learn. He conducted over 575 jnana yajnas as well as countless spiritual camps, crisscrossing the globe, and transforming millions of lives directly and indirectly. He encouraged the formation of Study Groups, which became the crux of the Mission. Forums for children (Balavihar), youth (Chinmaya Yuva Kendra), and women (Devi Group) were started to help them address the issues that were plaguing them and to strengthen their cultural backing. His love for the youth was unparalleled and his cry ran out, "The youth are not useless, they are used less!" Under his guidance and encouragement, the youth wing has carried out numerous projects from compiling books to conducting stage-plays to convey the meaning of Vedanta.

Besides this, he undertook the task of translating the scriptures into English, and wrote numerous books on Indian philosophy and culture. With his own unique brand of wit, humour and logic, he was able to convey vividly the wisdom of the scriptures with a modern perspective. His commentary on the Bhagavad Gita is regarded as one of the best ever written. Also his commentaries on the Upanishads are outstanding for their clarity and crisp logic. Probably the most cherished

achievement of his was the establishment of the Sandeepany Sadhanalayas in Mumbai and Sidhbari, to train future monks to pass on the torch. The focus of the Mission expanded to cover nation-building activities, and so he built schools and colleges, and established Chinmaya Organisation for Rural Development in remote areas to facilitate the upliftment of the lowest rungs of society. To bridge the gap between the Western intellectuals and Eastern mystics, he founded the Chinmaya International Foundation, a premier institute in Sanskrit research and Indology, which is housed in Adi Sankara Nilayam (the maternal home of Adi Sankara).

On the 3rd of August, 1993, Swami Chinmayananda attained Mahasamadhi in San Diego. With his 42 years of relentless service, Swami Chinmayananda left an indelible mark in the hearts and minds of people. He created a vast legacy – a global organization committed to Vedanta and numerous educational institutions and social service projects. He lives on in the priceless publications of Chinmaya Mission and in the hearts of millions as a saint and teacher extraordinaire.

Swami Chinmayananda's life is indeed a saga of immeasurable strength, boundless love, tireless service, and metaphysical reach.



SHIBIR CALENDER - 2012

NAME OF THE SHIBIR	DATES	AGE Years	CAMP DONATION
Yoga Shiksha Shibir (Eng)	05 - 19 May	18 to 60	Rs. 2000/-
Yoga Shiksha Shibir (Hindi)	05 - 19 May	18 to 60	Rs. 2000/-
Spiritual Retreat (Eng)	07 - 13 Aug	18 to 70	Rs. 1500/-
Spiritual Retreat (Hindi)	07 - 13 Aug	18 to 70	Rs. 1500/-

India does not depend on foreign investments

Prof. P.Kanagasabapathi

We often listen to the experts from within the country and outside, policy makers and economists telling us that the economy cannot grow at faster rates unless investments are attracted from foreign countries. Their argument is that economies like India should make all-out efforts to get capital from the other countries, as it would not be possible for them to raise the required resources domestically to achieve higher growth rates.

After the globalized approach became the drive in policy making, India began to invite foreign investments seriously from the early 1990s. Many of the restrictions that were in place were slowly removed over time, so that foreign investments could enter into our territories easily. In fact the foreign players are

being given all sorts of concessions and allowed to enjoy special privileges.

As a result foreign inflows have increased manifold during the past two decades. Reserve Bank of India notes that the inflows have increased from Rs.1, 713 crores in 1992-93 to Rs.2, 81,897 crores in 2010-11. Broadly the foreign inflows are under two categories, namely Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) and Foreign Portfolio Investments (FPI). While the FDIs involve creation of assets with a longer life, FPIs are into the financial markets with a shorter duration.

Even twenty years after the country started easing policies welcoming foreign investments, the clamour for outside funds has not ended. It has increased more during the recent periods. This leads us to the

question as to whether we really require foreign funds. India remained the most powerful economy with superior levels of prosperity for many hundred years without any outside financial support, before the Europeans started 'investing' in the country. Subsequently after independence, the economy has been moving forward for forty years with its own funds. One can say that the growth was slower during these years, but that was due to the structural issues and faulty approaches.

India was a poor and underdeveloped country in 1947 with lack of opportunities to save and invest for most of the population. But soon after independence, people started using all the available opportunities to prove themselves. The rate of Gross Fixed Capital Formation was 8.4 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product during 1950-51, while the saving rate was 8.6 per cent. Capital formation increased steadily over the years to reach 26 per cent during 1990-91 enabling the economy to consistently move forward. It is no small achievement for the country, when policy making was being guided by the socialistic ideology. Subsequently after about twenty years of opening up of the economy, capital formation stands at 35.1 per cent during 2010-11, with the savings being 32.3 percent.

The main argument for foreign funds is the investments are more than the savings. It is called saving-investment gap. Between 2004-05 and 2010-11, the gap has raised from 0.4 per cent to 2.8 per cent. Why this gap? It is due to the lower savings of the public sector. The public sector savings as a percentage of GDP has decreased from 2.3 per cent to 1.7 per cent during the above period. Hence it is the mismanagement of the state owned sector that propels experts argue for foreign flows. Why

don't the governments take steps to make them work better and save more?

India is one of the countries that save more. Apart from the 'official savings' for which the government publishes details, there are many other types of savings that people undertake. People save through indigenous methods and make huge investments in gold, which are not taken into the official savings. Hence the actual savings would be much more than the official rates.

The major part of official savings, about two thirds or more, is contributed by the household sector, with the balance coming from the corporate sector and the government sector. Studies show that the investments made by the non-corporate sector through the family-based enterprises are totally funded by local finance, with almost the entire requirements mobilized by entrepreneurs through their own efforts.

The non-corporate sector that contributes about 57 per cent to the national income does not depend on foreign funds. Experience proves that the society is capable of generating the required funds when they need it. How do people generate funds for buying around one fourth or more of the global gold output annually? How is it that the ordinary entrepreneurs operate successful clusters with turnovers and exports worth thousands of crores, with only domestic funds?

It is relevant to remember that the household sector, apart from its own investments, contributes to the major part of investments by the public sector and a significant share of investments in the corporate sector. Of course the corporate sector is also contributing a reasonable share to national savings.

Realizing the capacity of India to generate

funds, the Report of the Working Group on Savings for the Eleventh Five Year Plan underlined: "On the whole, the overall macro-economic environment in the country is fairly conducive to generate and sustain high level of savings and investments that might provide the resource base for attaining a higher growth trajectory as envisioned in the Eleventh Five Year Plan Approval Document."

Moreover the share of foreign funds has always remained lower in the total investments of the country. Quoting official figures, Mihir Rakshit shows that during 1992-93 to 2004-05 the proportion of foreign investments was less than one percentage of GDP on an average. Even when the inflows increased later, it was not much. Reflecting the position, Reserve Bank of India notes: "Domestic saving financed more than 95 per cent of investments, and the remaining by capital flows."

Macro-levels studies show that the portfolio investments are speculative in nature and move out of the country any time causing damage to the domestic financial systems. Nagesh Kumar notes: "As there are sharp movements in these inflows linked to developments, they become channels of transmission of instability to the country's financial system." Even in the case of FDI, the results are not positive. Writing in the context of South Asia, he mentions: "The empirical studies suggest the region has received FDI inflows of mixed quality and the developmental impact has been uneven."

An analysis of data over the last sixty years shows that the rate of increase in investments during 1990-91 to 2010-11 is lesser than the increases during the previous two twenty year periods namely, 1950-51 to 1970-71 and 1970-71 to 1990-91. Has the free flow of foreign

funds dampened the spirit of Indians to invest more? It is true that there are instances in which the local industries and domestic players, especially the smaller ones, are put in a disadvantageous position with the entry of foreign players. Thousands of units have already been wiped out in different sectors. It is relevant to emphasize that the foreign investors get enormous state benefits that are denied to the domestic players. Instead of encouraging the vibrant domestic entrepreneurship, the policy makers are paving way for their slow destruction.

In this context, the words of the leading non-resident Indian industrialist Swaraj Paul come to mind: "It always pains me to see that there is a feeling in India that development can only take place with foreign investments. India is far more richer and it can contribute a lot to the world economy."

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Sayajirao Gaekwad- the king who assisted Ambedkar and others

Rajesh Pathak

Those who offered their service in British India in the welfare of the depressed class were many. But the one whose contributions were diverse and matchless was Sayajirao Gaekwad, the king of Baroda. It was he who bestowed the title of 'Mahatma' upon Jyotiba Phulay for the revolutionary works he did to the cause of removal of social discrimination that low-castes faced then. Not only this, but he also pleaded the British govt. to confer on him the title of "Booker T. Washington" of India. On the persuasion of Bhai Parmanand he made the provision of monetary-relief from the fund of Baroda govt. for Jyotiba's wife and son after his [Jyotiba] demise.

So also, the founder of the "Mission to the depressed class" Vitthal Rao Ji Shinde [popularly known as Maharshi Shinde] received scholarship from Sayaji Rao to complete his higher study in Manchester college of England. To keep the depressed-class away from the tendency of violence and retribution and to inculcate in them the inspiration for the self-emancipation was Maharshi Shinde's modus-operandi. Here also Sayaji offered him his cooperation wherever needed.



More notably, the architect of Indian constitution and Bharat Ratna, Bhimrao Ambedkar had been provided economic assistance during his college education by none other than Sayaji. And, on the recommendation of his guru Kaluskar, when Ambedkar was to go to foreign for the higher studies and was in the urgent need of money, then also, Sayaji came forward to give him scholarship. Ambedkar held Sayaji in high esteem and had a great sense of indebtedness

towards him for the helps he gave to him on the different occasions. And, therefore, when he published his PhD research work -“The Evaluation of Provincial Finance in British India”, in the form of book he dedicated it to none other than Sayajirao Gaekwad

On 19th March 1918 a convention of “All India Council for Remedy of Untouchability” was organized in Mumbai. In the convention

other than the prominent leaders like Vitthal Bhai Patel, Barister Jaikar, Bipinchandra Pal, also present was Sayaji Rao Gaekwad, who presided over the convention. What he spoke then is the reflection of his outlook on the caste based untouchability-“For false notion born out of ignorance and caste-based ego to stand before social resurgence and scriptural knowledge is impossible..... untouchability is man-made, not God-made.”



Have faith that you are all brave lads, born to do great things.

Visionary Swami Vivekananda - a Realist par Excellence

SubhrenduBhattacharya

Both lexically and conceptually, the word *Visionary* stands diametrically opposite to the word *Realist*, for the former gets absorbed in divine thoughts or highly imaginative thoughts, whereas the latter remains concerned with the facts of the mundane world. But this schism between the two did not hold water in the case of Swami Vivekananda, because his unflinching and staunch belief in *Vedanta* led him to come close to the arena of reality.

Sankaracharya, one of the greatest interpreters of *Vedas and Vedanta*, advocated the concept of *monism* according to which *Brahman*, inherent in the soul, is the only reality and the phenomenal world where we breathe in and breathe out is illusory having been veiled with the seductions of *Maya*. Hence the mundane world is ephemeral. But Swami Vivekananda, a modern interpreter of *Vedanta*, went a step forward to uphold that *Brahman* is not only immanent but also transcendent. What it means is that *Brahman* is omnipresent and as such all-pervading. According to Sri Ramakrishna, the *Guru* (Master) of Swami Vivekananda, *Brahman* is realized not only in the inner self of man, but also in natural objects surrounding him. In this respect, Swamiji followed the path of his *Guru*.



Swamiji as a practical Vedantist

From this standpoint, I intend to project the Swamiji as a practical Vedantist. *Vedanta*, as we know, is another name or the philosophy of the Upanishads; and the quintessence of all this is to 'know thyself'. In other words, *Vedanta* teaches us about the existence of *Brahman*, inherent in the soul, and to reach Him is to derive supreme bliss or *ananda* to enjoy. Now a question automatically arises - Who this *Brahman* is and what his characteristics are? According to different schools of philosophy, He is the supreme Being and is absolute by nature - He has no beginning nor end. He is both *saguna* (qualified) and *nirguna* (non-qualified). But above all, He is infinite by nature. In this context, what Sri Ramakrishna

opined is significant. According to him, *Brahman* is what is divine and absolute; He sustains everything in this world and as such He is omnipresent. Empirically, Sri Ramakrishna felt the presence of the divine in his ownself as well as in the blades of grass. So he got apprehended if he should trample down the grass while moving across the grassy field. To him oneness of all existence is nothing but the living experience, of man. Further, he realized from his practical experience the existence of *Brahman* in the mind of the poor as well as in the mind of the rich. So he exhorted us that we need not be kind to the poor, rather we should worship them in the form of *Narayana*. This service of man is the service of God, and as such is the coinage of the term, *DaridraNarayana*.

However, before I begin my discussion on the Swamiji's ideas about practical *Vedanta* I like to point out some of the salient characteristics of *Atman* which is inseparably related to *Brahman*. In this respect, what Dr. S. Radhakrishnan observed is apt:

Atman is the principle of man's life, the soul that pervades his being, his breath, prana, his intellect, pragna and transcends them. *Atman* is what remains when everything that is not the self is eliminated.¹

Here *Atman* and the soul are found to be synonymous with each other. The soul like *Atman* appears to be a governing spirit in human life. It illuminates bodily organs and remains immortal even when the body perishes. Besides, what Swami Nikhilananda observed on the nature of the soul is also significant:

The soul is unchanging and immortal substance in every living being. It is of the nature of spirit and consciousness. It is the detached witness of the changes that take place in the body and the mind.²

Here we find the predominance of the soul over the body. The former is immortal, but the

latter is subject to change. The inner meaning which can be derived from the above two extracts is that, though the soul is superior to the body, the latter's existence is not negated, and as such the phenomenal world which is the concomitant of the body has not even been negated. From what has been said above about *Atman* another important thing can be extracted. This means that *Vedanta*, the practicality with which this discourse is concerned, does not discard the body nor the phenomenal world.

Now let me come back to the central point of the present discussion. Swami Vivekananda, taking the cue from his Guru, gave a concrete shape of what *Vedanta* teaches us. He strongly believed in what is called *Brahman* who is the *summum bonum* of the infinite existence, infinite knowledge and infinite bliss (*ananda*). He is the only reality and is above the concepts of time, space and causation. As already said, *Brahman* is both immanent and transcendent. It means that He is present in man as well as in every object of nature. To a man, especially a house-holder, it is too difficult to reach the divine in him, because the veil of *Maya* always allures him, misleads and misguides him and he remains in bondage. How to liberate from bondage is the main concern. What is relevant is that ignorance in man has to be overcome. According to the Swamiji, it is possible if he devotes himself sincerely to the worship of God in him, as he emphatically said;

Whatever exists in this universe is to be covered with the Lord. He added, 'You have your wife, it does not mean that you are to abandon her, but that you are to see God in the wife. So also you are to see God in your children. So in everything, In life and in death, in happiness and in misery, the Lord is equally present. The world is full of the Lord. Open your eyes and see Him. This is what *Vedanta* teaches'³

Thus it is obvious that the Swamiji did not discard the phenomenal world which is a part

and parcel of the vast infinite world. In other words, it maybe said that in the finite lies the infinite. What Rabindranath Tagore said in this context is a case in point:

Simarmajheasimtumi/Bajajapansur,
Amar madhyetomarprakash / tai eta
madhur.⁴

(In the finite, thou, the infinite /Play thy
tune of infinitude/ As thou art manifest
in me, the finite/Thou art so sweet to
me].⁵

Further, as said before, ignorance in man leads him to the trap of *Maya* and thus he remains in bondage. Here a question may arise as to what ignorance means and what *Maya* is. Ignorance does not mean illiteracy nor lack of knowledge, but it connotes lack of true knowledge or wisdom. Hence emphasis has been laid on wisdom or *pragna*. As far as *Maya* is concerned, it is a seducer that creates hallucination in the mind of man, as Margaret Rudd observes:

The veil of *Maya* is the changing
v e i l o f N a t u r e a n d
appearance which in its magical
a n d o f t e n d e l u s i v e
moods can hide or obscure the bare
reality of the spirit.⁶

Thus Swami Vivekananda, being a practical vedantist, gave emphasis on man's acquiring wisdom to conquer ignorance and thereby reaching the divine in him.

Furthermore, the Swamiji, being an embodiment of catholicity and liberalism, was always above narrow interpretation of religion. Religion, according to him, does not cater to the interest of a particular sect or community, is not a doctrine nor a dogma. Its intrinsic truth is that it unites people of all sects and communities together through love, fellowship and universal brotherhood. Perhaps herein lies the essence of *Vedanta* on which the following observations made by Dr. R. K. Dasgupta in his article what is *Hinduism?* Willshed adequate light:

Those who call themselves Hindus or are mentioned as Hindus by others seldom, if ever, ask themselves the question - what is Hinduism? And even the most learned amongst them fail to define it precisely. If it were a religion founded by a single prophet and its tenets were recorded in a single book one could sum up those tenets and then add an appreciation of their truth. But the sacred books of what we now call Hinduism belong to a tradition of over three thousand years and they are the work of many prophets and sages.

When Sir Monier Williams (1819-1899) published his 576-page/work entitled *Indian Wisdom* (1875, 4th enlarged edition - 1893) he presented an account of the Vedic hymns, the Upanishads, both constituting Shruti, that is revelation or divine wisdom, the six systems of philosophy, Dharma Shastra, the epics and many other sources of what he mentioned in the subtitle of the book '*Religious, Philosophical and Ethical Doctrines of the Hindus*'. Perhaps he called his book *Indian Wisdom* and not Hindu Wisdom because the authors of these books never mentioned themselves as Hindus, the word Hindu does not occur in any of our ancient sacred books.

Swami Vivekananda knew it well. In his address on Vedantism delivered at Jafna in January 1897 Vivekananda said: The word Hindu by which it is the fashion nowadays to style ourselves, has lost all its meaning, for this word merely meant those who lived on the other side of the river Indus. This name was murdered into Hindu by the ancient Persians ... During the Mohammedan rule we took up the word ourselves. I therefore would not use the word Hindu. In the same address Vivekananda said that we are all Vedantists, followers of the

Vedanta (Complete works III, 118) ... Even the non-Hindu world, the West, knows that Vedanta is a religion. In his 'Three lectures on Vedanta Philosophy (1894) Max Muller (1823 - 1900) says what distinguishes Vedanta philosophy from all other philosophies is that it is at the same time a religion and a philosophy (p 11). He says in the same work that it is the most sublime and the most satisfying religion. (p.29).⁷

What is apparent from the foregoing observations is that Swami Vivekananda adhered to the main tenet of *Vedanta* which is more significant than any conventional religion.

Swamiji as a Realist par excellence

At first, I should like to mention, in a nutshell, about different activities of Ramakrishna Math and Mission, established by Swami Vivekananda. Here it is pertinent to note that if the said Math and Mission had not been founded, humanity would have been much poor. To speak the truth, Ramakrishna Mission is now reckoned as an international forum, having been engaged in the dissemination of Indian culture within India and abroad. Following the main tenet of the Swamiji's message:

Bahurupesammukhetomar,
charrikothakhujichaiswar,
jibepremkorejeijan,seijansebichaiswar.⁸
[He prayeth best who loveth best
All things both great and small,
For dear God loveth us
He madeth us all.]⁹

Ramakrishna Mission has all along been devoted to serve the suffering humanity by mitigating their sorrow and anguish. The presence of the monks of the Mission is felt palpably when there occur natural calamities like flood, earthquake, tsunami, cyclone etc. in any part of India or elsewhere. They are found to be prompt to give succour to those who are

badly in need of relief.

Further, for the spread of education and removing illiteracy as well as providing medical relief to the people, especially belonging to the low income group, Ramakrishna Mission has been rendering a lot of work in both urban and rural areas of India. Obviously, the philanthropic work of the Mission is discernible in the hill areas of some north-eastern states like Meghalaya and Arunachal.

Likewise, the philanthropic works rendered by Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari towards the removal of illiteracy by setting up schools, and upholding the ideals of the Swamiji among the youth by arranging different *shibirs* (camps) almost throughout India, particularly South India, are highly commendable.

With this perspective in view, Swami Vivekananda's concern for the sorry plight of the poor requires to be studied dispassionately. Vivekananda, as we all know, besides being a great Sannyasi India has ever produced was a realist par excellence. He was not only a visionary or a thinker, but also a man of the practical world, having his root down to the soil of the country. In other words, his mission was not to fight shy of the realities of life, nor to seek refuge in the cloistered seclusion, far away from the madding crowd. Here it is relevant to note that the multifarious spiritual, cultural and social activities, performed regularly by Ramakrishna Mission and Math, established by him, bear testimony to his realistic approach to life.

Needless to say, Vivekananda was a lion-hearted man; his heart was so broad and passionate that he could easily expose the stern realities of human life as well as his deep concern for the misery of the down-trodden. The observation made by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, former President of India, gives clue to this:

He looked at the millions who died of poverty and hunger, and he said, 'I am the worshipper of *Daridra Narayana*, of the *Narayana* who is located in all the poor people of this world. So long as they are there, how can I content myself with my salvation or with my own beatitude? It is my duty to look after them all. The best way to reach God is by the service of man'.¹⁰

The phrase *Daridra Narayana*, coined by his Guru, shows how sincere he was in his serving to the suffering humanity; Vivekananda practised what he preached, and as such there was no dichotomy between his preaching and practice. Thus he proved himself to be a man of practical sagacity.

Like Gautama Buddha, Vivekananda was passionately touched by the lot of the destitute and the down-trodden. His clarion call to his countrymen for the upliftment of the poorest of the poor and the lowest of the low speaks highly of his love for them in unequivocal terms. Like a true *Messiah* he declared:

... forget not that the lower classes, the ignorant, the poor, the illiterate, the cobbler, the sweeper are thy flesh and blood, thy brothers. Thou brave one, behold, take courage, be proud that thou are an Indian, and proudly proclaim I am an Indian, every Indian is my brother.¹¹

Vivekananda's socialistic attitude to life as well as his patriotic fervour is reflected here in a unique way. He envisaged that India's development could not be accomplished unless the socio-economic condition of the poor masses was augmented. Actually, the unprivileged and under-privileged were the victims of the casteism, a legacy of the long past. So they remained for a long time socially ostracized; in other words, they could not come close to the main stream of social life. Even they were denied the right to worship God in a temple or in a sacred place.

Economically, they were subject to exploitation and torture, meted out to them by the alien rulers and their *agent provocateurs* - the so-called zamindars.

Such was the lot of the common people which Vivekananda saw with his own eyes while travelling extensively across the country. Under such a situation he could not remain silent. His reaction was forthright when he uttered the voice of admonishment to the upper castes of India:

... Now under the British rule in these days of free education and enlightenment, pass them (i.e. the treasures inherited from ancestors) on to your heirs, ay, do it as quickly as you can. You merge yourselves in the void and disappear, and let *New India* arise in your place. Let her arise out of the peasant's cottage, grasping the plough, out of the hut of the fisherman, the cobbler and the sweeper.¹²

This apart, Vivekananda from his own experience realized that the poor people under the British regime could not earn a square meal to sustain their livelihood, they could not be provided with relief even during famine and drought. They were utterly deprived of education and health facilities. The British colonialists would take the lion's share of the output, derived from the natural resources of India, to their country for their comfort and luxury, and thereby exploiting the working class people. Such a situation, according to Vivekananda, could not last long, as the time was not distant when the people of India would free her from the chain of bondage. As he had great faith in his country people, especially the youth, he advised them to be bold and courageous; they must think that India was theirs and it was they who could bring about a great change in national life. Shakiness and vacillation would serve no purpose. About Vivekananda's patriotism, Dr. Roma Choudhury, former Principal Lady Brabourne College, Calcutta, asserted:

Swami Vivekananda was an Indian, to the core, in the truest sense of the term. Who is an Indian? A true Indian is one who is not only born in India, but feels one with her, represents her culture and civilization ... Our beloved Swamiji was one such man, one such incomparable man.¹³

Here it is appropriate to point out that in a democratic country like India citizens are entitled to enjoy various kinds of fundamental rights and even human rights, and as such both constitutionally and legally all are equal, no matter whether they are rich or poor. Despite this, even now in our country there is large disparity between the haves and the have-nots, especially in socio-economic sphere. Consequently, the poorest of the poor and the lowest of the low are living below the poverty line. Is there no remedy to bridge the gulf? Here I would simply point out what Swami Vivekananda suggested as remedial measures. According to him, there are mainly two means - one by uplifting and another by degrading the social order. Let the two means be explained clearly. According to the first means, all the lower classes are lifted to become equal to the higher ones. It means that the *Chandala* or *Sudra* must be equal to the *Brahmin*. The second means is just the reverse. It means that the *Brahmin* must go down to become equal to *Chandala* or *Sudra*. The solution to the problem, as stated above, is not to bring down the higher, but to raise the lower up to the higher. To fulfil this objective, more and more privileges have to be delivered to the have nots. It is not impracticable to a democratic country like ours.

Side by side, the ideals of Swami Vivekananda which are still relevant in the national scheme of socio-economic development, meant specially for the poor, need to be followed to make our country a better one for the posterity to live in.

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ANNA HAZARE

Jai Jawan to Jaikisan



Swami Krishnananda

Continued from last issue...

Community Marriages:

Community marriages are promoted to remove economic and social disparities. It also checks the 'Dowry System'. 'Community Marriages' started in Ralegaon Siddhi in 1978-79. Caste differences are removed. All couples are married in the same pavilion. In the community feasts all castes sit together and the people who serve belong to different castes.

Food Grain Bank:

People of Ralegaon Siddhi operate a grain bank in the temple premises in which people with surplus yield deposit their surplus grains. The borrower will have to increase the 1 quintal grain by 20 kgs. while returning. About 50-60 quintals of grain get accumulated in the bank every year. In this way the more

prosperous farmers help the poorer farmers.

Piped water system (through community participation):

Every house was given a water connection without taking any financial assistance from the government. Each family has to deposit its share of the cost in the bank. Any house hold which allows water to flow on the road will have its water connection disconnected and has to pay a fine of Rs. 150/- for getting re-connection. One young man has been appointed, with an allowance, for releasing water and general maintenance. All villagers gave voluntary labour and financial contribution for the piped water scheme.

Blind Faith and Superstitions Eradicated:

As in other places of India, Maharashtra too

has plenty of local God and Goddesses like Marai, Janai, Jokhai and Mhagobha. Genuine God-believers know that there is ONLY ONE GOD. Some deities are offered eggs, chicken or goats in sacrifice. Why God the protector of all should want the poor animals to be slaughtered? Sometimes some local deities take possession of the body of a person. This possessed person starts talking on behalf of God and the rural folk get carried away. In Ralegaon Siddhi also for the local Goddess Padmavati a goat is sacrificed. Gram Sabha has done away with this goat sacrifice. But, Puranoli etc. are offered to the Goddess.

A 5 feet boulder called 'Vital Baba' was smeared with red lead paste and worshipped on religious festivals. It was right in the middle of the road and was a big obstruction to vehicular traffic. A few volunteers came at night and moved the boulder to the side of the road. Nobody came to harm. Gram Sabha has eradicated so many blind faiths and superstitions. No harm has come to the village.

Dairy Farming:

Watershed Development led to great progress in agriculture. Water is always available in the wells and tanks. So the ShriSantYadav Baba Milk Producers' Union, a Co-operative Society was formed. Milk production increased from 150 litres to 3000 litres per day bringing Rs. 13-14 lakhs per month income. The Society has built a building worth Rs. 8 lakhs. In all there are 22 buffaloes and 375 cows (Indian and hybrid) in the village. Milk Industry has raised the income of farmers substantially.

Women's Empowerment:

In Ralegaon Siddhi an organization called MASUM has set up 17 women's self help

groups to spread knowledge and awareness. These 17 self help groups have a savings collection of Rs. 11-12 lakhs. Nearby villages like Jategaon, Gatewadi, Ghanegaon and Pimpalner have also set up 35 self help groups with a savings collection of Rs. 18-20 lakhs. Thus, the women have been freed from the clutches of money lenders. Child marriages in the villages have been stopped and birth-rate has come down to 18-19%. Some women have taken loans from self help groups to start businesses like milk supply, poultry, tailoring, bangle making, running grocery and stationery shops, thus becoming economically independent.

Anna Hazare Awarded for His selfless Service:

Anna Hazare's pioneering 'Rural Development Works' at Ralegaon Siddhi brought him many awards like:

1. Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri from the President
2. Krishibhushan award in Maharashtra
3. Vrukshamitra award from Prime Minister etc. etc.

The Rs. 18 lakhs received as awards have been put in a trust named 'Swami Vivekananda Gratitude Fund Trust'. The sum of Rs. 18 lakhs has been kept in a bank as a fixed deposit earning an interest of Rs. 2 lakhs a year. Some rural development workers are not well-off financially. They are given an honorarium of Rs. 1500/- per month (or Rs. 18, 000/- per year). An award of Rs. 25, 000/- is given to persons totally devoted to social service. This 'Award Function' takes place on Swami Vivekananda's Birth Anniversary, the 12th of

January.

'FIVE BANS' Essential for Rural Development:
The following '5 BANS' contributes to the overall development of Ralegaon Siddhi.

1. BAN ON CUTTING TREES (This put an end to deforestation).
2. BAN ON OPEN GRASING OF CATTLE (Cattle are stall-fed only. Thus, pastures valuable shrubs and trees grow abundantly).
3. BAN ON ALCOHOLIC DRINKS (This led to improvement of health of villagers and saving of money).
4. BAN ON TOBACCO AND SMOKING (This ban resulted in better health and longevity of villagers and saved wasteful expenditure).
5. BAN ON GAMBLING (This led to saving of wealth).

Village Transformation Day:

Volunteers of the village had a novel idea of celebrating the 'Village Transformation Day'.

The Gram Sabha discussed the idea and it was decided to celebrate the 'Village Transformation Day' on 2nd October every year (i.e. on Mahatma Gandhi's Birth Anniversary). The following are the features of the celebration:

1. All the children born in that year are presented with a set of new clothes (No discrimination of caste or creed is made).

2. Young girls from outside the village married to young men of Ralegaon Siddhi during the current year will be welcomed with a gift of blouse piece and a coconut.

3. The eldest man and woman of the village were felicitated with a set of new clothes and honoured as father and mother of the village.

4. Primary and middle school students who have meritorious performances along with young men who have performed brave deeds would be honoured.

5. Young couples who had undergone sterilization operation after the birth of first



child would be felicitated.

In the evening all the villagers will gather and have a common feast.

The expenses for all the above features are shared by the villagers. This function is going on for 9 years. Several other villages are also celebrating this day similarly, on 2nd October every year.

Replication of Ralegaon Siddhi model in

other villages:

In order to transform other villages also on the model of Ralegaon Siddhi, 75 villages in 10 districts of Maharashtra (Kolhapur, Satara, Pune, Raigad, Ahmednagar, Beed, Osmanabad, Naded, Latur and Dhule) have been selected through 29 Voluntary Organizations. These villages should not have a population of more than 4000, and should belong to a scarcity and drought prone area. Gram Sabhas of these villages have agreed for vasectomy operation, alcohol prohibition, ban on tree felling and offer of voluntary labour. These villages are at least 20 kms. away from cities to avoid pollution. Gram Sabhas take full charge of all the operations. It is expected that 35 to 40 new

Ralegaon Siddhi type villages will come up in the next 4 to 5 years. The country as a whole will get a new inspiration and direction from the above work.

Local Bank:

As per decision of Gram Sabha, The Ideal Non-Agricultural Co-operative Bank Ltd., a local bank was started in 1998. No cash credit was taken from any bank or financial institution. People of Ralegaon Siddhi deposited their money in the bank, thus helping it to build a capital. Loans were granted for marriages, building houses, education, medical expenses etc.

Women of Ralegaon Siddhi are getting credit from the 17 self help groups, which have savings upto Rs. 13 lakhs.

The above organizations have put an end to money lenders who were exploiting the poor villagers.

A Public Movement Against Corruption:

Crores of rupees spent in Social Forestry Department, Construction of Dams and Public Distribution System are siphoned away by corrupt practices. Thus, various public schemes do not benefit the poor rural masses of India and our country remains poor and undeveloped in spite of so many five year plans being implemented so far. Anna Hazare thought a lot about these problems and concluded that curtailing corruption and accelerating development are two sides of the same coin. Our country can have a bright future only if both these movements go together.



Once more the world must be conquered by India. This is the dream of my life... This is the great ideal before us, and every one must be ready for it -the conquest of the whole world by India -nothing less than that, and we must all get ready for it, strain every nerve for it...

Swami Vivekananda

Understanding “The Family” Various approaches

N. Krishnamoorti



Sumati: Mother! The Family is such a multilayered social unit, that it impacts all the aspects of the life of the society, the life of the Nation. The psychological, social, emotional and cultural factors are there. The religious and spiritual dimensions are there. Now even the economic, political and entrepreneurial dimensions are being studied. How do we understand the significance of the FAMILY?

Mother: You have not mentioned the educative and therapeutic effects of the families on an individual. When people related to each other by blood or by marriage live together and share a roof and share a kitchen, this togetherness bears a tremendous impact on all aspects of the human personality. Mutual trust, mutual love and willingness to practise Tyaga and Seva are basic human virtues respected by all humanity. Tolerance, adjusting oneself to the tastes and habits of others, forming long-term associations which blossom into healthy traits are the direct outcomes of the FAMILY system.

Sumati: Is The FAMILY – a religious and

spiritual unit?

Mother: Yes. God is worshipped as Father and Mother and parents are worshipped as Gods.

Pitaham asya jagato mata dhata pitamahah/
Vedyam pavitram aumkara rk sama yajur eva
call// (Gita 9/17)

Matru Devo Bhava, Pitru Devo Bhava say the scriptures. All Hindu gods and goddesses except Hanumanji are portrayed as Family – related. A child learns its first lessons of Tyaga and Seva, Titiksha and Pratyahara from its family and extends this relation to all creation. A true Sannyasi does not give up his family. He simply makes the whole world his family VASUDHA EVA KUTUMBAKAM. A person born with brothers and sisters learns from his birth onwards the importance of sharing his comforts wealth and food. Spiritual and Religious consciousness starts from these basic human aspects and becomes more and more intense, widespread and deep.

Sumati: That is why Swami Vivekananda addressed the Chicago parliament members -

“Sisters and Brothers”

Mother: Too much of propaganda on Family planning, one child norm have created many families with 'Single Child'. These children do not know what brotherly love is. Values inculcated at a young age are deeply implanted in the human heart and stay all through one's life. A child misses his brother at his young age, misses him all through his life!

Sumati: You talked about the educative and cultural dimensions of the FAMILY.

Mother: Education is a painful process. But when knowledge is imparted to a child by its father or its mother, it is able to learn faster and better, because of the loving influence of its parents. A Mother – Child pair need not chant “Ma Vidvishavahai”:- There is no dvesha at all between them. Modern research and the ancient Indian wisdom say that the child's education starts from its mother's womb and a major portion is completed before its sixth year. Primary schools, colleges and other training just polish that knowledge and add technical information. That is why children without parents suffer in their educative life. All the cultural inputs such as good taste, good manners moral and aesthetic values and refinement of language come from the family first and later on, the society intensifies these values. Persons brought up in stable and well-adjusted families know how to handle, stress – situations, how to utilize life's opportunities and get on easily with friends and co-workers and with the society at large.

Sumati: A family has its own culture!

Mother: A family has its own dress - code, ways of preparing food, do-s and don'ts, Kuladevata, medicinal knowledge, favourite pilgrim – centres, favourite hobby, etc. A family has its own way of using language, its

own set of private jokes. These family-born, family induced values have given rise to Musical GHARANAS, dance Paddhatis, Vaidya Parampara etc.

Sumati: (laughing) In Politics also ...

Mother: But that is undemocratic. Because, people who have built themselves as a political group around the father want to continue the association and align themselves around the son. It is an easy and natural association of people.

Sumati: How does a government look upon families?

Mother: Governments see the Families as ways and intermediate steps in delivering social, economic and health services to the people. The year 1994 was observed by the U.N. as the International year of the FAMILY. The Government of India commissioned a study group on The Family. The outcome was a book “Enhancing the Role of the FAMILY”. The study says, when the government wants to deliver financial, nutritional, health and educational services to an individual, the FAMILY comes in as a very handy tool and a focussed and target-oriented delivery-mechanism. The parents help in the education of the child and supplement the teachers' work. Medicines are administered better to a patient living in a family ambience. In fact a FAMILY is a well-balanced combination of Privacy and Satsang. A child, a patient, gets personalized attention in needy situations.

Sumati: You claimed that the Family is also an economic institution.

Mother: When people come together motivated by mutual trust, concern, love and live for long years together, the atmosphere is one of creativity and productivity. After all, all economic activities are rooted in human

cooperation and mutual give-and-take attitude. The family provides a man with a ready-made platform for practising thrift, cost-effective spending. A well-knit and intelligent family substitutes human ingenuity for manmade tools and monetary expenditure. A man saves money and accumulates capital because he has a wife, children and relatives for whom he cares. It is a well-known fact that India has a large quantity of family –induced saving, purchase of gold etc. This large number of small savings serves as ballast for the ship of the National economy. In countries like America where the family values have been degraded, the saving habit has also suffered, leading to National economic crisis. Similarly, many of India's major business houses are family enterprises – the Birlas, the Goenkas, the Bajaj, Godrej Ruia, the Chettiyars etc. They have intelligently combined modern management practices with ancient family conviviality. Many state chambers of commerce have started counselling programmes on family - promoted business centres.

Sumati: You said “Family Therapy”!

Mother: Yes. Sickness and medicine have a large psychological component. When a patient stays with his relatives and loving ones, his self - healing strength increases. Controlled studies have revealed that medicines are absorbed better and work well when the patient is relaxed. The family environment provides such a basis. In some cases actually the patient wants only a little attention and someone to talk to. The family fulfils this basic need.

Sumati: When the family has proved to be such a fine tool for building a human personality, with its spiritual, cultural, social, moral and even economic dimensions, why do people

allow families to degenerate to crumble?

Mother: There is a large variety of reasons, why the family values degenerate though Man knows the significance of the Role of the Family. Education, Economic needs, job opportunities, wars, etc, send away one or more family - members from the group and this disrupts the family system. Male migration is common all over the world. Nowadays Female migration is also increasing. The absence of parents or death of a spouse affects the members deeply. Rural to urban migration, with industrialization, takes away the male member and it may be many years before the rest of the family join the bread – winner in the town. Cities by themselves do not break families. India has a very ancient urban culture and our families know how to adjust to the demands of the city life. It is sudden migration, combined with the urban housing problem that disturbs the family. When a person is separated from his/her family, a number of problems arise. 1) Psychiatric disturbance 2) Juvenile Delinquency 3) Behavioural disorders 4) Decline in financial position 5) Insomnia 6) Worries 7) Break up of joint and extended families 8) Division of property 9) Reduced fertility rate 10) Loneliness 11) Sense of guilt 12) Weakening of marital bond 13) Emotional problems 14) Tension 15) Overload of work 16) Divorce, etc. Slowly the western values of rights - based society are attacking the Indian society. Our duty – based, responsibility – based Dharma is getting eroded, leading the society to all round decline.

Sumati: How are we to remedy the situation?

Mother: The cure lies in long term cultural education and short term behavioural training. If in a family everyone asserts his/her rights there is no family. The family

survives on the principle of Tyaga, which is the ultimate panacea. Human beings are to be educated on the many advantages of the family. In fact Nature speaks the language of Family. There is a hidden connection between Man and Man, this manifests best in the Family. The individual's personality is held together by the Family without which he/she will go to pieces. The family is held together by the community, the community (Kula) by the Nation and the Nation by the entire world. Each unit of the society is protecting the smaller unit and is protected by the larger unit.

On a short term basis, frequent and meaningful interaction between family members, spending quality - time together,

praying together, and eating together, building a system of give-and-take etc. will strengthen the family ties. The Shastras talk about Five fold sacrifices – Pancha Maha Yajna - 1) Bhuta Yajna – loving all living beings and serving them 2) Nara Yajna - service to mankind 3) Pitru Yajna, worshipping the ancestors and taking proper care of the parents in their old age 4) Deva Yajna – worship of God, especially the Kula Devata and 5) Rishi Yajna – studying the scriptures which promote the holistic values - as the ways of strengthening family values, now being threatened by selfishness, rights - based value system and cinema, media and TV.

Sumati: Oh! How much does my heart bleed for the age – old FAMILY – SYSTEM.



The longest night seems to be passing away, the sorest trouble seems to be coming to an end at last, 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 awaking! Like a breeze from the Himalayas, it is bringing life into the almost dead bones and muscles, the lethargy is passing away, and only the blind cannot see, or the perverted will not see, that she is awaking, this motherland of ours, from her deep long sleep. None can resist her any more; never is she going to sleep any more; no outward powers can hold her back any more.

Swami Vivekananda

The War Inside

R.Hari Narayan



As we hear the news on wars and destruction happening around us, we often manage to compromise ourselves that we are not amongst its victims. These days, wars happen with an intention to acquire power, show dominancy, display defense technology and seed fear in the hearts of people. As the pages of our epics read, there were days when wars happened always between the two sects of people, the people of good, who were learned, wealthy of results from good deeds and those of the bad, mischievous, arrogant and atheic.

I have got no idea on how many of us are aware of the war that is happening very nearer to us, almost every one being its victim, destructing almost every one of us. Pitching it directly, let me tell where the war happens, it is happening in us. And about where it ends? It is again us. And the victims of it? It is we, our friends, and it can be any one who comes in to our relationship.

At kindergarten, we heard stories that taught us morale; we were given chocolates to listen to it, there bribery was actually sown. When

we were at school we played for being fit, we learnt that winning is making some one lose. When we won for the first time pride began and when we lost, envy rooted. Greed began when your friend brought new pencil box to school, sorrow began when your dad refused to get you another one like that. Sense of giving started when you saw a smile in your sister's face at the moment you kissed her, you learnt gratitude when she kissed you in return. When you were 18, you learnt responsibility seeing your father and seeing the television, you developed lust for opposite sex. Holy books said renunciation was important when ads in the newspapers said a brand new car was important. When you started earning, job said hard work was important and society said money was more important.

Eventually, both the Good and the Bad is into us, battling almost every time we do an action. We decide to wake up early in the morning and when we couldn't, the Bad defeats the Good in us. However if we manage to wake up early, victory was for the Good in us. When you are sitting in a bus with an old man standing near you, the Goodness In You says

you to make him sit but the Bad makes you bother least. In such situation, the victim of the war is just you. In the first case it affects your schedule and in the second case, it affects your morality. There can be situations when the war happening in us can affect others severely. Every time when people smoke, the Bad in them defeats the Good. This not only affects their health but also contributes to the environmental pollution.

Some people may think you are good and some may think you are bad. Their conclusion on your character depends on what quality in you wins, when they are with you. As these qualities win the battle it becomes stronger,

consistent and indestructible making its opponent weak. As the days pass on, it may become difficult for you to change the way the battle is played and the winning quality may become your permanent identity.

So, how do we make the Good to win always? In Mahabarath, it is the surrender to the Lord Krishna, that made the Pandavas win the battle. From such great works, one can easily conclude that surrender to the Lord alone can make the Good in you win always and make you Good. So let us surrender ourselves to the lotus feet of the Lord, serve people and be happy.



Let New India arise..... Let her arise -out of the peasants' cottage, grasping the plough; out of the huts of the fisherman, the cobbler, and the sweeper. Let her spring from the grocer's shop, from beside the oven of the fritter-seller. Let her emanate from the factory, from marts, and from the markets. Let her emerge from groves and forests, from hills and mountains.

Shall India die? Then from the world all spirituality will be extinct, all moral perfection will be extinct, all sweet-souled sympathy for religion will be extinct, all ideality will be extinct; and in its place will reign the duality of lust and luxury as the male and female deities, with money as its priest, fraud, force and competition its ceremonies, and the human soul its sacrifice. Such a thing can never be.

Swami Vivekananda

This Page is sponsored by Anil Chakraborty, West Bengal

A forgotten hero

Rash Behari Bose

Bengal has produced many a great freedom fighter and notable but no so popular among them was Rash Behari Bose. His college studies were in Chandernagore, a place which was under French control. He happened to read about French Revolution of 1789 and it influenced him very much. His mind was pre occupied with revolutionary ideas. The famous novel "Ananda Math" written by another renowned Bengali Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya also had great influence on him. Bengali poet Navi sen's "Plasir Yudha" a collection of patriotic poems made him more determined to work on revolutionary lines.

Roots of the Patriotism

He read nationalistic speeches by orator and revolutionary, Surendranath Banerjee, and Swami Vivekananda. In Chandernagore, his teacher Charu Chand, a man of radical ideas, inspired Rash Behari along revolutionary lines.

Rash Behari did not get a chance to complete college because his uncle got him a job at Fort William. From there he transferred to the Government press in Shimla on his father's wish. He was appointed the copy-holder in the press and was able to master English and typewriting. After some time he moved to the Pasteur Institute in Kasauli. Rash Behari was not happy with these jobs.

On a colleague's advice, Rash Behari went to Dehra Dun as a guardian tutor in the house of Pramantha Nath Tagore. He got a clerical post at the Dehra Dun Forest Research Institute where through hard work, Rash Behari became a head-clerk.

Beginning of the life as a Revolutionary

The partition of Bengal in 1905 and the events that followed in its wake drew Rash Behari headlong into revolutionary activities. Rash Behari concluded that the Government would not yield without revolutionary action on the part of the patriots. He started gearing up his revolutionary activities under the guidance of Jatin Banerjee, an eminent revolutionary leader.



Rash Behari Bose with his Wife Toshiko

The famous Bomb attack on Lord Hardinge

Rash Behari suddenly came in to prominence after 23rd December 1912 when bombs were thrown at Lord Hardinge, the then Viceroy of India. The planning for it was ingenious. At a conclave in Chandan Nagar, the suggestion for an attack on Hardinge emanated from Shreesh Ghosh, a dare-devil friend of Rash Behari. But some present thought that it was unpractical. Rash Behari was reflecting and spoke only that he was ready and resolute but laid two conditions - that he should be supplied with powerful bombs and that he

should have a young man of unimpeachable revolutionary character. Both were obtained and the first rehearsal was made on Diwali of 1911, amidst sound of crackers all round. The bombs burst to Rash Behari's satisfaction. But he had to wait for more than one year, which, however, was fully utilised in rehearsing for the outstanding action on 23rd December.

The young man who came from Chandan Nagar was one Basant Biswas, a handsome boy of 16 years. He could easily be dressed up as a girl and get mixed up with other women sitting on the spacious terrace of a building in Chandni Chowk. All were eagerly waiting for the Viceregal procession. The bombs had to be hurled by Basant on the target. He had actually practised it for months in the garden of Raja PN Tagore at Dehradun. Rash Behari was serving with the Forest Research Institute there, and Basant was supposed to be his servant. Cigarette tins were filled with stone pieces and were hurled at the imaginary height of Hardinge, seated on a Howdah. On the previous day Rash Behari took his young 'girl friend' in a Tonga and had a ride through the roads of Chandni Chowk, which was to be the venue the next day.

It was the 23rd December 1912. The Viceroy and the Vicerene were on the elephant back. Ladies were excitedly waiting for the procession to arrive. Basant (dressed as a girl) was one amongst them. The point chosen was the Clock-tower in Chandni Chowk, near the Punjab National Bank. The bomb was to be

thrown when the elephant would be just in front. Rash Behari would be at a nearby point and Awadh Bihari would be just opposite, to throw the bombs if Basant somehow failed.

The atmosphere was electrifying, when it just occurred to Rash Behari that the practice of bomb throwing in cigarette tins at Dehradun would be of no avail. It was from the ground to the imaginary height of the target on an elephant back. He just rushed in and asked Basant to enter the bathroom and quickly change his Sari to male clothes which he was carrying. There came out a handsome boy in place of a beautiful girl. In the all round excitement of the moment, none noticed the 'sartorial change of sex' of the boy from Bengal. He came down and got mixed up with the crowd on the foot path. But the bombs were not thrown by him but probably by Awadh Bihari. The Viceroy was seriously injured and was taken to a famous doctor, A.C. Sen, nearby. Awadh Bihari was later hanged but Rash Behari could not be touched.

He returned to Dehradun by the night train and joined the office the next day as though nothing had happened. Further, he organised a meeting of loyal citizens of Dehradun to condemn the dastardly attack on the Viceroy. Who on earth could imagine that he was the same person who had masterminded and executed the most outstanding revolutionary action. Lord Hardinge in his My Indian Years had described the whole incident in an interesting way.

to be continued...

Yoga Shiksha Shibir at Kashmir

Medium : Hindi Date : 20/08/2012 to 03/09/2012

Place : Vivekananda Kendra, Ramakrishana Mahasammelan Ashram, Nagdandi, Achabal, Anantnag, Kashmir- 192201 (J&K) Camp Contribution : Rs. 3000/-

Any Physically and Mentally fit person in the age group of 18-60 years. The participant should be able to perform various Yogasanas and exercises.

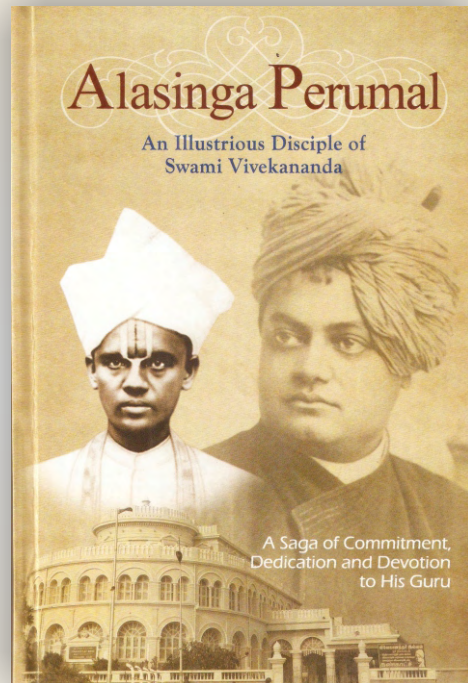
The Camp is fully residential. Simple dormitory accommodation is provided separately for Ladies and Gents. We provide simple vegetarian food.

Alasinga Perumal - an illustrious disciple of Swami Vivekananda

Alasinga Perumal - an illustrious disciple of Swami Vivekananda by Swami Sunirmalananda - Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Chennai 600 004, Year of Publication 2012 vi+342 pages Rs.75/-hardbound.

Swami Vivekananda's 150th birth anniversary has inspired his devotees and followers to write extensively about all aspects of his life, teachings and work. Being a magnetic personality fired with the sense of his vision for Bharat and for the world at large, Swamiji was surrounded by disciples, admirers and friends all over the world. That these people should occupy the entire spectrum of human classes from the lowest illiterate way - side cobbler with whom he broke bread to the highest princes, scholars and saints was to be expected. As a true friend of humanity he had none to spare, none to forget. But there were special people among them, who were to take his legacy to the far corners of the Nation and to give concrete shape to the ideas of this "prophet in a hurry."

Mandayam Chakravarty Alasinga Perumal (1865-1909) was a staunch Vaishnavite who



dedicated his life to Swami Vivekananda's work. Swami Vivekananda saw in him a disciple, a scholar, a journalist and a sounding board for his ideas and programmes as they were taking shape. That Swamiji wrote 43 letters to Alasinga Perumal shows that the Swamiji trusted him with his mission. Things were in a nebulous shape and no one knew what form things would take yet. Swamiji would take Alasinga into confidence, make him responsible for his work in Chennai and

this humble Alasinga, "dear Achinga" to Swamiji rose upto his Guru's expectations. A teacher, with the responsibilities of supporting his parents, wife and children, Alasinga could find time, energy and money to serve his Guru's cause.

Swamiji arrived at Chennai in the early days of 1893 fresh from his inspiring sojourn on the Kanyakumari Rock. He was on his way to hatch his life's grand plans. But he was not without his doubts and uncertainties. All round support was needed by him – organizational, financial, secretarial and social support. This Alasinga and the Chennai friends provided in ample measure and enabled the Swamiji to launch his Chicago trip.

When Swami Vivekananda was being harassed by various forces the west, it was Alasinga, who would keep things going in India. He founded with his friends "The Young Men's Hindu Association". He tried his best to fulfil Swamiji's dream of opening a centre in Madras of Sri Ramakrishna's yet - to - be – inaugurated - mission, launch a magazine and keep the public interest in Vedanta going. He would send his Guru small items such as seats made of Kusha grass or important items such as a copy of the Brahma Sutra Bhashya. Inspired by Swami Vivekananda's idealism, a brilliant band of educated, young, forceful and spiritually - alive young people organized themselves in Chennai. Alasinga was at its centre.

Alasinga managed the journal Brahmavadin, he also established a Brahmavadin - publishing - company bringing out Swamiji's speeches / articles in the book form. He also brought out other important books.

Alasinga was the proof, if proof is needed of Swami Vivekananda's golden touch, which would turn a humble teacher into a master organiser.

How do we summarise Alasinga's life, work, zeal and devotion? One word - GURUBHAKTI would explain everything.

This book by Swami Sunirmalanandaji with editorial help from the Chennai math was long overdue. At last it has come, with a number of period pictures, hard - bound and highly subsidized. The readers will be happy to see all the 43 letters written by Swami Vivekananda to Alasinga being appended to the volume. To use the cliché, "the letters speak for themselves". Also included in the volume are a precious facsimile of Lokmanya Tilak's letter to Alasinga, and poet Subrahmanya Bharati's tribute to Alasinga on his death.

In all, a neat production, long overdue, and when it comes out it, proves that the readers' waiting was adequately compensated.

One feels guilty in accepting such a precious book of 341+vi pages, hard - bound at a throw away price of Rs.75/-.

N. Krishnamoorti

Vivekananda Kendra Samachar

Vijaya Poorna Vijaya programme at Mysore

On the occasion of Swami Vivekananda's 150th Birth Anniversary Celebration, Karnataka Pranta VIJAYA POORNA VIJAYA is going on in different parts of Karnataka.

Vivekananda Kendra Mysore organised a three day Residential Vijaya Poorna Vijaya Shibir for students of Mysore, Mandya, Hassan and Chamarajanagar districts from 13th to 15th April 2012.

In this shibir, 128 participants from 16 colleges participated and 20 karyakartas were involved. The shibir was inaugurated on 13th January 2012 by Mananeeya Nageshji, Secretary, Vivekananda Kendra Vidyalaya, Kallubalu. The shibir concluded on 15th April. Ma. Nageshji, Shibir Adhikari, Swamini Virajamartha Didi of Mata Amritanandamaiyee Mata and Brahmacharini Geetamba of Mata Amritanandamaiyee Mata were present on this occasion. Swamini Virajamartha Didi talked about Ma. Eknathji and her experience at V K V Arunachal Pradesh.



Vivekananda Kendra Nashik

Vivekanand kendra prashikshan va sewa prakalpa organizedan Adhyatma Shibir from 12th April to 15th April 2012. Ma.Satishji S.Choukulkar, shibir sanghatak of kanyakumari training centre and Ma.Vishwasji Lapalkar prant sanghatak gave Lectures.

Also Vivekananda Kendra Nasik organised Sanjivan Dhyan Shibir from 16th April to 19th April 2012. The Dhyan Shibir at Vivekananda Kendra was attended by karyakartas, students



Sanjeevani Dhyan programme at Nasik

and Gruhasthas. Another Sanjivani Dhyana shibir was arranged at Single window system company's conference hall exclusively for Industrialists and Professionals. Both the camps were well attended.

Vivek Bhaskara-2012 – Mass Suryanamaskaram at Kovilpatti, Tamilnadu.

On 23rd February 2012, over 2600 school students gathered at AV High School Kovilpatti Tamilnadu and performed 12 Suryanamaskaras. This was their tribute to Swami Vivekananda on his 150th Birth day. This Mega event – first of its kind in Kovilpatti region - was organized by Vivekananda Kendra Kanyakumari, Kovilpatti Branch of Tamilnadu. These students were from 18 schools in and around Kovilpatti. Inaugurated by Chief Guest TmT. Ayyalummal, Head Mistress of Govt. Girls School Kovilpatti, the event was addressed by Thiru Krishnamurthyji-Editor Vivek Vani, Sri Ayyappanji-Secretary RDP, Sri.S.K.Subramaniyan Correspondent of VKV Vallioor and Sri Krishnaswami-Vibhag Sanghatak Tamilnadu and conducted by Sri Paramguru-District Incharge for Kovilpatti. Also 90 teachers from the participating schools and many spectators were present to witness this memorable event.

