

# YUVA BHARATI

## VOICE OF YOUTH

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04 Editorial	P.Parameswaran	<p><b>Founder Editor</b> MANANEEYA EKNATHJI RANADE <b>Editor:</b> P. PARAMESWARAN  <b>Editorial Office:</b> 5, Singarachari Street Triplicane, Chennai - 600 005  Ph: (044) 28440042 Email: vkchennai@vsnl.net www.vkendra.org</p> <p>Single Copy Rs. 7/- Annual Rs. 75/- For 3 yrs: Rs. 200/- Life (20 Yrs) Rs. 800/-</p> <p>(Plus Rs. 30/- for outstation Cheques)</p>
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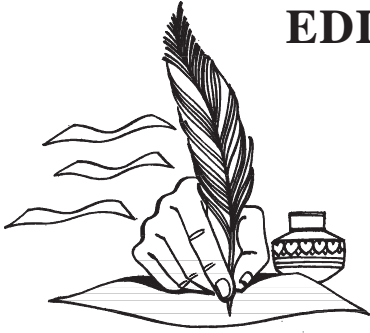
**Keep the motto before you – 'Elevation of the masses without injuring their religion.'**

**--Swami Vivekananda**

## प्रार्थना – INVOCATION

Different are the paths laid down in the Vedas, Sankhya, Yoga, and Saiva and Vaisnava scriptures. Of these, some people take to one and some to another as the best. Devotees follow these diverse paths, straight or crooked, according to their different tendencies. Yet, O Lord, Thou alone art the ultimate goal of all men, as is the ocean of all rivers.

- Sivamahimnah Stotra



## EDITORIAL



**E**very culture is characterized by certain fundamental concepts which distinguish that culture from others and which lend it its identity and individuality. They can be compared to certain symbols that evoke a “cosmos of ideas”. They have a living and dynamic reality about them. They grow and evolve with time, adapt themselves to the changing situations and thereby keep the cultural flow vibrant and uninterrupted. ‘Yajna’ is one such fundamental concept, basic to the Hindu culture. Satya, Rita, Tapas, etc. are some other concepts of that kind unique to Hindu Dharma. These are terms with a profound significance, which cannot be conveyed through translation into any other language. Right from the beginning of our history this term has been continuously in vogue. In course of time, it assumed added significance and acquired new shades of meaning, adapting itself to the changing situations and thus enriching our culture. There has been a regular growth and enhancement in its significance; even today it arouses the noblest of sentiments in the collective psyche of the people of this country. The word Yajna brings to our mind the idea of ‘a sacrificial fire’ around which people sit and offer various oblations like ghee and other valuable items while chanting Vedic Mantras. This is a symbolic aspect of Yajna, a symbolism that conveys a profound Truth. The underlying truth is that everything in the world belongs to God and must go back to Him. We are only

temporary custodians entitled to its limited use. With this understanding the Vedic Rishis taught us to first make an offering to the Divine and then enjoy whatever remains as ‘Prasad’. In Vedic tradition, the Mantras used during the Yajna expressly state that “This belongs to the Deity, it is not mine, I offer it to the deity”. The purpose of the symbolism is to make us understand that we are not the owners, God is the only owner. So without laying any claim of ownership, we must utilize everything that comes in our way for the betterment of the society and not for our selfish ends. Yajna has a still deeper mystic significance. The entire creation is an act of Yajna by the Divine himself. Creation is the projection of the Divine in time and space. The infinite divinity consents himself to become finite through an enormous act of sacrifice. The omniscient God puts on the cloak of ignorance in creation. Similarly God that is all bliss accepts the agonies of world existence, which is again a great sacrifice. Without the Divine voluntarily undergoing this colossal sacrifice there would have been no creation at all. And since we are a part of this creation, we owe a duty to offer Yajna to the Divine. During the period of the Dharmashastras, ‘Panchamahayajnas’ were prescribed for every householder. These are social obligations, which everyone was expected to discharge. It is on the fulfilment of this that the harmonious social life could proceed without disturbance or dislocation. The uninterrupted existence of our society from time immemorial to this day was largely dependent on the performance of these obligatory functions or Yajnas that our society adhered to. Of course, changing circumstances demand changing responses. What might be relevant at one time become irrelevant at another point of time. But the attitude of Yajna is a value that never becomes irrelevant. It is an eternal value, in spite of changing social situations. The radical transformation that is overtaking humanity requires a corresponding attitude of Yajna to be adopted and implemented.

According to Bhagavat Gita, Yajna is the principle of existence. As Lord Krishna puts it: “The Prajapati created mankind along with Yajna and told them ‘You prosper by Yajna which is your Kaamadhenu. By Yajna you propitiate the Gods, and being thus propitiated, they will nourish you in return. And by nourishing each other, you attain the highest prosperity’.” What is of immense significance in the Gita is the slight shift in emphasis it gives to the term by providing a new perspective about Yajna. In the Gita Lord Krishna says that there are innumerable types of Yajna like, “Evam Bahavidhayajna”. Here in the place of pouring oblations in to the sacrificial fire, Lord Krishna suggests that actions like Tapas, teaching, learning, etc. are also to be sublimated into Yajnas. They have to be done with the same spirit underlying the Vedic Yajna. If we glance through various slokas dealing with Yajna in the Bhagavat Gita, we will come to understand that Yajna has to be understood in terms of three main criteria: 1. An act performed without any selfish motive is Yajna 2. An act done as an offering to the Divine is Yajna 3. An act done with a collective consciousness and aspiration is Yajna. Yajna should in fact combine all these dimensions. So, Yajna according to the Gita means selfless action collectively undertaken offering the fruit thereof as an offering to the Divine. Bhagavan says that he himself is the recipient and the master of all the Yajnas. What makes the difference between an ordinary act and a Yajna is not the act itself, but the motive and the attitude behind it. According to Lord Krishna even fighting the battle of Kurukshetra, however fierce and inhuman it may appear, is to be transformed into a sacred Yajna. For that, all that Arjuna has to do, is to give up the claim of doership and the hankering after the result

and fight considering himself an instrument in the hands of the Divine. The teaching of the Gita is that the performance of one’s Swadharma in this spirit makes it a Yajna. Swadharma may be anything from worship in a shrine to scavenging in the street. There is no high and low, no sacred and secular. The attitude of Yajna makes everything sacred because it is an offering to the Divine. The workers of Vivekananda Kendra always consider Yajna as part of their daily life. It may be more appropriate to say that for a Kendra worker life itself becomes Yajna. Whatever he does in any situation, anywhere as assigned by the Kendra becomes his Swadharma. Performing it without any selfish element entering into it, with total Shraddha and dedication irrespective of likes or dislikes, pleasure or pain, with full understanding that it is an offering to the Divine becomes an act of Yajna. There is another important consideration in this regard; it is the collective thinking, the collective will and aspiration that makes the act truly a Yajna. The individual ego has to be first thrown into the sacrificial fire. The selfish ego has to be annihilated. For all the Kendra workers, the object of their worship before whom the offering or the Yajna is done, is the sacred Motherland. As Swami Vivekananda had put it, “Let this alone be the object of your worship. Let all other vain Gods disappear”. With this sublime sentiment and with the mantra “Rashtraya Swaha Idam Na Mama”, let every Kendra worker offer himself and all his actions as Yajna at the altar of service to our Bharat Mata. When all the workers are fully imbued with this spirit, the entire organization will become a mighty Yajna for national regeneration and world upliftment through pure spiritual power.

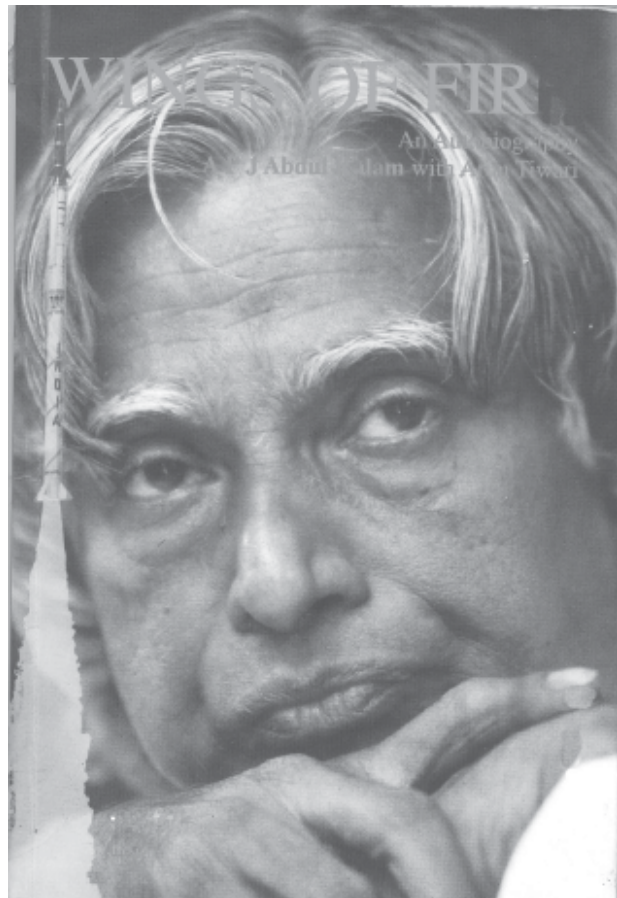
--P.Parameswaran



**A**t Peda Amiram near Bhimavaram, I have visited an International Cancer Centre with all modern facilities for treatment of cancer patients. At Parumala in Kerala, the International Centre for Cardio Thoracic and Vascular Diseases is providing specialized treatment to heart patients in rural areas. I also met 1000 physically challenged children wearing the light weight calipers at Nalgonda in Andhra Pradesh and most importantly the first and the 10,000th child benefited from the Defence Technology spin off. All these results indicate that the development has started reaching certain parts of our rural areas. What does it all symbolize? The 5000 years old civilization is awakening to new technology and towards development. I can see that developed India is on the rise.

In order to strengthen this process, scientists, technologists and healthcare specialists have a special role to play.

**Mission for Scientists and Technologists:** For the scientists and technologists of the nation, I



**Excerpts from the**  
**ADDRESS TO THE NATION BY THE PRESIDENT**  
**OF INDIA, DR. A.P.J. ABDUL KALAM**  
**ON THE EVE OF 57TH REPUBLIC DAY - 2006**

have five immediate national missions: (a). Increasing the Solar Photo Voltaic Cell efficiency from 14% to 45% using nano technology; (b). Research in proteomics to identify the disease causing mechanism and to develop new methods to treat diseases; (c). Earthquake forecasting using multiple parameter pre-cursors such as pre-shock conditions and electromagnetic phenomena, prior to the final rupture; (d). Building a validated mathematical model for predicting the quantum of rain for a particular cloud conditions in a particular region in a prescribed time using the new type of Polarimetric radar and; (e). Developing the products in the

healthcare, electronics and materials to meet the national requirements using the convergence of nano, bio and info technologies.

**Healthcare:** Healthcare community should give highest priority for treatment of HIV/AIDS and accelerate the development of effective anti-vaccine for certain types of HIV before 2007, by networking with national and international institutions working in this area. They should integrate research efforts of malaria, typhoid, and diarrhoeal disorders for facilitating development of combination vaccine by 2007. Healthcare personnel, doctors, psychologists, researchers, pharmacologists, economists and environmentalists should all work together



coherently towards the mission of providing good health to all citizens of India and make the nation near disease free.

**Bharat Nirman Programme:** The Government has already launched the Bharat Nirman Programme with an outlay of Rs. 1,74,000 Crore for providing rural infrastructure within the next four years. This will facilitate the rural programme like PURA to progress faster in an integrated way.

### **Awakening and Change**

These actions from multiple agencies spread across the country gives me the confidence that we are well on our way on the path of development and transforming India into a developed nation before 2020... Now I would like to discuss the need for important changes required in our mind-set.

**Transparency starts from Home:** ... A 10th class student Bhavani, studying in Adichunchanagiri Composite High School, Shimoga, asked me the following question:

Dear Sir, "What is the role of students to stop corruption which is deeply rooted in our country just like cancer?"

The agony of the young mind is reflected in this question. For me it was an important question, since it comes from a young mind. I was thinking what type of solutions we could give.

I said there are one billion people in the country and nearly 200 million homes. In general most of them are good people. However, if we find that people in a few million houses are not transparent and not amenable to the laws of the country, what can we do? These houses apart from parents have one daughter or one son or both. If the parents in these houses are deviating from the transparent path the children can use the tool of love and affection and correct the parents to come back to the right path. I asked all the children assembled in that gathering, if parents of a few children get deviated from transparency, will you children boldly tell your parents, father or mother, you are not doing

the right thing. That is what we are taught by you and in the school. Most of the children spontaneously responded, 'we will do it.' The confidence comes from them that they have love as a tool. Similarly I have also asked the parents in some other meeting, initially there was a silence, later, many of them hesitantly agreed that they would abide by the children's suggestion since it is driven by love. The children took an oath. The oath was: "I will lead an honest life free from all corruption and will set an example for others to adopt a transparent way of life." Finally I told the students that they should start a movement starting from their home.

### **Gift Extinguishes The Dignity of Human Life**

It was around 1940 and the Second World War was in progress. At that time Panchayat board elections took place in Rameswaram. My father was elected as Panchayat Board member and on the same day he was also elected as the President of Rameswaram Panchayat Board.. He was elected only on the basis of his being a good human being. I would like to narrate one incident that took place on the day he was elected as President of Panchayat board.

I was a school boy at that time studying in fourth class in Rameswaram Panchayat School. Those days we did not have electricity and we used to study in kerosene lamp. I was reading the lessons loudly and I heard a knock on my door. We never used to lock the door in Rameswaram in those years. Somebody opened the door, came in and asked me where my father was? I told him that father had gone for Namaz for evening prayers. Then he said, I have brought something for him, can I keep it there. Then since my father had gone for Namaz, I shouted for my mother to get her permission to receive the items. Since she was also on the Namaz there was no response. I asked the person to leave the items on the cot. After that I went for my studies.

I used to learn by reading aloud in my younger days. I was reading loud and fully concentrating on my studies. At that time my father landed

and saw a *tambalum* kept on the cot. He asked me what is this? Who has given that? I told him somebody came and has kept this for you. He opened the cover of the *tambalum* and found there was a costly *dhoti*, *angawastram*, some fruits and some sweets and he could see the slip that the person had left behind. I was the last son of my father, he really loved me and I also loved him a lot. This was the first time I saw him very angry and also this was the first time I had a beating by him. I got frightened and I was weeping. Then he touched my shoulder lovingly with affection and advised me not to receive any gift without his permission. It is not a good habit. Receiving gift with a purpose is a very dangerous thing in life. He quoted a verse from Hadith which means: Gifts accompany poisonous intentions. This lesson stands out prominently in my mind. This experience taught me a valuable lesson for my life.

I would like to mention the writings in Manu Smriti which warns every individual against accepting gifts given with the motive since it places the acceptor under an obligation in favour of the person who gave the gift... I am sharing this, with all of you particularly the young ones, to emphasize that, not to be carried away by any gift with a motive through which one loses his personality greatly. I will be very happy if you can practice this sincerely.

### **Mother Gives Principle of Truth**

Now, I will narrate to you a story surrounding the life of a great saint Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Gelani which happened about one thousand years ago. One day child Abdul Qadir heard a cow saying, "What are you doing here in the grazing fields? It is not for this you have been created." He ran back to his house feeling utterly terrified and climbed on to the roof of his house. From there he saw a large group of people returning from Arafat Mountain, thousands of miles away from his place in the neighbourhood of Mecca after performing Haj. Bewildered Abdul Qadir went to his mother and

asked her permission to make a journey to Baghdad in order to pursue a career for knowledge. The mother understood the divine call and promptly gave the permission for him to go. She gave him 40 gold coins which was his share he inherited from his father. She stitched these 40 gold coins inside the lining of his coat and gave him permission to leave. When she stepped out of the door to bid him farewell, she said, "Oh, my son! You are going! I have detached myself from you for the sake of Allah knowing that I shall not see your face again until the day of last judgement. But take one advice from me. My son, you always feel the truth, speak the truth and propagate the truth even when your life is at stake."

Abdul Qadir travelled with a small caravan heading for Baghdad. During the journey, when the caravan was passing through the tough terrains, a group of robbers on horses suddenly attacked the caravan and started looting. None of them however took the slightest notice of Abdul Qadir, until one of the looters turned to him and said. "You are here poor boy! Do you have anything with you?" Abdul Qadir replied, "I have got 40 gold coins which are stitched by my mother in the lining of my coat underneath my armpit." The looter smiled and thought that Abdul Qadir was just joking. He left him alone and moved elsewhere. When their leader came and the looters took this boy to their leader and said to him, "A poor boy claims that he is in possession of 40 gold coins. We looted everybody but we have not touched him because we hardly believed that he has got gold coins with him." Then the leader put the same question but Abdul Qadir replied the same. Then the leader ripped through his coat and discovered that he indeed had 40 gold coins inside the lining of his coat.

The astonished leader asked Abdul Qadir, what prompted him to make this confession. Abdul Qadir replied, "My mother made me promise her to be always truthful even at the cost of my life. Here, it was a matter of only 40 gold

coins. I promised her and never betrayed her trust, so I told the truth.” The looters started weeping and said, you have adhered to the advice of your great mother but we have been betraying the trust of our parents and the covenant of our Creator for many years. From now onwards, you would become our leader in our repentance and they all decided to give up robbery and from that day, became righteous persons. Here the world saw the birth of a great saint, Shiek Abdul Qadir Al-Gilani out of a message of truth a mother gave to her child. At this juncture, let me recall a Thirukkural composed by Poet Saint Thiruvalluvar, 2200 years ago.

மனத்தொடு வாய்மை மொழியின் தவத்தொடு  
தானஞ்செய் வாரின் தலை.

**This means that Truth in thinking and action will have a power higher than enduring Tapas and generous Charity.**

#### **Influence of Teacher: Mission of my life**

I have talked to you many times about my primary school teacher Shri Sivasubramanya Iyer. He was a great teacher and he imbibed in many of his students a vision for future. For example, once he explained about bird flight and asked whether we understood or not. Seeing our response, he took us to the seashore and showed the birds actually flying and explained the flight mechanism. Above all, the way he explained it injected into me, what should be the goal of my life. He is an excellent role model for all the teachers...

Our 540 million youth, who are below 25 years of age, should see an imprint of great leaders. They can become their role models to bring a dynamic change in politics and the developmental missions. Here, I am reminded of the famous statement by Swami Vivekananda. “The basis of all systems social or political rests upon the goodness of men. No nation is great or good because parliament

enacts this or that, but its men are great and good.”

#### **The Story of the Lost Sheep**

Dear Friends, when I am talking to you, I am reminded of the Biblical story of the Lost Sheep, as said by the Jesus Christ. If anyone of you has a hundred sheep and one of them gets lost, what will you do? Won't you leave the ninety-nine in the field and go and look for the lost sheep until you find it, and when you find it, you will be so glad that you will put it on your shoulder and carry it home. Then you will call in your friends and neighbours and say, let us have a feast, I have found my lost sheep.

As the Lost Sheep is most important for the Shepherd, the message for every citizen of our country from this story is that you may find around you a house which is not lit. Please help to light that house. Similarly, teachers in the class room may find hundreds of bright students but a few may need knowledge with kindness. All teachers must locate such students and impart the knowledge...

There are many such examples, which can be cited. Dear Citizens, if all of us do this, God will be with us and I am sure the whole nation will be happy, prosperous and safe. This is fully corroborated by the advice given to Mahatma Gandhi by his mother. Gandhiji says, “My mother had given an advice ‘Son, in your entire life time if you can save or better someone's life, your birth as a human being and your life is a success. You have the blessing of the Almighty God’.”

#### **Conclusion**

Infallibility is divinity. We are not divine. We are fallible. To err is human. Divinity would demand that we realize this irrefutable truth and correct ourselves when we become fallible. The spirit of life and thirst for success and rectitude should propel ourselves to correct our mistakes on our way instead of ruing over mistakes and slips that have been committed even inadvertently. The need of the hour is

disciplined action by all citizens. This will lead to the creation of enlightened citizens. Any country is as good as its citizens. Their ethos, their values and their character will be reflected in the country's make up. They are crucial factors that will determine whether the country will move forward on a progressive path or stagnate. Hence, there is a need to cultivate a sense of eternal values in each of its citizens, instill in him or her a sense of discipline. The education system right from the primary level has to concentrate on this aspect. For inculcating discipline among citizens, I visualize the necessity for providing compulsory NCC training for a minimum period of 18 months to all our youth either during the senior secondary stage and or during graduation in all educational institutions, both Government and private. This will ensure disciplined politics, business, judiciary, bureaucracy, scientific pursuits and sports and games. All of us have to practice the values of honesty, sincerity and tolerance

in our day-to-day living. This will elevate our politics to statesmanship. We have to collectively inculcate a positive attitude of what we can do for our country so that we together will be able to benefit ourselves. We have immensely benefited from what our ancestors did and left for us. We have a right and responsibility to leave a positive legacy to the posterity for which we all will be remembered for. The land, water and sky of this nation are the witnesses.

*Our righteous toil is our guiding light,  
If we work hard, we all can prosper.  
Nurture great thoughts, rise up in actions,  
May righteous methods be our guide;  
May the nation prosper ever with  
Almighty's grace.*

Allow me again, my dear citizens, to wish you a very purposeful and happy Republic Day.

May God bless you.

Jai Hind.



**THE SACRED CONFLAGRATION**  
*Devotion to motherland of the intense, dynamic, uncompromising, and fiery type is the life-breath of a free, prosperous, and glorious national existence on face of the earth. And we, the Hindus, are the inheritors of the most sublime devotion for the motherland. Let those ancient embers of devotion lying dormant in every Hindu heart be fanned and joined in a sacred conflagration which shall consume all the past aggressions on our motherland and bring to life the dream of Bharat Mata reinstated in her pristine undivided form.*

—Sri Guruji Golwalkar





## WHOSE DREAM WAS IT THAT MATERIALISED?

Part- II



(Interview with R.N.Venkataramanji  
continued)

*How was the co-operation from the government of Tamilnadu during the construction of the Vivekananda Rock Memorial?*

**W**hen the permission was obtained from the State Government for the construction of the Memorial, Shri Bhaktavatsalam was the Chief Minister. When the actual construction was in progress, Arignar Anna was the Chief Minister. Next came Kalaignar Karunanidhi as the Chief Minister.

Initially though there were some setbacks in obtaining permission for the Memorial construction, the fact remains that from Bhaktavatsalam to Karunanidhi everyone extended good cooperation.

Kalaignar Karunanidhi presided over the inaugural function of the Memorial and saw through the programme. At the function Chief Minister Karunanidhi delivered his first ever address in English before a mammoth crowd of thousands. Then for about 20 minutes he spoke in beautiful, chaste Tamil. That was the time when the Assembly was in session. Still, Karunanidhi graced the occasion with his participation right through.

During M.G.R.'s rule also, there was good cooperation. It was Eknathji's way of approach that won him such camaraderie from all.

*What kind of service activities has Vivekananda Kendra taken up?*

Right from the inception of Vivekananda Kendra, it was the intention of Eknathji that

the service of the Kendra should be made available in those regions where no other organization had ever ventured. He trained young men and women and prepared them to go and work in such remote regions. Today there are more than 150 Life Workers in the Kendra engaged in various service activities in different parts of the country.

In accordance with Eknathji's wish, the activities of Vivekananda Kendra were first started in Arunachal Pradesh. The Kendra continues to serve the tribals in that State. The state of affairs was such that the people there remained cut off from the national mainstream. Therefore it was felt necessary to start the service activities among the people there.

Through the Kendra's schools, the people there are being served, in addition to instilling in them love for the country — Deshabhakti. The Kendra is running 22 schools there. The pupils studying in those schools are taken to different parts of India in order to familiarise them with our country, and enable them to know about her wealth and glory. In short, the Kendra is nurturing in their minds the awareness that they are also people of this country.

Likewise, in the Andamans too the Kendra is going on with its services. Nine schools are being run there. Yoga training classes are part of the Kendra's activities.

On an average, 12 lakh people visit the Vivekananda Rock Memorial in a year. Vivekananda Kendra facilitates their visit and caters to their requirements. The Kendra also brings out many publications in various languages, spreading the message of Swamiji.

Published and printed by N Viswanath on behalf of Vivekananda Kendra from 5, Singarachari Street, Triplicane, Chennai-5. at M/s. RNR Printers and Publishers, 8, Thandavarayan Street, Triplicane, Chennai-5. **Editor: P Parameswaran.**

*What personal qualities in Eknathji impressed you most as unforgettable?*

All his qualities were astonishing and awe-inspiring. To mention one particular quality, under no circumstances would he let down anyone in his company. During my 18 years association with him, whenever he went to meet anyone in Chennai, he would invariably take me with him. I can say with firm confidence that I was with him, whomsoever he went to meet, in Chennai. That experience was rewarding to me in several dealings.



Once Eknathji had a meeting with the Governor of Tamil Nadu, Shri K.K.Shah. I also accompanied him. Shri Shah who had been informally chatting with Eknathji, expressed that he would like to talk to him something in person. To this, Eknathji said, "Whatever you speak to me in the presence of Venkataraman is as

good as speaking to me in private."

Then both of them freely exchanged their views on several matters right in my presence. This incident is a typical example of the confidence Eknathji had in his colleagues. I recall another incident. The Late Shri V Mahalingam, who was the Manager of *Vijayabharatam* (a Tamil magazine), had been earlier the Administrative Officer of Vivekananda Kendra in Kanyakumari. I was in charge of the Kendra in Chennai.

Once in Kanyakumari there was a small meeting in which seven or eight members were there. The former Governor of Pondicherry, Shri

Cheddilal, was also one among them. After his retirement he joined Vivekananda Kendra and he was designated as Vice-President. Eknathji was the President.

In that meeting Eknathji aired his views on a particular project. Shri Mahalingam expressed his view which was diametrically opposite to Eknathji's. There ensued a heated argument. Both Eknathji and Mahalingam stubbornly stood their grounds with no chance of let up.

After the meeting was over, Shri Cheddilal reproachfully told Eknathji: "That Mahalingam

should be dismissed from service forthwith. How dare he opposes you so vehemently! Who gave him such authority?"

Eknathji was quick to reply. He said, "I only gave him that authority. When it comes to work, everyone has the full freedom to express his views freely and frankly." Eknathji who told me about this incident, added, "See, those coming from outside, cannot easily understand our method of working."



These two are most unforgettable incidents in my life. They bear testimony to Eknathji's geniality and noble approach to men and matters.

*What is the people's participation in the construction of the Vivekananda Rock Memorial?*

As I had mentioned earlier, the total cost of construction of the Memorial touched Rupees one crore and thirtyfive lakhs. Of this, Rupees eighty lakhs were from the common people. One Rupee, Two Rupee and Five Rupee

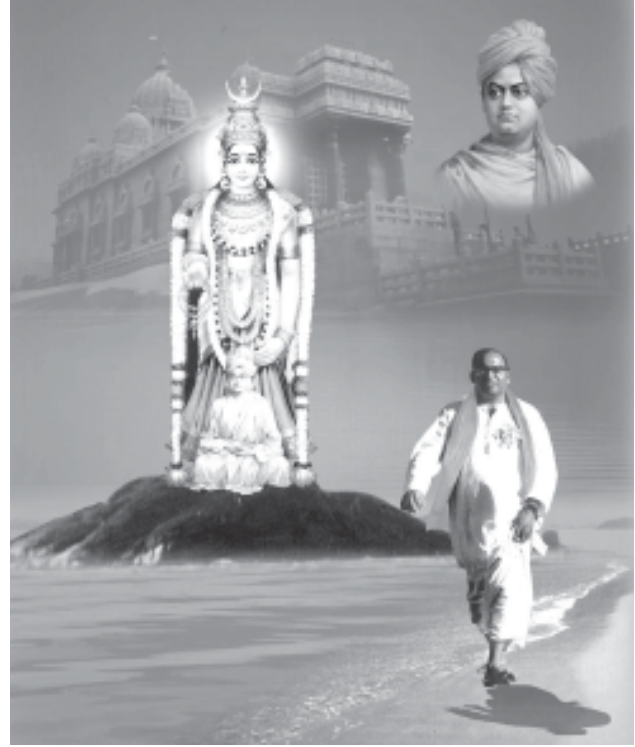
coupons were issued so as to enable as many commoners as possible to contribute towards the cause, and in order that whenever they visit Kanyakumari it will be a joyous recollection for them that their share of money has also gone into the monumental work. The task of mobilising such funds from the public was taken up by the Sangha Swayamsevaks. The Central and the State Governments also donated towards the cause. Our army Jhawans have also contributed. Yet, the lion's share of the contribution came from the general public.

*Any other speciality about Eknathji?*

One can go on talking about his qualities. During his days of service in the Kendra, he had written about 20,000 letters. Copies of those letters are available in the Chennai Kendra and in Kanyakumari Office. He has expressed his views on several matters through those letters addressed to senior government officials, industrialists and co-workers.

In those days when the Memorial construction was in progress, to me alone he would have written about 1000 letters. I was 34 years old then. When I joined the service I was 28.

Vivekananda Kendra has recently brought out a book titled *Kendra Unfolds*. The book contains a selection 300 letters of Eknathji's. Some of his letters addressed to me have also found place in the book. I can say that the



golden period of my life was the period when I worked with him. When Shri Venkataramanji heaves with pride while saying that, our minds get a glimpse of that Himalayan personality called Eknathji whose name will continue to be uttered as long as the world remains.

Yea! It is true that great achievers continue to live even after they are gone in the worldly sense.

**Concluded**

—Translated by K.P.Shivakumar

## **YUVA BHARATI Subscription Renewal - An Appeal**

**Dear Subscribers/  
Readers,**

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

**YB/12879,910,912,913,915,16406-408,411-18,456,59-65,68-80,82-87,  
91-94,96,97,99,500-504**

**(Ends with May '06)**

## THE SCARE OF EPIDEMICS

What is the reality of the avian flu?  
MANEKA GANDHI

Perhaps some Congressional committee might look into the entire subject of plausible conflicts of interest regarding Secretary Rumsfeld. This is not the first time that Rumsfeld has been involved in pharmaceutical scams. It was after all Rumsfeld, as chairman of G.D. Searle, who pressured the FDA to get Aspartame approved. The FDA blocked its approval for ten years, stating it was toxic, before Rumsfeld twisted arms at the FDA.

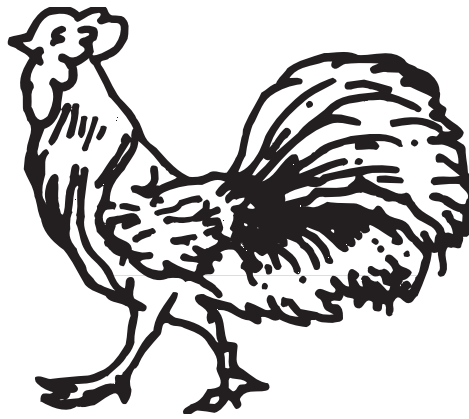
Now that the Bush government has bought all these vials, how many people have been vaccinated. None. According to President Bush's national strategy he is protecting the American people by stockpiling vaccines in case there is an outbreak! What does the American Centre for Disease Control say?

"A specific vaccine for humans that is effective against avian influenza has not yet been approved. Based upon LIMITED data, the Centers for Disease Control have suggested that the anti-viral medication Oseltamavir (brand name-Tamiflu) MAY be effective in treating avian influenza."

What does Bush say on this replacement of the Osama bin Laden bogey?

"If left unchallenged, this virus could become the first pandemic of the 21st century. We must not allow that to happen. It is essential we work together, and as we do so, we will fulfil a moral duty to protect our citizens, and heal the sick, and comfort the afflicted." He announces the International Partnership on Avian and Pandemic Influenza during the UN General Assembly in September 2005. and the first meeting of the

Partnership takes place October 6-7 in Washington, DC, hosted by the U.S. Department of State attended by officials from 88 countries, the World Health Organization, the Food and Agricultural Organization and the World Organization for Animal Health.



**BIRD FLU?**

The goals of the International Partnership conceived by Bush are to Elevate the avian influenza issue on national agendas; Coordinate efforts among donor and affected nations; Mobilize and leverage resources; Build local capacity to identify, contain and respond to an influenza pandemic.

After Bush announces that he is going to give funds to any country that has any signs of Avian flu (\$251 million to detect and contain outbreaks before they spread around the world) and starts off by giving 25 million dollars for prevent the spread of Avian Flu in "affected" South Asian countries and \$ 13 million for "technical assistance promising millions more, suddenly each country that has a low GDP discovers strains of Avian Flu. Not in poultry because then people will stop buying and eating chicken, but in wild migratory birds!

Everyone wants a piece of the money. The Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), Mt Jerraud has suggested that his organization be given more money to expand its studies to the correlation between climate the spread of avian flu!

Where is the Avian flu?

Simple- 53 people have died of it. However they have not died of this virus as it cannot spread to



humans - which every scientist has admitted. So what have they died of? Look at the poultries in these and any country. The chickens are overcrowded, kept in filthy conditions and killed in the most filthy manner possible. They regularly suffer from cholera and most all of them get salmonella related bacterial diseases. The victims are poultry workers - people who live amongst filth and disease and work in the killing fields with their bare hands. How many people who work in the poultries in any Asian country die of salmonella poisoning . Thousands - including in India.

Look at the words used by the media:

“A bird flu virus may mutate to a human form that becomes as deadly as the ones that killed millions during three influenza pandemics of the 20th century.” Bird flu could become epidemic - 2/22/2005

“Hundreds of thousands of people may die and one quarter of the work force could be absent if Britain were hit by a bird flu pandemic...” Bird flu epidemic could kill as many as 750,000 - March 22

“The European Union’s health commissioner called on Europe to protect itself from a possible epidemic of bird flu.” EU warned to protect against bird flu epidemic - May 27

“The virus that killed hundreds of thousands of birds and dozens of people in recent years is about to mutate and cause a worldwide epidemic.” WHO warns of worldwide deadly flu epidemic - June 12, 2005

“International experts fear that bird flu is mutating into a strain that will cause a worldwide pandemic.” Fears that new strain of bird flu will kill millions - 12 June 2005

“A flu pandemic would be triggered if the lethal H5N1 strain mutated into a form that could jump from human to human. “China to shut borders if struck by bird flu” - October 28

“If, could, may, fear that bird flu is mutating, about to mutate, may mutate, could become epidemic”. Just “shock-n-awe” material to grab your attention. Our neighbours have it, say the Indian papers, regularly. Which neighbour? Duh... Which is the one paper that has taken this the most

seriously? The one newspaper that sells every inch of its space - including the “news”. Most newspapers ignore this nonsense - occasionally putting it in as a space filler. Why does India which sells the largest amount of eggs in Asia and exports the largest number of chickens all of which are kept in the same conditions as anywhere in Asia not have it? Because we don’t have the money to import the vaccines. Once they are locally made by Ranbaxy, no doubt we will suddenly develop Avian Flu as well ! It is to the credit of India that we have not fallen prey to this scamming as yet.

Here is the actual truth.

On October 28th the Chinese Ministry of Health and Ministry of Agriculture reiterated that China has experienced no human bird flu infection. The two children that fell sick with on Oct. 17 with symptoms of fever and cough of which one died (and this led to the killing of millions of birds) were later diagnosed with bronchial pneumonia. On January 24, 2005, newspapers in Vietnam reported that “three brothers in northern Vietnam who MAY have contracted bird flu all drank raw duck blood at a family feast”. Raw duck blood could give any disease - try it.

One human bird flu victim reported in Siberia. “We cannot say now if something out of the ordinary has occurred. The reason behind the accident could be bad water, feed poisoning, Newcastle disease or bird flu. More investigation is needed,” ~ The Moscow News

Even WHO Director-General Dr. Jong Woo Lee, urging the world to prepare itself for the outbreak, betrays himself “The burning question is, will there be a human influenza pandemic. I believe, on behalf of WHO, that there will be. And right now the only one condition missing is the virus that is rapidly transmitted from human to human,” said Dr. Lee.

WHO warns of human flu pandemic. How many cases reported in Europe so far by WHO? Not one. The only thing that is mutating is the propaganda line, and the resulting fear factor

Let us presume that flu which has been in pandemic form for about several hundred years

(how many times a year do you get it ? does the rounds again. Big deal. Flu ( influenza ) is a viral infection that has a relatively short lifespan and causes problems for its victim in the form of several minor effects (chills, high fever, aches and pains, headaches, sore throat, mucosal irritation). 35,000 people get flu daily. Some die anyway if they have other complications. The great Global Threat is closer to what Spain's Agriculture Minister describes it as - "science fiction"

Scientists in America are increasingly airing their opinions about this "vaccine". A prominent radio show, The Diane Rehm show, was entirely about the "U.S. Strategy for Flu Pandemic."

Some excerpts: "This whole 'bird flu' issue is a total fraud. These tests are not for the virus but for the anti-bodies to the virus. This is a totally different thing. If an animal or person has antibodies to a virus it means that that animal or person has successively fought off the virus at some earlier time. If they are healthy they will still show the antibodies in future tests. That certainly does not mean they have the flu.

If avian flu becomes more than a threatened pandemic, it will have done so by political and economic design. This thesis is supported by current massive media misrepresentations, profiteering on risky and valueless vaccines, gross neglect of data showing earlier similar man-made plagues including SARS, West Nile Virus, AIDS and more; continuance of genetic studies breeding more mutant flu viruses , inside trading scandals involving pandemic savvy White House and drug industry officials, curious immunity of these pharmaceutical entities over the past century to law enforcement and mainstream media scrutiny.

If Avian Flu is that serious and Tamiflu is the answer, why is Tamiflu only being sold to governments and not to the public? The answer lies here: About the time that President Bush was buying the "vaccine" he also announced that the United States must approve liability protection for the makers of lifesaving vaccines as American vaccine manufacturers had been hit with a flood of lawsuits.

So government not only buy the drugs but protect the manufacturers when the drugs are found to be useless ! Is there any other clue that this scam is mainly designed for pharmaceutical companies at the taxpayers' expense. . Bush and Rumsfeld, the people who led America into the Iraq decimation based on those mythical "weapons of mass destruction" have found another WMD as mythical - Avian flu. Bush outraged Americans on both sides of the political spectrum when he announced his intention to have the U.S. military take over American cities hit by the avian flu! Bush has said no one knows when or where a deadly strain of flu will strike but "at some point we are likely to face another pandemic." Avian Flu has become the new "terrorism" in place of Osama bin Laden and as usual bemused scientists and an easily led media will carry on with the game till the next bogey.

Why have research scientists in the Western biogenetic field welcomed this fiction of Avian Flu. The Microular Virology at Cambridge University and the Roslin Institute in Scotland are involved in developing 'transgenic chickens' which would have small pieces of genetic material inserted into chicken eggs to allegedly make the chickens H5N1 resistant. This is what they say: "Once we have regulatory approval, we believe it will only take between four and five years to breed enough chickens to replace the entire world (chicken) population. We will have the patents on these chickens and control their products." It is increasingly clear that the entire saga of Avian Flu is one whose dimensions are only slowly coming to light.

By the time you discover this fraud, taxpayer billions will have gone Indictments being handed down to Scooter Libby, the Chief of Staff of the Vice President of the United States for lies and cover-up of information used deliberately to suppress the fact the Bush Administration had no 'smoking gun' to prove Saddam Hussein was building a nuclear arsenal. This new scandal is as outrageously criminal.



*On the eve of Guruji's birth centenary celebrations.*

## WE WANT MEN WITH CAPITAL 'M'

Speech by Shri Guruji before students, Bangalore, Nov. 30, 1957

One more and the final notable example I shall tell you. Many of you must have heard of Swami Rama Tirtha, a very famous man, a very great man. He was a sannyasin. Some may think that he might have taken to that life for want of livelihood. No, not at all! He was a professor of Mathematics. He resigned the job and then became a sadhu. In early days he was extremely poor. He was married, as was the custom, in his early age. After the S.S.L.C. standard his father wanted him to take to Government service and maintain the family. A conflict came. There was a quarrel between the father and the son, not like that of the present students who quarrel with their parents for nothing. The conflict with him (Swami Rama Tirtha) was that of an ideology. He had decided to prosecute education as far as possible. His father was adamant — as in the case of many of our fathers — and did not budge an inch. Rama Tirtha was also equally adamant. Father told him “If you do not obey me, quit my house.” Swami Rama Tirtha did *shashtanga namaskar* to his father and prepared to quit the house. The father said: “Look here. This is your wife. Take her away also.” At that time Rama Tirtha was only 15 years of age and that girl might have been 8 years of age. At once Rama Tirtha asked her to follow him. She also readily and faithfully followed him. She in her early days must have heard the story of Ramachandra and witnessed the dramas of Ramayana and Mahabharata. In it she must have seen how Sita and Draupadi had followed their husbands. The wife is called the *saha-dharmacharini*. Now-a-days after going to cinemas, they learn something else! With the little cloth she wore, she followed her husband, Rama Tirtha. Then what next? He found a place to lodge, i.e., a room 3 cubits in length and 1.5 cubits in width! A nominal rent of 4 annas per month was fixed. He asked his wife to stay there. He went out and found an educational institution in which he could be a tutor and earn something. He had passed the S.S.L.C. examination in 1st

class. In those days very few people would get 1st class. Even much later when I was studying, out of 33 students who appeared for the Matriculation examination only 7 passed. With tuition money he joined college. One more thing was there. In our Shastras it is said that a student is a Brahmacharin. And he should not take food prepared by any woman other than his mother or else he should cook his own food. So Rama Tirtha cooked the food for his wife and for himself and taught her also. He joined college and ultimately passed the B.A. examination. When he entered M.A. he took Sanskrit. Until that time he had not studied Sanskrit at all. But by dint of hard labour and strength of mind he passed M.A. in 1st class. All these years he did not allow his wife to go to her father's house. He told her that people would talk to her as the wife of a man who goes begging from door to door. The girl also refused to go to her parents' house when the parents came to take her. Such are towering personalities! And when he gave up the worldly life, he told her: “Look here, these two children I am leaving in your care. Look after them. I am going.” “Oh yes,” she also said.

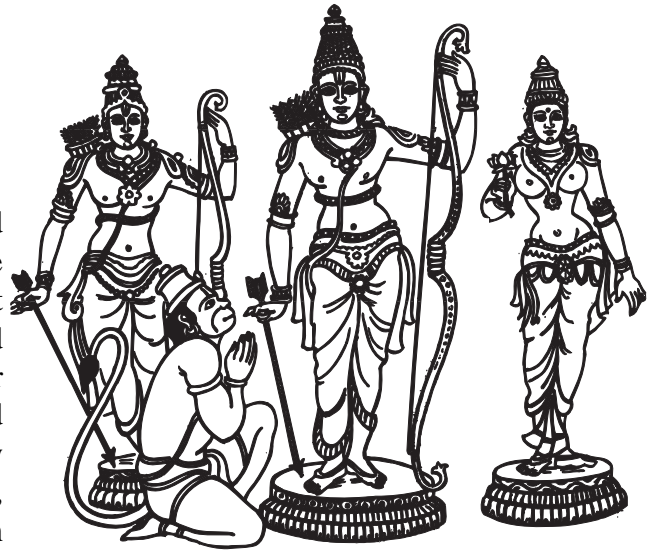
Such people, with that spirit, that determination, can alone cut their way through all the difficulties. The attitude of a beggar we need not have. Secondly, the attitude of swollen-headedness must also be eradicated. We must be idealists and realists too. Realists in the sense of understanding our own capabilities and limitations. We should have a happy confluence of both idealism and realism. Each one should examine himself and understand his capabilities. He should know what should be his standard of understanding, his qualities, and above all his character. Character should be developed both individually and from the national point of view. What is that character which is sound from both the national and individual points of view? I don't know whether one in a thousand knows this.




**DIVINE TRAIT**  
 Dr. K.SUBRAHMANYAM

**G**od's love is pure as the unadulterated raindrop. The rays of the sun are colourless. But the colourless light acquires colours when reflected and refracted by a prism. The rain drop has no taste, no colour and no odour. But it acquires taste, colour and odour due to its contact with the earth. Similarly the divine love of purity becomes lust, greed, anger, pride, conceit and possessiveness when it passes through the prism of egoism in human beings. The more the ego is erased, the more the innate love gets purified. The more the love is purified, the more the person becomes divine. The difference between God and man is in the nature of love. God's love is uncontaminated, unselfish, spontaneous and impartial. The love of ordinary people is ego-centric, possessive, selfish, jealous, body-bound and calculative. The more the egoism is erased, the more the divinity shines through the spontaneous flow of unselfish love. Love's brightness is either concealed or distorted by one's egoism. All our efforts are therefore to annihilate selfishness and become transparent so that the divine torch of love shines, freely and fully, impartially and justly showing the way to all. When the love is pure and spontaneously overflowing on all, fully offering solace and protection, it is called compassion. The love of God is not only abundant, but available to all, at all times. It is but a law of love that it is always seen in service and worship, in self - surrender and self- denial when it moves from mankind to God. The same love is also seen in the offer of solace and protection, fearlessness and peace when it flows from God to humanity. It is compassion and grace when it is divine. It is devotion and service when it is human.

As and when this divine trait of kindness is on the decline, people feel insecure and tension-ridden. Selfish people, then, rise to power and



torment the meek ones. There will be, then, no peace or progress. Devils dance in merriment at the cost of innocent folks. The only way left to God is to manifest divinity and shower grace for overall peacefulness and safety, fearlessness and prosperity. In every age, God comes on earth to display the divine trait of love and compassion. When Ravana is terrorizing the meek mankind, God arrives as Sri Rama to save all from the clutches of fear.

Sri Rama with all his vanara warriors has reached the island of Ravana to release Sita from the prison-grove. All the preparations for the righteous war against terrorism are almost over. Ravana, however, has not reduced his terrorist activities. Anybody disobedient to him is being subjected to humiliation and torture. Hanuman's valiant expedition too does not seem to have any worthwhile impact on him. Ravana continues to be haughty and aggressive, lustful and conceited. The wise counsel of his younger brother Vibhishana falls on the deaf ears of defiance. At the height of his arrogance, he makes fun of Vibhishana's advice and kicks him out. Rolling down the steps of Ravana's court hall, Vibhishana, undeterred, holds on to his righteousness and devotion to Truth. Unable to set right Ravana of his follies and crimes, Vibhishana decides to turn his steps towards Sri Rama, the compassionate Lord of righteousness. Soon, he arrives in the



improvised cantonment of Sri Rama's soldiers. Arrested by the Vanaras, he is produced before Sugreeva, their chief. Vibhishana's surrender is suspected by almost everyone including Sugreeva. The purpose of his visit is duly communicated to Sri Rama. As an ideal administrator, Sri Rama convenes a meeting of all his well wishers and seeks their opinion about Vibhishana's self-surrender. Nobody, except Hanuman, is in favour of offering protection to the foe's brother. It is almost the opinion of everybody that Vibhishana has arrived at an inappropriate time at an inappropriate place, for an inappropriate purpose. Therefore it is not appropriate to admit him into the fold of Sri Rama. Hanuman, then, is asked to express his views. And Hanuman speaks with all sincerity what is in the mind of Sri Rama. He says, "Whoever seeks protection is to be offered fearlessness first. That is the noble quality of a divine person. It is only when we are in distress and difficulties that we seek solace and protection. If not at the abode of pure love, where else can anyone expect genuine affection? How else can one express one's devotion, if not by total self-surrender? Vibhishana, therefore, is right and righteous in every respect. He deserves to be protected". And Sri Rama is immensely pleased with Hanuman's decisive display of whole-hearted devotion. Only a true devotee understands the deity's feelings fully. Sri Rama declares: "It is in tune with the law of true love that Hanuman has spoken. I have a principle in my life and that is to offer fearlessness to all. *Abhayam dadami sarva bhuteshu. Ye tat vratam mama*". And then someone in the council gathering some courage, gently asked "Sir, then will you offer protection to Ravana as well, if he seeks it?" Sri Rama emphatically proclaims without any hesitation: "Yes, if he submits and surrenders."



And that is a divine trait. Only people of nobility and affection can declare and do so. Sri Rama is God on account of his love which is unselfish, pure and spontaneous showering on all always and in full.

Vibhishana is clear and decisive about his course of action. Therefore he leaves Lanka and chooses to fight against his own brother with the blessings of Sri Rama. Although Arjuna has always been under the protection of Sri Krishna, he has not been able to be clear about his course of action: to fight or not to fight against his cousins, teachers, elders and relatives. He is in a dilemma unable to decide what *dharma* is and what *adhharma* is. Is it not a crime to kill someone? How can a heart of

kindness turn cruel enough to kill somebody? Is it not inhuman to be unkind? Question after question, many a question springs up in Arjuna's mind disturbing his poise. And he therefore submits himself to the loving will of Sri Krishna for a way out. Almost every person at one point or another faces a similar situation. Vibhishana's state of mind is stable and clear. He is

decisive and knows what is to be done. Arjuna is in a confused state of mind. He is unable to decide what is to be done. Even when we are on the right path, we need God's grace. And that is why Vibhishana goes to Sri Rama. Arjuna has sought Sri Krishna's guidance to choose the path itself. The compassionate lord has decisively said "Be thou an instrument in my hands. Be thou thus a *yogi*. Perform every action as an offering to me. And receive every reaction as but a blessing of mine. And remember I shall look after you and the welfare of all. It is more so, when the devotees worship me without any distraction. No action is absolutely good or absolutely bad. And at every moment everybody is engaged in some action

or another. No action is without reaction. The best way to be poised and to be tranquil is to perform all actions as an offering to the lord and receive the reactions or fruits as but the blessings of the same Lord. Be thou a devotee". If Sri Rama's principle is to offer fearlessness, it is Sri Krishna's vow to look after our welfare; "Yoga kshemam vahamyaham". And we are only to submit ourselves to them for the perfection and progress, peace and prosperity. Narendranath is unlike both Vibhishna and Arjuna. He is unable to decide before whom he should express his confused state of mind and quest for God. Vibhishna is aware of Sri Rama's abilities; Arjuna knows about Sri Krishna's divinity. But Narendranath does not know whether Sri Ramakrishna is capable of offering proper guidance. In his search for a divine person, he has met the great master Sri Ramakrishna and has sought to be sure of his bonafides. Therefore, in clear terms he questions him about his (the master's) proximity to divinity. Sri Ramakrishna categorically

declares that he is very much divine, since he has seen God, experienced God.

Sri Ramakrishna not only offers protection and direction but proclaims his divine traits. Both, Sri Rama's offer of fearlessness, and Sri Krishna's promise of welfare are available in Sri Ramakrishna. In addition, he draws the devotees by a proclamation of his divinity. No less an intellectual and sceptical person than Narendranath is drawn towards Sri Ramakrishna's divinity. Neither Vibhishana nor Arjuna is doubtful of the divine traits of Sri Rama and Sri Krishna respectively. But Naren is very much in doubt about the master's divinity. Sri Ramakrishna dispels all doubts about his divinity, offers fearlessness to every devotee and looks after the welfare of all his votaries in addition to guiding them all on righteous lines.

Whoever gives his or her power of attorney to Sri Ramakrishna is sure to be saved, looked after, guided, and led to Self-realization.



## Do you hear Swami Vivekananda saying:

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

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Shibir Calendar for 2006			
Names	period	Age group	Camp Donation
Yoga Shiksha Shibir (English & Hindi)	1 - 15 May	20-25 years	Rs.1000/-
Spiritual Retreat (English & Hindi)	5 - 11 October	40-70 years	Rs.700/-
Yoga Shiksha Shibir (English & Hindi)	1 - 15 December	20-55 yrs	Rs.1000/-

## SHIVA AS ECOLOGIST

NANDITHA KRISHNA

*The Hindu religion celebrates nature. Shiva is a shining example. Unfortunately, many traditions are forgotten today. The loser is the environment, as well as humanity.*

**R**udra-Shiva is the ultimate symbol of the environment. He combines in himself the forces of nature and the five elements or *panchabhutas* that represent the Indian commitment to conserving nature: air, water, earth, fire and space. During the month of Shivaratri, when the devout fast and stay awake, meditating on Shiva as the giver of life, is meditating on creation itself. The worship of Shiva was an important method of venerating the environment.

Many natural forces are imprisoned in Shiva's person: his flowing tresses represent the forests themselves, trapping within them the mighty river Ganga, the source of perennial water and life. His *vibhuti* or sacred ash is the symbol of fertility, a gift of the earth. He is invariably painted or sculpted beneath one or several trees, generally the *bilva*. He is accompanied by Nandi the bull and, often, different wildlife, for he is Pashupati, lord of animals.

Shiva is also Bhupati, Bhuteshvara or Bhutanatha, lord of the earth. *Bhu* means earth and the suffix *ta* means give in Tamil, so *bhuta* means "given by" or "formed" or "created" from the earth. *Bhuta* is the spirit of the earth who is worshipped in rural India. The *bhuta* of Udupi in Karnataka and *theyyam* of Kerala are *bhuta* rituals that continue to be popular.

As the ascetic rishi meditating on a hill, the mountains become the sacred home of Shiva. The Himalayas, even visually, look like the abode of the gods'. Several Shiva temples are found on hills. From Kailasa in the Himalayas to Tiruvannamalai in the south, the country is strewn with hill and mountain homes of Shiva.



By sanctifying them, important watersheds were conserved, preserving forests and providing water for existence. So sacred are the hills that no tree on them could be cut. However, this ban is hardly observed any longer, and Tiruvannamalai is a classic case of deforestation, as are the Himalayan foothills, that were once rich with forests and wildlife. Shiva holds Agni or fire on the palm of his hand. It symbolizes the energy released during creation. The drum represents the sound Om, the origin of creation. The *trishula* or trident in his hand represents the feminine half of creation. There is no aspect of this deity that does not invoke nature.

The five elements or *panchabhootas*—earth, air, water, fire and space—are represented by the five Shivalingas, which are famous temples and pilgrimage centres. Earth is represented by the prithvi linga made of mud at the Ekamreshwara temple in Kanchipuram, Tamil Nadu. Due to its fragile composition, the ritual washing (*abhisheka*) is done with the oil on the

*champaka* flower, not water on milk or sandalwood. The linga at Sri Kalahasti, near Tirupati in Andhra Pradesh, houses the vayu linga. The oil lamps flicker away in the wind, so pooja is offered to the *utsavamurti* (festival idol in bronze) alone. At Tiruvanaikaval (Jambukeshwara) near Trichy in Tamil Nadu, the lingalinga stands inside a small shrine beneath ground level, submerged under a perennial underground spring. This is the linga of water.

The fourth linga—of fire—is situated on top of Tiruvannamalai hill. Shiva appears as the jyoti or light on Kartika Poornima day, when 1,00,000 lamps are lit on the hill. For the rest, the hill itself is regarded as Shiva's linga, making it a sacred natural feature. The fifth linga is the akasha linga of Chidambaram. Space is represented as the vast emptiness in which Shiva danced his *ananda tandava* of creation. There is nothing to be seen in the small shrine. While the lingas within are mentioned in early Tamil literature, dating back 2,000 years, the present temples are magnificent structures that were rebuilt in the Chola, Vijayanagara and Nayaka periods, and are important centres of pilgrimage. However, one wonders how many know the unique symbolism of the temples.

There are twelve jyotirlingas dedicated to Shiva which celebrate various aspects of nature. Kedarnath (Garhwal, UP) has a natural linga, an irregular-shaped rock, in a temple surrounded by the five sacred peaks of Rudra Himalaya. Vishwanath at Kashi is washed by the sacred river Ganga. At Nageswar near Dwaraka, the snake is celebrated as a protector. Mahakala at Ujjain represents the unrelenting march of time, the Destroyer. Omkareswar is situated on an island in the river Narmada. The temple of Somnath in Saurashtra is a dyke along the Arabian sea. The linga of Tryambakeswar



in Nasik has a crack from which there is a continuous drip of water, the occasional flashes of fire and sound. Ghrishmeshwar in Aurangabad is the Lord of the torrid summer. Bhimashankar in the Sahyadri hills is ritually washed by an exquisite lotus pond. Vaidyanatha in Parli, Maharashtra, was once surrounded by forests of medicinal plants. Mallikarjuna at Srisailam in Andhra Pradesh was situated in a garden of white jasmine plants. The twelfth jyotirlinga at Rameshwaram is sacred for the 22 fresh water springs situated within the sea.

Other temples of Shiva are equally representative of nature. The linga at Amarnath is made of ice, and waxes and wanes with the moon. The ancient Mauryan-Sunga temple at Gudimallam near Tirupati contains a linga with an emerging Shiva carved in relief. The God stands on a *yaksha*, a spirit of nature, surrounded by a stone fence. Most importantly, the statue once stood beneath a tree, out in the open, as did most ancient figurines.

The forms of Shiva are also eco-friendly. Dakshinamurti is the teacher seated beneath the pipal tree. Bhairava is always followed by his companion the dog. Bhikshatanar is the free spirit living in the wild open spaces. Lingodbhava comes out of the linga of fire.

Ardhanarishvara combines the male and female in a single figure, like the simplest forms of creation where male and female are not distinct. Shiva is also the doctor, Vaidyanatha, symbolized by the sacred bilva tree which has multitudinous medicinal properties.

The Hindu religion, like all ancient religions, celebrated nature and used religion as a means of protecting the environment. Unfortunately, many of these symbols are forgotten today. We have discarded old traditions without replacing them with anything equally good or better. The loser is the environment, as well as humanity.

-- First published in *The New Indian Express*.





## RELIGION IN INDIA'S ARMY

LT. COL., RETD., N. C. GUHA, DELHI

**I**t is well known that our troops mostly come from rural backgrounds and are religious by nature. Even India's troops from urban backgrounds and educated families have deep-rooted faith in their religions. As a result, religion forms an important part of a soldier's life. His faith inclines him to uphold his religious ideology, including his moral and ethical duties. Daily practice of his faith makes him a better human being. It helps in promoting self-discipline, reduces the stress factor of a soldier and overcomes the feeling of loneliness. Besides, religion is also considered as the single most important battle-winning factor. As with other modern armies, the Indian army has striven to meet the religious needs of all soldiers of all faiths in a harmonious spirit. In 2002, there were 980,000 active troops and 800,000 reservists in our army.

The routine religious activities of a unit temple—that is, a temple attached to an army unit—is just the same as we find in civilian life. Hindu soldiers celebrate Mangala Arati, Nitya Puja, Sandhya Aratrikam, etc. Havans (fire worship), special pujas and other services are performed according to the soldier's faith on holidays such as Dussehra, Deepavali, Janmashtami, Holi, Guruparab (Birthday of Guru Nanak), Christmas Eve, etc. For troops belonging to the Christian community, Church services are held on Sundays and holidays.

Similarly, kirtan or bhajanas (devotional songs) are conducted on a regular basis in the temple for the Hindus as are Sabadh Kirtan and Gurbani in the Gurudwara of the Sikh regiment. It may come as a surprise that in Mathura and other cantonments of the pre-partition days, masjids (mosques) constructed for the troops of Muslim units of the undivided British Indian Army still continue to be maintained, often by the Hindu or non-Muslim troops [Muslims comprise just two percent of the Indian army].

Id and other major Muslim celebrations are held regularly in these mosques under the supervision of a maulvi (Muslim priest). As a result, an atmosphere of perfect religious harmony and esprit de corps have existed in India's Armed Forces since the beginning.

The army includes religious teachers who are qualified priests in uniform with badges of rank in war, but permitted to put on civilian wear like any other civilian priest in

normal circumstances. Their duties include religious discourses and lectures on values to the troops. Traditionally, these religious teachers come from brahmin families or priestly castes. They are adept in ritualistic worship. It is customary in most army units for a religious teacher to read out the horoscope of the unit on the Raising Day of the unit (anniversary of the unit's founding), to which the troops listen with rapt attention as it gives them an indication



of the unit's likely performance during the rest of the year. Tying of the sacred thread on the wrists and applying vermilion tilak on the forehead of the soldiers by the religious teacher gives them a sense of purity and happiness. It also inculcates a sense of belonging to the unit. Attendance or roll call is taken of the soldiers for the Mandir (temple) parade every Sunday and at important religious functions. This is how spiritual discipline is instilled in the soldiers. In a noncombat location, even the women and the children of our soldiers attend these functions. As the children of the soldiers grow up in such a close-knit family environment, many of them later join the Armed Forces. Even in the remote and high altitude mountainous terrain in the operational combat areas, a religious teacher visits the troops regularly, which enhances the morale of the troops greatly. In any case, a religious institution is also the place where exhausted, broken and desperate souls take refuge to recover their lost strength. Post-Korean War psychological research has shown that strong religious faith builds up mental resistance to brainwashing. Therefore, a religious institution such as a temple, gurudwara or church is authorised to every unit of our Armed Forces and preserved and maintained as such.

In this connection, the inspiring words of Swami Vivekananda uttered a century ago are most appropriate and still hold good: "Your forefathers underwent everything boldly, even death itself, but preserved their religion. Temple after temple was broken down by the foreign conquerors, but no sooner had the wave passed than the spire of the temple rose up again. Some of these old temples of Southern India and those like Somnath of Gujarat will teach you volumes of wisdom, will give you a keener insight into the history of the race than any amount of books. Mark how these temples bear the marks of a hundred attacks and a hundred regenerations, continually destroyed and continually springing up out of the ruins, rejuvenated and strong as ever! That is the

national mind, that is the national life-current. Follow it, and it leads to glory."

**Hindu Observances:** Some of the older and most famed Army regiments remain caste, religion or region based, with the religious observances of the regiment following its tradition. For example, the icon of Lord Vishnu, popularly known as Badri Vishal, installed at Badrinath in Garhwal, Uttar Pradesh, by Adi Shankaracharya, is the presiding deity of the Garhwal Rifles, an Infantry regiment of the Indian Army drawn from this area. Badri Vishal is worshipped in all the Battalions of the Garhwal Rifles. For the Garhwal Rifles personnel, Badrinath is of supreme significance. The name of Lord Badri even embellishes the Garhwal Rifles' war cry and is their ultimate motivating force.

The typical person from Garhwal is animated with intense religious fervor. As per Markandeya Purana, Goddess Durga is the powerful Deity who killed the demon king Mahishasura in a fierce battle and restored peace and tranquillity in heaven. The Goddess Durga is represented as a golden-colored Deity with ten hands having a gentle countenance, but according to other accounts the Goddess is having eight hands. Being the embodiment of Shakti (strength), troops get a lot of happiness and derive inner strength by worshipping Her image. In all the battalions of the Garhwal Rifles, Goddess Durga with eight hands is worshipped. Within the Garhwal Rifles, Vijay Dashami or Dussehra in the month of September/October is the religious event of the year.

Garhwal Rifles units fully observe the festival for ten days, beginning with the *ghatasthapana* ceremony at the unit temple in which nine grains are set in a pot to germinate during the following days. On the ninth day is *shastrapuja*, during which all the weapons of the unit armory are decorated with flowers and displayed in a square fashion in the center of the parade ground or an open space. Similar ritualistic

celebrations with minor changes are performed during the Dussehra and Durga Puja days in all the battalions of Gorkha Regiments, Kumaon Regiment and other army units.

Another vital aspect which needs deliberation is the performance of various religious rites as described in our Holy Scriptures. These rites usually take the form of worshipping of arms, equipments, vehicles and musical instruments. Religious rites are also performed before undertaking expeditions or going into the battle. It is equally important that mortal remains are properly laid to rest by organizing befitting funerals in the highest traditions of the army. In fact, this is the least that any army or a nation can do to pay their last respect to a martyr.

**Battle Cries:** The battle cries of the various regiments in the Army can be traced to deep-rooted faith of the troops in their presiding Deity or in their pride of belonging to their community. It is from a soldier's strong conviction in his religious faith or class composition that he gets the last ounce of his inner strength in battle. The deafening battle cries by the troops is the last act of final assault on the enemy with fixed bayonets. It is a do-or-die situation. While the battle cry revitalizes the inner strength and spirit of our own troops, it is also intended to totally demoralize the enemy and shatter his hopes of surviving.

For example, the battle cry of the Garhwal Rifles is "Badri Vishal lal ki ji," "Victory to the Great Lord Badrinath." That of the Gorkha regiments is "Ayo Gorkhali," "Here come the Gorkhas." The Sikh cry is "Bole so Nihal, Sat Sri Akal," "He who cries 'God is Truth,' is ever victorious." The Jat regiment, who originate from Rajasthan, shout, "Jat balwan, Jai Bhagwan," "The Jat (clan) is powerful, victory be to God." And the Dogra Regiment, raised from Jammu/Kashmir, cry, "Jawala Mata ki jai," "Victory to Goddess Jawala"—a popular form of Shakti in their area.

**Religious Harmony:** It is said that if one religion is true, then all the other religions also

must be true. As such, every man should follow his own religion. A Christian should follow Christianity, a Muslim should follow Islam, and so on. Therefore, the true meaning of religious harmony is to allow every one the equal liberty to stand by his own religious faith and belief. A truly religious man should think that other religions, too, have so many paths leading to the Truth and maintain an attitude of respect and tolerance towards them. In fact, the spirit of religious tolerance in Hinduism is rooted in the Rig Veda statement, "Ekam sad viprah bahudha vadanti," "One alone exists. Sages call that by different names." The idea that God can be realized through different spiritual paths has been taught through the ages by many saints. But Sri Ramakrishna, the great Indian teacher of the 19th century, is regarded as the prophet of religious harmony all over the world. It is through the fine cord of religious harmony that we come closer to each other and project a united front as a nation. Like all the centers of the Ramakrishna Order where important religious ceremonies of other religious faiths such as Guruparab (the birthday celebrations of Guru Nanak), Christmas Eve and New Year Day, etc., are celebrated in the true spirit of universality, such events are also held in the Armed Forces for promoting integrity and religious harmony amongst the troops belonging to various compositions.

**Religious Integration:** It may be noted that the organization and composition of the Indian army is highly secular and apolitical. All religious practices are observed without any discrimination. After Partition, the Indian Army units, i.e., Battalion/Regiment (a composite fighting unit), inherited from the British Indian Army was based on caste and religion. However, during the pre-Partition days it was sufficient to have one religious teacher of the class composition in the unit. The religious practices were also restricted to that religion. After Independence, in keeping with the national policy, the class composition has undergone changes. While no changes have

been made in the basic fighting regiments, the units of Technical and Supporting Arms and others of the Armed Services have been remodelled on a mixed-class basis. In order to maintain the religious sentiments of the troops, facilities have been provided to the religious institutions of all such units under the guidance of a Hindu, Muslim, Sikh or Christian priest. Troops of all religions are allowed leave of absence to practice their religions. Where the number exceeds more than a hundred of a particular faith, a religious teacher is provided. Discourses are held followed by community meals. Inside the cantonment area, these facilities are centralized as the Station Religious Institution and the functions are also managed as Military Station Functions.

In the Regimental and Training Centres, where basic training is imparted to the troops, these facilities are also centralized. It is compulsory for the recruits to attend. These occasions are used to inculcate in the young soldiers the feelings of religious integration, harmony and tolerance.

Training of the religious teacher is done in the Regimental and Training Centres. Although enrollment of religious teachers is made from the same background as the Regiment, grooming is done at the Centre so they fit in a multi-religious organization. Teaching includes all religious observances from birth to death. Teachings from the religious books are interpreted to inculcate moral values, social values and cultural values. The teachings are practiced and the required knowledge is ascertained through examinations. Customs and unwritten traditions of a religion are passed along as teachings. Also, trained religious teachers from the units are sent periodically for further education, freshening of knowledge and

integration with other religions at the Institute of National Integration.

As a nation is composed of different states, religions, culture, caste and creed, so is the case with the Armed Forces. It is a nation within India. Religious integration is made an instrument to inculcate the feeling of national integration. During their service tenure, the troops, though having varied religious background, live together, fight together and eat together—sometimes even from the same plate. An Indian soldier is fully trained to take his rightful place as a citizen in the country without any bias towards any religion. He shuns religious groups preaching religious dichotomy as he understands the true value of an individual and his religion.

**Conclusion:** It is observed that most of us tend to overlook the broader aspects of a religion and generally look at it from a narrow angle like a selfish man. We must not forget that as true Indians and responsible citizens we should treat all persons in the society alike irrespective of caste, creed or religion. Like a military commander or a true leader, we should lead from the front and take the masses along, or else, the country is bound to disintegrate. Therefore, we in the Armed Forces can ill afford to lose sight of this vital aspect and must always keep a close watch for any secessionist elements or divisive forces that may have crept in within the forces. Even though we in India pursue multiple religious faiths and at times fight with each other on petty issues, yet in times of national crisis or in the event of any foreign aggression, the people of our country have always displayed great solidarity and stood by the Armed Forces like a totally galvanized nation in the true spirit of national integration.

Courtesy : The Vedanta Kesari, October, 2004.



**Be patriots, love the race which has done such great things  
for us in the past.**

- Swami Vivekananda





**GITA FOR THE YOUTH**  
**DESIRES VERSUS DISCIPLINE**  
**CH.SATYANARAYANA MURTHY**

**D**esires run riot in the human mind. Man strives hard to satisfy these desires and attain happiness. His notion is that happiness will be his if he is able to obtain the object he desires. But happiness eludes him as long as he runs after the objects he desires. If by chance, he secures the object he desires, he will have a semblance of happiness for a moment as the mind which has been all the while on the object, returns to the original state or place which is Atman. The next moment the fickle mind rushes to some other object and the poor man begins his chase again. This process is endless as desires grow without any limit or stop. The ever-growing desires distract the mind from its original Brahmi state and make the man indulge in wild-goose chase.

A dog runs with a dry bone and bites it mistaking it for some edible. As a result of hard-biting blood oozes from the teeth of the dog. The dog imagines that blood comes from the dry bone and licks its own blood with relish. Similarly man on attaining the object of his earthly desire feels sham happiness for a brief moment. This happiness does not lie in the object attained. It is in the return of the mind from the object to Atman for a moment before it again runs to some other object. All happiness inheres in Atman and man mistakenly imagines that it lies in the objects desired by the mind or senses. "So if you want to make man happy, add not to his possessions, but take away from his desires".

Suppose a person wants to put a sacred mark on the forehead of his image in the mirror in front of him. If he tries to put the mark on the mirror he will never succeed in his mission. The correct thing he has to do is to put the sacred mark on his forehead himself. Then he automatically sees the mark on the forehead of the image. Similarly if a person wants to have real happiness, he has to put his mind on his Atman or God but not on the visible objects of desire.

A striver who wishes to attain 'Moksha' (Salvation) ought to discipline his mind. He should not give reins to his ever-increasing desires and inflamed passions. Without curbing the mind and without exercising spiritual discipline, salvation will be a cry in wilderness. When Hiranyakasipu boasts of his valour and conquest, his five-year old boy, Prahlada points out to him his folly in not conquering his internal enemies. If man conquers his internal enemies, lust (Kama) anger (Krodha) covetousness (Lobha) infatuation (Moha) pride (Madh) envy (Mathsarya) he will have no enemy to conquer. Conquest worth the name is the conquest of the internal enemies. Man's disquietude, unhappiness and worry are traceable to the havoc done by these internal enemies. The so called enemies cease to be enemies when once a person subdues his internal enemies. How a person feels restless, miserable and unhinged, with the internal enemies gaining upper hand is well-pictured in the thirtyseventh sloka of the third chapter of the Gita.

In reply to Arjuna's query why a man commits sin in spite of himself, Lord Krishna says thus. Lust (Kama) and anger (Krodha) born of 'Rajas' impel a man to commit sin. Hence lust (Kama) is the greatest enemy of man and it drags him down. When a man strongly desires a particular thing and when that desire is thwarted, he gives

into anger. Wings and no eyes figure the blind rashness of wrath. In this blindness man commits sin after sin the root cause of all this moral crisis is lust and wrath. Hence man has to cultivate spiritual discipline in order to keep the six enemies, lust, wrath, covetousness, infatuation, pride and envy at bay. According to Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, just as a patch of cloud conceals the blazing sun 'Maya' in the form of desire veils Eswara and just as with the disappearance of cloud the sun becomes visible so also with the disappearance of desire, Eswara reveals Himself. Hence blessed are those who by their discipline drive desire from their heart. Lust or desire wrath and their brood, instead of running after the objects of senses or the unreal and the passing, run after Eswara the Real and the enduring, when once they are sublimated through spiritual discipline. A devotee's desires centre round God and he desires God and God alone and nothing else. The Gopies have dedicated their 'Kama' to Chakri (Lord Krishna). Their Kama ceases to be 'Kama' as it is for the Real (or God) which knows no decay. Spiritual discipline consists in sublimating the desires and turning them too the Real and the enduring (to God). Knowledge (Jnana) tells us that we should not give reins to our rash desires. Devotion to God makes us turn all desires to God and have nothing else to desire.

Those who are endowed with good sense or in other words who have in them divine traits naturally fight with the eternal enemies and make rapid strides to liberation. Lord Krishna in the fifth sloka of the sixteenth chapter makes



it abundantly clear that Arjuna was born with divine traits and his mental make-up is fit for liberation (Moksha). He is far above the demoniac who are slaves of the six internal enemies 'Kama' and the rest of the brood. Lord Krishna explains to Arjuna how those with divine traits conquer the internal enemies and

attain liberation while the demonic, being the slaves of Kama and their brood, pave the way to perdition. He describes at length the demonic (Asuric) traits so that one may know them to be enemies. If a thief understands that he is observed he tries to flee lest he should be caught and punished. Similarly if one notices the evil traits and recognizes them as thieves and enemies, they may lose face and run away. So it is important that the strivers on

the spiritual path should know the demoniac traits with a view to keeping them at bay.

The demoniac do not care to know what is good to do. They do not refrain from evil. Purity, right conduct and truth have no meaning for them. Pride rules their will. Pleasure propels their activities which deprave them. Sense of justice, decency and good sense cannot stop them as they pursue their pleasures. To them lust is God and pleasure is reality. Denial of Godliness and goodness is their religion. Their being's end and aim being sensual enjoyment they are out to amass by means fair or foul abundant wealth to be sure of uninterrupted indulgence. A person with demoniac traits has a bloated ego. He is ever engaged in fulfilling his desires. He is after wealth and power. He is self-centered and he has an axe to grind in every deal with fellow-beings. If at all they perform any yoga or sacrifice, they do so for ostentation and selfish gain.





## VIVEKANANDA KENDRA SAMACHAR

### DELHI

1. One workshop was organized for the various Samskar Varga participants. 93 children participated in it.
2. On 16<sup>th</sup> Feb. 30 people attended one Bhajan Sandhya organized at 'Dwaraka'.
3. "Arise, Awake" youth meet was organized in South Delhi on 26<sup>th</sup> Feb. 30 youths were present and Prof. P. L. Dhar addressed the gathering.

### TEJPUR

1. Veteran Sarvodaya leader Acharya Rammurthyji gave a talk on "The Role of an Individual in Shaping Society and Nation Building" – in an interactive workshop organized on 9<sup>th</sup> March 06. 26 citizens participated in this 90 minute long interactive session.
2. On 19<sup>th</sup> March 06, 24 Karyakartas from Swarna Bhumi and Deva Bhumi Vibhag attended the *choumasik baithak*. Reports of last 4 months activities and next 4 months planning were presented and then Su. Rekhadidi addressed them.
3. "Yoga Varga Prashikshan Shibir" was organized from 19<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> March 06. 16 Karyakartas attended the Shibir. Su. Meeradidi was the Shibir Pramukh.

### DOMBIVILI

17 participants were there in the Omkar Dhyana Varga from 13<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> March. Two karyakartas attended the Prantiya Baithak held on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> March at Pune.

### RDP THOOTHUKUDI

1. 75 balwadis 1959 children
2. Thro 14 Rural Medical Centres 3264 patients were treated.
3. 59 destitute old persons were provided with provisions under adopt a Granny Scheme.



4. Eye-screening camps were organized at 4 place in which 108 patients were screened and 196 operated for cataract. The needy were provided with medicines and spectacles.
5. Two mass level Deepa Poojas were organized at Ottapidaram and Thiruppullani in which 1931 women participated from 92 villages. Village level Deepa Poojas were organized in 232 temples in which 9311 women participated.
6. Total 494 kgs of rice was contributed thro Amrita Surabhi from 5 districts.
7. Book sales Totalled Rs.51,217/-.
8. Subscription – Vivekavani 99, Yuva Bharati-02
9. 123 economically weaker girl students were trained in tailoring thro 7 residential and non-residential camps.
10. Swadhyaya Varg was organized for 90 participants in Ramnad dist.
11. 4 Yoga Vargas were organized in Thoothukudi and Aruppukottai in which 96 people were present.
12. Swami Vivekananda Jayanti celebration were observed in 7 Balwadis.

### Relief to the victims of fire accident

On 4<sup>th</sup> March Vivekananda Kendra RDP distributed relief material worth Rs.1500/- to each of 21 families whose huts were destroyed



in the fire accident at Poopandiapuram in Kumudhi Block of Ramanathapuram district.



## THE IGNITED TEAM

### – Arunachal Pradesh Delegates' Experience at the International Conference

P. SUMITRA

**J**aipur, the Pink City of India, welcomed us warmly on the slightly chill dawn of 4<sup>th</sup> February. A group of us: ten delegates from Vivekananda Kendra got down. A long train journey of 3 days, preceded by a 2-day travel from Arunachal to Guwahati was finally over. Smt. Yajum Ngumle, Mahila Manch Pramukh from Daporijo, Arunachal was travelling for the first time in train. They came from far north eastern state of Bharat – the land of the Rising Sun – Arunachal Pradesh – to the far western state of Rajasthan, to participate in World Council of Elders of Ancient Traditions. The entire atmosphere was new for five Arunachalee participants. We were divided into groups of two or three and taken to our local host's residences; so we could interact with Rajasthani families. The warm welcome of the Rajasthani people erased questions if any, in our minds. Soon we became a part of that family.

Smt. Yajum Ngumle and Smt. Jumre Makcha, Vivekananda Kendra Karyakartas said, *"The family where we were taken welcomed us with Tilak and Aarati. This was a totally new experience for us. At first we felt a bit uneasy - as we didn't know anyone there but after some time they made us feel part of the family. Even the child in that home made us his friend! The Bhabijis applied elegant Mehendi on our hands. They took us to different places in Jaipur. And soon the evening came and we realised that we have to go to the place of conference. But the departing was not so easy; we often say that Bharat is like a big family but this we experienced in Rajasthan."* Similar

was the experience of all. When we met our hosts again in the course of the conference we had so many things to share! We met many participants from different countries but talking the same language, the language of the Heart. At night five more members of our team who came by air also joined us.

The organisers, International Centre for Cultural Studies, told us that in the inaugural function every tradition will present their prayers in just one minute. Now this was a challenge for us as normally our prayers are very long. But Shri Lardik Kare, an Engineer by profession, accepted it. Overnight he prepared a beautiful prayer invoking the Goddesses of all the four directions. Sri. Batchow Khabisow of the Aka community also prepared a prayer. By the time train journey was through we had learnt to address him as *Akhi* (paternal uncle), Shri Johar Dususow as

*Ao* (father) and Shri Miali Sidisow as *Aya* (brother) respectively.

5<sup>th</sup> February was the Inaugural day. A beautiful and colourful procession saw Shri Miali Sidisow sit astride an elephant. We were all in traditional attire and another commonality surfaced: every community has its unique traditional designs and clothes. We gathered in the *Sawai Mansing Sabhagriha*. The function started, and delegates from different traditions presented their prayers.

And so when the academic sessions started, though not so fluent in English, all attended the sessions and tried to know something about other traditions. Our women's team from





Daporijo had come prepared to present a Traditional Dance 'Ponung' and to present papers and the Akas, to perform rituals. But when there was an opportunity to perform Puja as well as presenting some folkdance, we also got inspired. Our Tagin Sisters performed Puja and the Akas presented a song also. Dr. Ashan Riddi presented a well-written paper on 'Si-Donyi'.

Smt. Yade Nasi, Smt. Yapa Timba, Smt. Zemi Uli, Smt. Yajum and Smt. Jumre presented the beautiful 'Ponung' dance and everyone experienced Arunachal on the land of Rajasthan.

The next morning Joharji, Mialiji and Akhi were to perform a puja. They had carried along all the material including those made of bamboo but had lost it in the train! We were worried but not Mialiji. He said "No problem! We had made those ourselves and so we can make them again." What about the materials? Said Akhi: "One can't expect to find the same materials here: Its equivalent will definitely be there. We will make do with what is available!"

So Rishikesh Athalye, one of the ever-helpful organisers, was contacted and everything was set. Mialiji had a brainwave: Everyone had photographs, idols of their deities, temples. So without much ado he set about: persuaded a computer graphics person to scan, edit and bring out a beautiful, one-foot picture of the Nyezino temple used during the performance of the Puja Demonstration: *Thikincheo*. Our 70-year old Akhi must have found it difficult to adjust to the entirely new atmosphere, but he was always smiling and enthusiastic. Similarly was Smt Yanga Nasi: her motherly care, smile and organisational exposure were evident as she enthused her team mates to put in their best. In fact when the organisers

requested for some additional items for the evening cultural programmes, they would cheerfully practice even till 1 a.m.!

Another memorable event was our Presentation in the Academic sessions. Three presentations on the Kendra work were made, each unique in itself. For example: the paper on *Holistic Model for Development Through Culture, Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari's Work in Arunachal Pradesh – A Study*. What was unique about it? We wanted our presentation to reflect the theme and the nature of our work. So all the team members participated in the

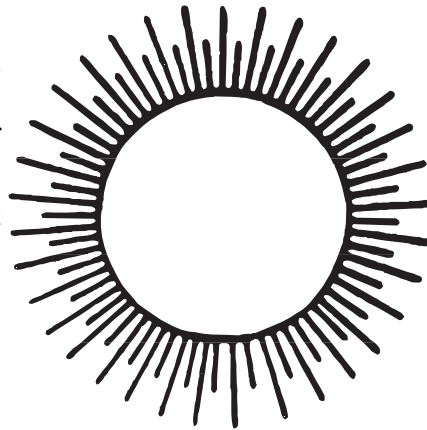
presentation! How? One introduced the theme, seven members sang a prayer in Tagin language addressed to Anne Donyi, [Mother Sun – the Supreme Being]; three members spoke on the work aspect.

Whenever we got leisure time we used to talk to our relatives from other traditions. We found many commonalities, but we were very happy when we came to know that like us the

Lithuanians and the Latvians also considered *Donyi* [Sun] as Mother. We saw the Amer Palace of Jaipur on the last day we went to schools and interacted with children. The children asked us many questions about Arunachal, our people, our life style, etc.

Meeting Shri Stephen Knapp and Shri SD Youngwolf again was a delight. They had ceaselessly interacted with people on their visit to Arunachal Pradesh in 2002 when Vivekananda Kendra had organised their lecture tour. They were full of concern and promised to visit again much to our happiness.

On the 10<sup>th</sup> evening we bade farewell to Jaipur the historic city with its warm people who had given us a feeling of a home away from home and made us feel that while we are all unique, we are one, manifestations of the same Divinity.





On the eve of Swami Ramatirtha's Mahasamadhi Centenary

## THE NATURE OF INSPIRATION

SWAMI RAMATIRTHA



Continued from last issue

**I**n the Hindu Scriptures there is a magnificent story told about three persons called *Asuras*. These three persons had wonderful powers. They were warriors, nobody could get the better of them, they were wonderful, wonderful people. People came, fought with them, and were defeated immediately; hosts of enemies came and were defeated. The men who fought with them came in thousands but were defeated by these three persons. The enemies being defeated so frequently went to a great saint and asked how they could win these three fellows; and the saint told them they must enquire into the cause of their invincibility, how these three *Asuras* were invincible. With great effort and trouble it was found that the secret of their invincibility lay in the fact that these persons, never, never did entertain the thought that they were workers or enjoyers. When the victory was gained, they thought nothing of it. They did not stoop down to enjoy the victory. When they were fighting, the idea that "I as this body am fighting" was entirely absent. Such are the heroes in this world. You know every hero in war, while engaged in action, as people say "I am all ears," so the hero is all action. There is no room left for the idea "I am doing." There his body gets mechanical, so to say. He is all action, there head and feet are saturated with the Divinity. So these people whenever they fought, became all action, they never for a moment allowed the idea, "I am acting." Just as a machine worked, their bodies worked; like machines of God, machines of Divinity, their bodies worked. This was the secret of their success, nobody could win them. Now the secret of their invincibility being found out, the great sage told the enemies of these three warriors the means of conquering them. He told those enemies to engage in action with them and then run away from them. Go to them and call

them out into action, and just when they begin to attack you, leave those warriors as conquerors. Just draw them out and flee away from them. The enemies of those warriors drew them out and fled from them. Thus a few times more were the enemies of those warriors defeated. By and by those three invincible warriors were drawn out of their true position, were drawn out of their real invincibility and were brought down into their bodies, they were made to believe that they were conquerors. They were made to believe that they were great, that they were victorious. Those continued victories engendered in them the idea that they were victorious, they were conquerors. Here were the three men brought down into the cage of the body; here the three men put into the prison house of the body. The idea of "I am doing" or the thought of "I am great" got hold of them and held them in prison. There the God in them was replaced by the small ego; and then it was no hard task to win them and catch them and imprison them. It was not a hard task, they were defeated immediately, immediately were they caught. Now mark the application of this story. So long as you are doing a work, your body being a machine in the hands of God, as it were, your personality being merged in Divinity, so long as you are in that position, you are invincible, you are like those three *Asuras* above the idea of "I am enjoying or I am doing." You are invincible; but when people come to you and begin to praise you, to puff you up, flatter you, favourably review you from all sides, you are made to believe that you are a conqueror, you are a hero, you are victorious, others are defeated, your rivals are downtrodden. You are like those three *Asuras*. The idea of "I am doing it", "I must enjoy the deed", and "I am the enjoyer"—that very thought imprisons you, brings you down into the cage of the body. You are undone, the power is lost.

Do you not see even in the Bible, when Christ came fresh from the mountains, he was possessed of the great power. He lived in the midst of his friends; he talked a great deal, and Christ had to say, "Who is it that touched me? I find my power going out of me." We see that in the Bible. There you see the same thing. When you are above this "I am doing, I am enjoying," God is working through you and you are inspired; but as soon as you do a thing and accept people's reviews and favourable criticisms, people's applause, and people's flattery, the power goes out immediately. Immediately it goes out; you are brought into the cage again. Go out of the cage and you are inspired, go into the cage again and you are no more.

Here is a beautiful watch, suppose. It is in working order and running day and night. It gets magnetized, it comes close to a strong magnet, the iron springs are magnetized. The watch cannot run, it is useless now, it gives us no time. What shall we do with it? Let the watch be buried underground, keep it away from the magnetic influences, keep it away from those influences, it will be de-magnetized, it will regain its original working power, and you can use it again. Beneath your minds, your inner Self is heavenly, is godly. Every child is by nature an inspired child; every child is by nature a poet, and if you live, live in accordance with divine laws, if you live in harmony with Divinity, you are always inspired. If you live in unison with your true *Atman* or Spirit, if you always keep yourself in touch with God in you, with your own Self or *Atman*, you are inspired all the time. What is wrong with you is that your mind comes in contact with earthly magnets on all sides, worldly attachments which magnetize you and put you out of order, you are no longer in running order, deranged. If you are not inspired today, the sole reason is that you do not keep yourself isolated, or insulated enough. You allow worldly objects to magnetize, to

hypnotize you, you allow them to play foul and fast with you. If you want to regain your original powers and inspiration, keep yourself insulated, isolated for a while. Bury yourself in the Reality, in Divinity, in God, in the true *Atman*. Keep yourself buried in the Spirit, in the Truth. Live alone for a time, set apart some time of your day for keeping in touch with the Reality; merge yourself, bury yourself in God. Do that and the spoiling magnetism and wrong hypnotism that you have got from these worldly objects will leave you, your mind will be running in order again. You will be again inspired.

Ships, when they keep sailing in the sea for some time, become a little deranged, are put out of order. They require to be placed in the dock for some time to be repaired. Similarly by keeping yourself too long in worldly affairs, in worldly matters, in the company of hypnotizing circumstances, in the midst of spoiling and wearing and tearing surroundings, you are put out of order, you are fallen, you get your inner natural powers of inspiration lost. Just as you do with your ships, so should you do with your bodies. Keep your bodies, for some time at least, in the docks, away from those influences; keep your bodies, for some time at least, in Spirit. Read books which will inspire you, live in the company of people who will inspire you, live alone by yourself. Devote some time to meditation and you will regain your power of inspiration. Does not your body require to be washed every day? Does not your house require to be rubbed and scrubbed everyday? Similarly, does not your mind require to be cleansed and purified, washed and bathed every day? So long as worldly ideas, worldly attachments or thoughts of worldly enjoyment, or the idea of "I am doing this" etc., is present, so long as you are not entirely crucified, there is no hope for you. The way to inspiration is nothing less than crucifixion.

(Extracted from a lecture delivered on 21-2-1903, in the Golden Gate Hall, San Francisco, U.S.A.)

