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Founder Editor

MANANEYYA EKNATHJI RANADE

Editor: P. PARAMESWARAN**Editorial Office:****5, Singarachari Street
Triplicane, Chennai - 600 005**

Ph: (044) 28440042

Email: vkpt@vkendra.org

Web: www.vkendra.org

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The remedy for weakness is not brooding over weakness, but thinking of strength.

-- Swami Vivekananda**प्रार्थना****INVOCATION**

यस्याः कुक्षौ लीनमखण्डं जगदण्डं
 भूयो भूयः प्रादुरोभूदुत्थितमेव ।
 पत्या सार्धं तां रजताद्रौ विहरन्तीं
 गौरीमम्बामम्बुरुहाक्षीमहमीडे ॥

yasyäù kukñau lénamakhaëòàà jagadaëòàà
 bhüyo bhüyaù prädurobhüdutthitameva|
 patyâ särdh täà rajatâdrau viharantéà
 gaurémambämamburuhäkñémahaméèe||

I adore Gauri, the Divine mother with lotus-like face.
 The entire Universe is embedded in the womb of the
 Divine mother. This Universe that was created by Her
 is being created again and again periodically. I praise
 Gauri sporting on the silver mountain (kailasa) in
 the company of her Lord.

- Adi Shankara's Gauri Dasakam / 7

EDITORIAL



Vijaya Dashami

*Victory March of the Mother,
across the globe through the
ages*

Worship of the mother is natural to human beings. Not to worship her is not only unnatural, but also ungrateful. People from very early times used to adore Divinity in the form of Mother. This continued in all parts of the world among the so-called 'pagan' religions. After the emergence of 'Abrahamic religions', this faith and practice were discredited. Father became the object of worship. Father is the symbol of Power and Authority whereas Mother represents Love and Affection. The former represents the

qualities of the masculine and the latter the feminine. It was not just a matter of two different approaches in the religious attitude. It was a question of two different forms of culture. In the pre-Abrahamic times, Nature was looked upon as the bountiful mother who gives you birth, protection, nourishment and sustenance. She was love-incarnate. Abrahamic religions, with a fundamentally different approach abolished the culture of Mother worship, and gave rise to the worship of a Father; away and unapproachable, who is to be looked upon with respectful fear. The new dictum was, 'Fear of God is the beginning of wisdom'. Gradually all over the western world, the pagan religions were wiped out and Judaism, Christianity and Islam took over. The faith imparted through the scripture was that nature has been provided by God to man to exploit. The entire western civilization was built upon the principle, that God has given man the authority to exploit nature to the hilt for his enjoyment.

The East, particularly Bharat had, from the very beginning developed a totally different approach. Nature is the manifestation of 'Adi-Shakti', the

primordial power. She is to be adored with love because she is the mother of everything. Mother worship became ingrained in the minds of the people with the result that the culture that evolved centered around this sublime sentiment. Earth being the visible form of nature and the *terra firma* of all human existence was naturally considered as an expression of the Divine Mother. To worship her, was considered the primary duty of every human being.

Our literature is replete with expressions of devotion to the Earth Mother--*'Bhoomi Devi'*. No wonder the *'Atharva Veda'* has a separate section of more than 60 *'sukthas'* all devoted to rapturous adoration of the Mother Earth; the deepest ties that bind man to earth--the *'Prithvi Suktha'* has been considered the most comprehensive approach of man to Mother Earth, invoking Her blessings and enumerating his duties towards preserving, protecting and promoting nature by all means.

Shri Aurobindo has through his inner vision, given us a poetic description vibrating with the spirit of a mantra, the four major aspects of the Divine Mother *'Adi Shakti—Maheshwari, Mahakali, Mahalakshmi and*

Mahasaraswati'. It is in these forms, that the Mother could be understood and approached by us, who are her children. There is nothing, no power visible or invisible, which is not one form or other, of these four aspects of the *Divine Mother*. From time immemorial, Bharat has been worshipping the Divine Mother in one or more of these forms, sometimes called by different names in different languages and regions. Whatever be the names, the concept is the same.

During the course of history as the people's attachment, love, and gratitude to the land of *'Bharatvarsha'* began to grow more and more intense, the concept of *'Bharat Mata'* got articulated in our literature and also in the folklore. Bharat, from the Himalayas to the seas, was personified as the mother of all children, irrespective of various differences arising out of time and clime. Beautiful symbolism was woven out of this emotional attachment, which gradually merged in the subconscious mind of the people at large. Various poetic creations emerged in all the languages of our country, praising, adoring and worshipping the Divine in the form of *'Bharat Mata'*.

Worship of '*Bharat Mata*' became identical with nationalism and patriotism. The entire Bharat became holy. Swami Vivekananda, in reply to a question put to him before leaving England said as follows, "*Bharat I loved before but now every particle of dust in Bharat is extremely holy. It has become a place of pilgrimage for me.*" The sentiment has been beautifully expressed in a Sanskrit verse

Rathnakaradhoupadadam

Himalayakireetineem

*Brahmarajarshiratnadyam Vande
Bharathamataram*

रत्नाकराधौतपदां हिमालयकिरीटिनीम् ।
ब्रह्मराजर्षिरत्नाड्यां वन्दे भारतमातरम्

During the freedom movement the predominant feeling of every patriotic Indian was that our beloved mother is languishing in bondage and it is their bounden duty to liberate the Mother and make Her free, by all means. It is in this context that Bankim Chandra's immortal poem '*Vande Mataram*' assumed the form of a war cry for the freedom fighters along with it being a beautiful description of Bharat Mata as the Divinity manifesting as '*Durga, Saraswati and Lakshmi*'. The song became the real national song much

before it was formally included as a part of the constitution in the year 1950. Even though '*Jana Gana Mana*' was adopted as the National Anthem, there is no dispute that in its *emotional* contents, its divinely inspired poetic effusion, its '*mantric power*', '*Vande Mataram*' stands incomparably supreme.

There is another aspect to be remembered. Right from the '*Upanishadic times*', the '*Divine Mother*' began to be worshipped in various forms on various occasions. '*Vijayadashmi*' began to be celebrated all over the country and in course of time it became the most widely celebrated national festival. '*Vijaya Dashami*' is our greatest national festival. It proclaims the grand victory of '*Dharma over Adharma*', of light over darkness, of divine forces over those of the demoniac. As a nation, we have been celebrating this festival of triumph from time immemorial; celebrating it in every part of this vast and sacred land. Forms and contents of the celebrations might have varied from time to time and place to place. But the message and spirit have been the same: "*Darkness can never win. Light can never dim*". Hold on to this

faith with deep conviction, wait patiently; fight tenaciously, with courage. The Goddess of Victory is bound to embrace us. And that has been our national experience, all through history, even pre-history.

Thus we find that the names 'Durga' and 'Bharat Mata' became synonymous during the freedom struggle. Shri Aurobindo in his famous book 'Bhavani Mandir' writes, ***'Our Mother country is not a piece of earth, nor a figure of speech nor a fiction of the mind. It is a mighty Shakti, composed of the Shaktis of all the millions of units that make up the nation; just as Bhavani Mahishasura Mardini sprang into being from the Shakti of all the millions of gods assembled in one mass of force and welded into unity. This Shakti we call India, Bhavani Bharat.'***

It is most unfortunate that in independent India even this most widely cherished national song has now become a matter of controversy. In no other country in the world a national song can be made optional, yielding to the predilections of a section of the population. Nationalism cannot be a matter of option. It is the central theme around

which all people stand united. Unfortunately in our country, even the concept of nation itself has not been well defined. It is only here that the Motherland is called by two names '*India that is Bharat*' and two national songs have been given equal status. This duality has led to the totally wrong usage 'India a union of states'. India is one and not a union of states as United States of America or other federal states. Unless this confusion is eradicated from our mind, our nationalism, our national song, our national unity, our national aspiration all will remain dubious and truncated. In short, the nation will be frustrated with irreparable damage.

This '*Vijayadashmi*' is to be made an occasion for deep introspection and self-rectification.

The concept of Bharat as the Mother, One and indivisible has to be firmly established in the minds and hearts of every true son and daughter of the Mother. '*Vijayadashmi*' is not only the occasion for worship or jubilation, but it is the time for plunging ourselves to join this battle for '*Dharma*' against all dark anti-national forces, '*Adharmic forces*' challenging the very foundations of Indian nationalism.

But things are changing, changing for the better. Centuries have rolled by since the Vedic *Rishis* sang the song '*Prithvi Suktha*'. From that emerged a culture and a civilization based on Nature Worship, whose ethos was 'No exploitation, but tenderly milking (*Dohana*) the blessings of Nature.

But on the other hand the West went ahead creating a civilization based on exploiting Nature. Its motto was 'Conquest of Nature, conquer the depths of the Ocean and the peaks of Mountains'. Nature was bled white by using Science and Technology, culminating in the *death dance of destruction* wrought by the Nuclear Bomb. Soon nature began to take revenge through earthquakes and eruptions of volcanoes and Tsunamis and Katarinas.

Slowly the West is waking up. Thinking people read the writing on the wall. Environmental movements

started and spread across the world. It was initiated on March 21, 1970. "The first proclamation of Earth Day was in San Francisco, the city of Saint Francis, patron saint of Ecology". Soon it snowballed into a mighty global movement participated in by thousands of environmental groups across the globe. So Mother Earth is again the focus of world's attention. April 22nd of every year is declared by the UN as the World Earth Day. Selecting one day for celebration is the western way of propagating ideas. But Bharat has Her way. The collective wisdom of the ancient *Rishis* as expressed by the magnificent *Prithvi Suktha* makes everyday a *Prithvi Day*, beginning with the chanting:-

**Samudra vasane devi parvatha
sthana mandale**

**Vishnu pathnee namasthubyam
padasparsham kshamaswame.**

--P.Parameswaran



“YATHECCHASI TATHA KURU”

M. LAKSHMI KUMARI



The great Mahabharata war was about to start. The armies on either side were restless. Arjuna the great hero – arrived at the battle front in the resplendent chariot drawn by white horses, Sri Krishna with his usual all knowing smile was seated as the charioteer, as though deftly managing the horses but really managing the whole show. It was a sight for the Gods to see the greatest among them donning the garb of a humble charioteer, waiting for his master’s call. Arjuna requested Sri Krishna to place the chariot in between the armies so that he could have a good look at who is who on either side. It was then that it happened – all of a sudden seeing in front of him innumerable friends and blood relations – starting from the Grand Sire Bhishma, adorable Guru Dhrona, he saw an array of well known faces on either side and the futility and foolishness of the war dawned on him and totally confused and weakened him and he almost collapsed in the chariot.

It is from here that the Song Celestial Bhagavad Gita unfolds and after the initial admonition of his friend for his foolish behaviour, in sweet measured tones, often



subtly sarcastic and harsh too, Sri Krishna revives him from his stupor and coaxes him back to fight the dharmic war in a totally, dispassionate way, surrendering the fruits of his action to the Almighty. To add to the validity of his advice and convince his friend fully Sri Krishna even displays his rare Viswaroopa, the Universal Form. Finally Arjuna is convinced of the importance of the dharmic war and picks up his Gandhiva

again. Just before this final decision of Arjuna we find the following remarkable advice from Sri Krishna, which hides a piece of supreme psychological truth.

“Iti te jnanam akhyatam guhyad guhyataram maya

Vimrsyaitad asesena yathecchasi tatha kuru”.

Instead of compelling Arjuna to act according to his advice Sri Krishna tells him to critically evaluate his advice and then do as he wishes. Sri Krishna does not bring any pressure on Arjuna to act as he has been advised,. but leaves him to act as he chooses and enjoy the freedom in action. Here lies one of the most distinguishing features of the Hindu Tradition--each mind should be left to grow according to its own propensity. Only a philosophy wedded to Truth and nothing but the One Absolute Truth, and which has evolved ways and means to realise that Truth by each individual in his or her own chosen way - could offer this much of freedom to the individual, to grow and expand in his own way at his own pace. Sri Krishna also falls in line with the great tradition. Imparting knowledge and leave it at that; so that the receiver gets time to make it part of his innate wisdom and from that secure connection expand his will and execute the action.

This individual freedom to think and act has characterized the Indian scene from time immemorial and this is one of the factors contributing to the rare flavor of the Indian heritage. Each individual has the freedom to clear the path in the jungle of life in front, in the way he feels best for himself. Only in such a self made life lies happiness, inspiration, enthusiasm, fulfillment and all round development. A guru's advice to his disciple fulfills itself in the disciple's life, becomes valid, relevant, updated and dynamic only through the latter's real life interactions and experiences.

All of us prefer to act as per our will, if the will be righteous, the action not only elevates us but also becomes useful and beneficial to the society. This is essential for the spiritual growth of the individual. This freedom of expansion releases the mind and sets it in evolution from untruth to Truth; from mortality to immortality, from darkness to light.

The point where the desire turns into will, later to be transformed into action, is the crucial junction where it needs “treatment” from wisdom. If right knowledge is implanted in the mind this process leads to righteous will and righteous action which in turn lead to the unfoldment and expansion of the individual's personality and to the welfare of those around. That

crucial turn is to be decided by none other than oneself. It is one's decision alone that can transform one's personality. Any outside influence may either distort the action or make it just a temporary movement which will turn the individual into a hypocrite, who acts, not out of conviction but of eagerness to please others, to get some selfish desire fulfilled. This doesn't help the individual nor the society.

A great psychological truth, an opportunity for self development is involved in this transformation of desire into willful action. Hence Sri Krishna's insistence on Arjuna making his own decision to act righteously. Then only righteousness as a value will be established again in the society.

Again and again Sri Krishna advises Arjuna to have his actions emanate from Buddhi - wisdom rooted in Truth - so that they bear the imprint of righteousness. Thus can an individual remain rooted in Satya and Dharma, the cardinal factors deciding the onward evolution of human life. Wonderful indeed is this teaching of the

Lord, the yoga of self emancipation, if only we would take care to absorb the full import of Sri Krishna's words correctly in practical life.

Today we find parents bending the will of their children to suit their own selfish needs, often resulting in creating psychological scars in the children, obstructing their natural unfoldment. We also have teachers adding to the burden of education curbing the free will of the children. Worst of all are the religious teachers who interfere with the spiritual growth of individuals implanting fanatic ideas in them. The total effects on the society are frustration, anger, intolerance, violence and what not.

The freedom of will which was part of the Sanatana Dharma is beautifully illustrated in the tradition of Ishta Devata worship which is a very fascinating aspect of Hindu tradition. The result has been the extraordinary profusion of growth in the fields of art, literature, music, sculpture and so on. This is, again, the secret behind the rare fragrance of Indian Spiritual Heritage.

SISTER NIVEDITA
“DOOR SE AAYI APNI BAN GAYI”
N.KRISHNAMOORTI

Sumati: Brother, how did our people receive Sister Nivedita?

Sumanta: Sister Nivedita got the most appropriate name Nivedita “offered” from Swami Vivekananda. Rabindra Nath Tagore called her the LOKAMATA, “The people’s mother”. Shri Aurobindo called her ‘*Shikhamoyee*’ – “all-afire”. Sri Jagdish Chandra Bose and his wife considered her a trusted friend – a lady with a lamp and installed a bas relief of Nivedita on the threshold of his research institute building. Gokhale and Tilak called her their philosopher. The great Artists Abanindra Nath and Nandalal called her MAHASHWETA. The young men of the Dawn Society swore by her. Sir John Woodroffe the great interpreter of the cult of Shakti worship to the West, considered her a personal friend!

Sumati: For a person born in England and brought up according to their tradition, it is a great honour. How did she achieve it?

Sumanta: Like any other Westerner, Margaret Noble also thought in the beginning that Britain’s association will do India a lot of good. England would have, a “civilizing” effect upon India. But it was Swami Vivekananda who through the

majesty of his personality, his persuasive talking, story telling, constant interactions with her and his other western disciples, showing her around India, brought Margaret around. She went through a painful phase of transition, but at last she changed. Swamiji convinced her that the great country of India with a spiritualising mission towards the world, has been brought to ruins by the British rule. That changed Nivedita into a great admirer and servant of India.

Sumati: I have read a book by Dr.K.M.Munshi “The ruin that Britain has wrought in India”.

Sumanta: The ruin was not only in the economic domain. The British suppressed the legitimate aspirations of the Indian people in the fields of education, scientific research and Institution Building. Nivedita saw how J.C.Bose and his discoveries were ill treated by the British scientists. She noted that Jamshedji Tata’s attempts to found an Indian University were suppressed. She knew how her own compatriot, Mrs.Annie Besant had to struggle to start a Hindu College at Banares. She realized the justness of what Swamiji said about India. Her heart

changed. The turn about was so intense and complete, and she thought that the British should leave India immediately allowing the Nation to rebuild herself.

Sumati: What was the position of freedom fighters in India at that time?

Sumanta: At that time the patriotic Indian aspirations were limited to getting from Britain more and more concessions for Indians. More Indians should find places in legislatures and services. That is how far our patriots could go at that time. Nivedita would have none if it. She was even sympathetic to armed struggles against the British by Indians.

Sumati: She could never do things by halves. She went full-blast.

Sumanta: Like her mentor Swami Vivekananda, she wanted root and branch change in India. She aspired for full-scale National education for our children, for creating perfect human beings. She realised that Bharat's conception of Man was fuller and had more dimensions to it than the West could ever imagine! She laid great emphasis on the study of our national epics as a part of our children's education.

Sumati: I have read the book on Indian tales co-authored by her and Ananda Coomaraswamy.

Sumanta: Arts and Science were to Sister Nivedita very important dimensions of nation building. That is why she fought to

get Dr.Jagadish Chandra Bose, his due honour in the west. She persuaded artists like Abanindra, and Nandalal to paint more and more pictures of themes on Indian scriptures. She was helpful in Indian artists rediscovering the Indianness of our art.

Sumati: But most of us remember her as an educator!

Sumanta: Yes! education in the broadest sense of the word; Education as Swami Vivekananda conceived it, education for service, education for self-discovering, education for Nation building, education with a global mission of taking India's spiritual message to all peoples of the world. Sister Nivedita, not only started schools in India, she served the people with her own hands when the plague-hit Calcutta suffred. She was equally powerful in Nonformal education. Her simplicity, fiery spirit, dedication, journalistic and oratorical skills were all great practical lessons for the patriots. She toured the western nations lecturing and writing on India. She wrote a powerful article "Lambs among wolves" for the London Westminster Gazette, as a rejoinder to the slanderous attacks the Christian Missionaries were then making on India. But Sister Nivedita completely identified herself with India, realizing India's global mission. Journalists described her as a

champion for India from an unexpected quarter. Tagore gave her the ultimate Tribute. “She had won her access to the inmost heart of our society. She came to know us by becoming one of ourselves”.

Sumati: And that reminds us of our Vedic hero Dadhichi...!

Sumanta: She herself was like a Dadhichi, living and dying for her beloved India, her beloved people. Great women from the west, like Sister Nivedita, Dr. Annie

Besant, and the Mother of Pondicherry came to India with the sincerity of seekers and discovered India for themselves and realized their own lives’ mission. Alas, there are others who come to India with their eyes blind-folded, fail to see the greatness and spiritual worth of India, and try to convert our people to other religions.

Sumati: The world requires more Niveditas!

Sumanta; True!

Religion is realisation; not talk, no doctrine, nor theories, however beautiful they may be. It is being and becoming.

-- Swami Vivekananda

SAKTI**Dr.K.SUBRAHMANYAM**

Sakti or energy is invisible. It cannot be created. Nor can it be destroyed. It may be dormant, dull and hidden. But it is potentially present everywhere, always. It may also be sometimes kinetic, dynamic and vibrantly perceptible. But it is never dead or absent anywhere, at any point of time. So are the Atman, God, love and life. Air is not visible, but we feel it. Visibility is not the test to prove the existence of a thing. Pain too is not visible. But it is present and we feel it. So is peace.

There are three aspects or phases of Sakti. They are Ichcha Sakti, Jnana Sakti and Kriya Sakti. Ichcha is desire. We do desire instinctively or impulsively. The force of desire is Sakti. It may be dormant and less intense in some; dynamic and vigorous in some others. It is when vigorous, that it becomes ambition; later the same powerful desire grows to be an irresistible passion. Then it tries to learn everything about the objects or places or persons sought after and relentlessly strives to achieve them, experience them or merge with them. In other words desire or Ichcha Sakti is capable of evolving further into Jnana Sakti (knowledge of the loved ones) and Kriya Sakti (experiencing the coveted ones). The hidden Sakti of desires becomes powerful and will not rest or remain complacent with mere desire. It is indeed a desire

for pleasures. That desire further evolves from sensual pleasure to emotional enjoyments. Later it grows to seek intellectual happiness. After repeated experience, positively and negatively, of physical pleasure, emotional enjoyments and intellectual happiness, it grows to desire a cessation of all and wants only peace. Finally there is, at last, a strong desire to know about and attain the highest state of bliss. The dormant desire for pleasure ends up with the knowledge and experience of Jnana and Ananda. It is then Existence – Knowledge- Bliss or Satya-Jnana—Ananda. Nobody can avoid this unfolding onward march of Ichcha Sakti; the evolution may be sudden or steady, sooner or later. It is not only inevitable but very much welcome as well. One can fly in the vast sky of infinite bliss by holding on to the aircraft of desire. It is thrilling to ride a bicycle. More so, when it is a two wheeler Enfield. The desire won't stay there. It drives us to experience the speed of a three-wheeler and four-wheeler. From them, we rush to the rails and finally go to the vast skies. Desire is itself a potential energy capable of taking us to the experience of full freedom in and beyond the entire cosmos.

Abhishta Varada's only son is Atmakama. One day the father asked the son to express if there was any desire in his mind. The boy said that he wanted to rise high. First he thought that the position of a village head was the highest. Soon he realized that a Mayor was higher. Later he developed a desire to get a position higher than

that. Collector or Commissioner may be higher, he thought. No, Chief Minister or Governor is greater than that, he felt. Finally he resolved to become the President. But later he thought that even the position of a President is not the highest. He wanted to be the creator, or generator, ordainer and dissolver of the entire cosmos. And that is nothing but God. God is also known as Self or Brahman or Atman. He gathered all knowledge about the highest position, the Brahman. Therefore, he resolved to realize the Brahman. Since he wanted to become the Brahman, he searched for the appropriate means to attain the coveted state. In due course he attained what he desired.

Rukmini is a beautiful girl. She is the daughter of Bhishmaka, a king of Vidarbha. One day Narada visited their palace. He described the glory of Shri Krishna to Rukmini. He had given her the knowledge of Krishna. The energy of the knowledge kindled the dormant desire in her for him. In other words Jnana Sakti ignited the Ichcha Sakti in her. The strong desire soon developed into Kriya Sakti or action. She had therefore written a love letter to Krishna and won his loving hand. Somebody describes the special features of a film and thereby rouses the desire to see it. So on, the person works out the means to procure money, buy the ticket and see the film for the full fulfilment of the desire. If one has learnt about ice-cream.....its sweetness, softness, deliciousness.....the knowledge about or the Jnana Sakti ignites the

Ichcha Sakti or desire to get it, eat it and enjoy it. Soon that potential desire begins to act as Kriya Sakti. The person thus roused searches for the shops where the delicacy is available; finds it, buys it and enjoys it. What is applicable to worldly issues is applicable to spiritual pursuits as well. When the Brahman is described in the scriptures, when the Samadhi experience is picturesquely presented by people like Swami Vivekananda, a strong desire is roused and the desire becomes an irresistible passion driving the aspirant to practise the prescribed procedural disciplines to experience in reality the thrill of Samadhi. Jnana Sakti or power of knowledge ignites the desire which in turn strives for realization or practical experience or Kriya Sakti or the power of action.

Energy ignites action. Actions bring out energy. The rotation in a dynamo generates energy which has been hitherto hidden. Energy causes the rotation in a ceiling fan. Kriya Sakti is energetic action; energizing action is action of energy; energy of action. The entire cosmos is engaged in action: birth and death; eating and breathing; pulsation and heart beat and a host of ceaseless actions are nothing but activities of energy. Repeatedly when they are performed, birth after birth, death after death, rebirth after rebirth, they ignite the latent desire to know the truth behind them. Man then becomes an enquirer after truth. Nachiketa is the son of Vajasravas. He is fed up with earthly activities. So, he and in his footprints Adisankara raised

certain pertinent questions to know about the secrets of birth, death and rebirth. Swami Vivekananda too has raised similar questions about God, nature and the human existence. In other words, Kriya Sakti or repetition of energy generating activities kindles in man the desire to know the highest truth. Nachiketa therefore has gone to Yama and raised his query 'Sir, what is the secret of this existence, universe, birth and rebirth, etc.? Where did we come from? Where do we go after death? What is the innermost core of man? What is the all pervading truth?' Yama gives the reply in the great Katha Upanishad. And that is the great truth of Brahman.

We worship Sakti who is available in us as Ichcha, Jnana and Kriya (as desire, knowledge and action). Depending upon our aptitude, any particular aspect may be strengthened, intensified and pursued. One aspect is sure to lead to the other two. For all the three worships, the greatest impediment is laziness, inertia or ignorance. It is the dullness that impedes all progress. And that is represented by Mahishasura a buffalo of insensitive nature, lethargic movement and dark ignorance. Our desires must not remain dull and passive. They must grow to be ambition and passion. It is easy to desire but difficult to deserve what we desire. It is only when our desires are accompanied by appropriate enquiry and activity, they become fruitful. Else, they remain passive like the buffalo. Our knowledge should be strong enough

to ignite in us a desire to translate our information into reality. Then only will it be Jnana Sakti. Else it will be a library book kept lying in the racks.

Our actions should be capable of generating an urge to know and realize the truth behind and beyond all. Sakti Puja is but worship of energy in various facets, forms or aspects.

Mythology describes the three goddesses Saraswathi, Lakshmi and Parvathi. Saraswathi is the goddess of knowledge and wisdom. Lakshmi is the very embodiment of wealth. Parvathi is the goddess of action and victory. Each is but energy in a particular form. All the three are capable of motivating the aspirants to be desirous of wisdom, wealth and victory. Each is full of grace to provide the required means and ways for the fulfilment of the ignited desire. Saraswathi enlightens us. Lakshmi gives us wealth of every type in this world and finally blesses us with the spiritual wealth which is the same as the wisdom granted to us by Saraswathi. Parvathi provides us with necessary weapons or means to remove all obstacles on our way to victory. We are sure to be victorious here and hereafter if only we worship the three goddesses. In other words, we are sure to be victorious, wealthy and wise if our desire (Ichcha Sakti) is strong, if our knowledge (Jnana Sakti) about the highest goal is full and clear, and if our action (Kriya Sakti) is directed towards the chosen goal.



HYMN TO DURGA

SRI AUROBINDO

Mother Durga! Rider on the lion, giver of all strength, Mother beloved of Siva! We, born from thy parts of Power, we the youth of India, are seated here in thy temple. Listen, O Mother, descend upon earth, make thyself manifest in this land of India.

Mother Durga! From age to age, in life after, we come down into the human body, do thy work and return to the Home of Delight. Now too we are born, dedicated to thy work. Listen, O Mother, descend upon earth, come to our help.

Mother Durga! Rider on the lion, trident in hand, thy body of beauty armour-clad, Mother, giver of victory, India awaits thee, eager to see the gracious form of thine. Listen, O Mother, descend upon earth, make thyself manifest in this land of India.

Mother Durga! Giver of force and love and knowledge, terrible art thou in thy own self of might, Mother beautiful and fierce. In the battle of life, in India's battle, we are warriors commissioned by thee; Mother give to our heart and mind, a titan's strength, a titan's energy, to our soul and intelligence a god's character and knowledge.

Mother Durga! India, world's noblest race, lay whelmed in darkness. Mother, thou risest on the eastern horizon, the dawn comes with the glow of thy divine limbs scattering the darkness. Spread thy light, Mother, destroy the darkness.

Mother Durga! We are thy grace, by the influence may we become fit for the great



work, for the great Ideal. Mother, destroy our smallness, our selfishness, our fear.

Mother Durga! Thou art Kali, naked, garlanded with human heads, sword in hand, thou slayest the Asura. Goddess, do thou slay with thy pitiless cry the enemies who dwell within us, may none remain alive there, not one. May we become pure and

spotless, this is our prayer. O Mother, make thyself manifest.

Mother Durga! India lies low in selfishness and fearfulness and littleness. Make us great, make our efforts great, our hearts vast, make us true to our resolve. May we no longer desire the small, void of energy, given to laziness, stricken with fear.

Mother Durga! Extend wide the power of Yoga. We are thy Aryan children, develop in us again the lost teaching, character, strength of intelligence, faith and devotion, force of austerity, power of chastity and true knowledge, bestow all that upon the world. To help mankind, appear, O Mother of the world, dispel all ills.

Mother Durga! Slay the enemy within, then root out all obstacles outside. May the noble heroic mighty Indian race, supreme in love and unity, truth and strength, arts and letters, force and knowledge ever dwell in its holy woodlands, its fertile fields, under its sky-scraping hills, along the banks of its pure-streaming rivers. This is our prayer at the feet of the Mother. Make, thyself manifest.

Mother Durga! Enter our bodies in thy Yogic strength. We shall become thy instruments, thy sword slaying all evil, thy

lamp dispelling all ignorance. Fulfil this yearning of thy young children, O Mother. Be the master and drive thy instrument, wield thy sword and slay the evil, hold up the lamp and spread the light of knowledge. Make thyself manifest.

Mother Durga! When we possess thee, we shall no longer cast thee away; we shall bind thee to us with the tie of love and devotion. Come, Mother, manifest thyself in our mind and life and body.

Come, Revealer of the hero-path. We shall no longer cast thee away. May our entire life become a ceaseless worship of the Mother, all our acts a continuous service to the Mother, full of love, full of energy. This is our prayer. O Mother, descend upon earth, make thyself manifest in this land of India.

Hymn to Durga was written by Sri Aurobindo in Bengali and was published in the 4th October 1909 issue of Dharma, a Bengali weekly. In view of its MANTRIC power the Mother has recommended it for all ardent patriots engaged in rebuilding the nation.

**Courtesy : Sri Aurobindo Ashram,
Pondicherry.**



A BRIEF LIFE STORY

Nivedita was born Margaret Elizabeth Noble on 28th October 1867 in the small town of Dungannon in North Ireland. Her father, Samuel Richmond Noble, was a priest, and her mother was Mary Esabel Noble.

Inspired by the influence of her father and forefathers on the one hand and the ideals of her maternal grandfather on the other, she developed in her character truthfulness, religious zeal, patriotism and also an attraction for politics.

Margaret spent her early student life in a Church boarding school in London, which was marked by rigorous discipline. A sharply intelligent student, Margaret used to study extensively beyond the school syllabus. She studied with equal eagerness literature, music, arts, physics and botany. Margaret became a teacher when she was only seventeen. Before that she had successfully completed her formal education. Within a short while she opened a school at Wimbledon and started to teach students following her own methods. Shortly her name as a good teacher spread far and wide.

In spite of fair success in her external life, the formal Church-regulated religious life could not give her the peace she had been longing for.

This restlessness in her heart was not set to rest until she met the Indian *sannyasin* Swami Vivekananda. She was charmed by the philosophical exposition and the personality of the *sannyasin*. Thereafter she attended several other lectures and question-answer classes of Swamiji in London. She listened to all the lectures with rapt attention, raised questions one after another to resolve her doubts and constantly meditated on them. At last she realized that this Indian *sannyasin* would be able to lead her to the truth she had been searching for. Margaret accepted him as her Guru. And during this period, Swamiji also became convinced of Margaret's truthfulness, determination and above all, her heart full of kindness.

Swamiji used to feel unbearable pain at the sorrows and sufferings of the common people of a subjugated India. He felt that in order to raise India it was necessary to improve the condition of the common mass and that of women. The only way to improve the condition of women was to give them education. With the spread of education, they would become self-confident and would be able to solve their own problems. Swamiji thought Margaret

would be eminently suitable for this task. He invited her for the task of spreading education among the common mass of India, women especially. He wrote to her : 'Let me tell you frankly that I am now convinced that you have a great future in the work for India. What was wanted was not a man, but a woman—a real lioness—to work for Indians, women especially. India cannot yet produce great women, she must borrow them from other nations. Your education, sincerity, purity, immense love, determination and above all, the Celtic blood make you just the woman wanted.'

Margaret left behind her motherland, friends and relations, an established life and everything, and reached India on 28th January 1898 to join Swamiji's task of nation-building.

She began to love India and developed an irresistible urge to accept the Indian life. Gradually India and she were merged together, as it were, to become one.

Within a few days of her arrival she got the audience of Sri Sri Ma Sarada Devi. The Holy Mother accepted Margaret spontaneously as her daughter. Margaret realized : Sri Sri Ma was an incomparable personality of love, purity, sweetness, simplicity and knowledge, a marvelous creation of Providence. Margaret felt

sanctified by being the loving *Khooki* (baby) of the Mother.

After a short while Swamiji formally initiated Margaret in the vow of *Brahmacharya* and gave her the name 'Nivedita'. He advised her to maintain strict continence and to dedicate her life for the good of others, like Buddha.

Henceforth, the sole purpose of her life was to serve India. She realized the truth of Swamiji's words that the world's good was dependent on the good of India and that India's spirituality would show the path of beneficence to the entire world. So she deemed her service to India to be the service to the entire mankind indeed.

As desired by Swamiji she set up a Girls school at Bosepara lane and started the work of women's education following the national ideal of India.

In 1902 Swamiji left the mortal plane. But Nivedita did not take the time even to mourn. Many unfinished tasks of Swamiji remained to be attended to. India, the ever-adored deity of her Guru, was to be awakened in all directions. Since her arrival in India, Nivedita had personally witnessed the nature of British torture in the name of administration. She was sad and angry to see Indians suffering indignities and oppression in the hands of the British. It appeared to her that the main obstacle of India's development lay in her

dependence. She realized in the core of her heart that foreign rule was responsible for the moral degradation and weakness of the Indians. In her forceful desire to free India from the British rule she actively associated herself with politics. Swamiji's direction is unequivocal--the Ramakrishna Math and Mission' cannot have any relation with politics. But in Nivedita's perception the topmost priority for India was to gain national freedom, so she could not disassociate herself as 'Nivedita of Ramakrishna Mission'. It was the most painful of all decisions, but she had to take it. However, her inner relationship was never cut off. She always maintained a respectful and loving relationship with Sri Sri Ma, the spiritual Mother of the Order, the Math's president, Swami Brahmananda, and other brother disciples. And she always identified herself as 'Nivedita of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda'.

From now on Nivedita became restless to give concrete shape to the great India that Swamiji had dreamed of. She tried her utmost to enthuse the entire India with the nationalist ideas. Nivedita's conception of nationalism was to awaken a nationalistic consciousness in all the areas of national life—education, literature, science, history, arts and folk culture.

Carrying afloat the banner of Swamiji's ideals, Nivedita now set out on lecture tours throughout India. She appealed to the countrymen to forget all differences of caste, creed and culture and come forward united to serve the motherland. Herself the image of selflessness, renunciation and austerity, Nivedita's sincere appeal touched the hearts of the people and enkindled patriotism in many a heart. She especially associated herself with the youths and student community. She urged them to become honest, hard-working and brave. Being born in the land of the heroic *sannyasin* Vivekananda, they should never be cowards. And, above all, they should love and adore their motherland and hold her cause over everything else.

Nivedita maintained very close relations with Sri Aurobindo, the chief of the then revolutionary movement and other revolutionary leaders and workers. She was ever alert to save these selfless people, dedicated to the cause of the motherland, from the royal wrath. She would secure secret news from the Government sources through her friends, and cautioned the revolutionaries well in advance. She also helped them through her counseling and made sure that the anti-people activities of the British Government were publicized in England, and that a

strong public opinion was built against such activities.

She was in touch with most of the front-ranking political leaders throughout India. Her foremost effort was that the Indians should unitedly fight against the foreign rule without creating divisions amongst themselves. But she never had the least intention of assuming the leader's role in political movement; rather she thought, as Vivekananda felt, that such a role was reserved for those who were Indians by birth and tradition. Nivedita's active role in politics evoked suspicion of the British and to elude the eyes of the police she sometimes had to move about in disguise. Nivedita accepted India, the motherland of Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, as her own country. She served the people of India in their days of sufferings and distress, caring even the least for her own life. In 1899, when plague broke out in Calcutta she plunged into relief work with the band of *sannyasins* of the Ramakrishna mission according to Swamiji's desire. Under her leadership, nursing of the ailing patients began, and side by side as remedial measure to fight the disease, the cleaning operation of rubbish and refuse of the localities continued. Nivedita herself took in her hand broomstick and basket to clean the rubbish and also nursed the patients. The

thought never occurred to her that she herself might contract plague for such personal involvement, and that plague was as good as death. Following her example many local youths joined the relief work.

While living at Bosepara Lane Nivedita always stood by the side of her ordinary neighbours in their hours of pleasures and pain. Her sincerity made the neighbours feel that she was one of them. Still she never crossed the social barriers regarding touch and food.

Nivedita's love for Indian masses was matchless. When East Bengal was ravaged by a terrible flood, followed by famine, she rushed there with her people for relief work. Wading through water and mud she reached the doorsteps of the common people and began to serve the distressed mass of people. Those distressed people and also regarded Nivedita as their own and accepted her service without any reservation.

She also wrote several books, the most remarkable of which are: *Kali the Mother*, *The Master As I Saw Him*. Many distinguished personalities of the day used to visit her Bosepara Lane residence regularly. Her versatile genius and knowledge in various subjects would charm everybody.

About her small school that was founded according to Swamiji's ideals and

consecrated by the Holy Mother, she had the conviction that their blessings were ever with it. She believed that in future Maitreyis and Gargis would emerge from amongst the students of this school.

During those days Nivedita had to work in an extremely conservative society. The parents were not all agreeable to educate their daughters. So Nivedita had to walk from door to door to enlist her students. She used to teach the girl students history, geography, natural sciences and a little bit of English. She would also teach them sewing, drawing and handicrafts. She also encouraged them to take up physical exercises. Above all, she helped them increase their innate sense of religion and introduced them to the Indian culture.

She had to earn money from her writings and giving lectures. But she spent all to meet the expenses of the school. She was ever unmindful of keeping even the barest for herself. Many a day she had to go without food.

All this hardship and the tremendous heat of the summer told heavily upon her health. She began to fall ill repeatedly.

With a view to recuperating her health, she was persuaded to go to Darjeeling in 1911 along with the Bose family. But she became further ill there and finally she passed away on 13 October. Nivedita of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda left the mortal plane after furnishing her mission here. She was then only forty-four.

Never did any foreigner love India so much as did Nivedita. Never have we come across any foreigner who felt so proud about India's religion and culture as she did or so committed to India's national awakening as she was. By totally dedicating herself to the service of India, Nivedita proved true the name that was gifted to her by her Guru.

*Courtesy : 'Nivedita of India', The
Ramakrishna Mission Institute of
Culture, Kolkata*

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/13485, 529 to 541, 43, 44, 53 to 55, 584,696,704,714,716,16997,
17313,316 to 334 341 to 349,352,353,355 to 381 384 to 388 (Ends with
October'06)**

CHARAIVETI! CHARAIVETI!!

Satish Chowkulkar

One day I received a telephone call from the Asst. Editor of Yuva Bharati magazine. He wanted me to come and pick-up some letters from the Yuva Bharati readers; in response to my writings that appeared in the magazine's July, August and September issues. Most of them were curious about Shiva Swarupananda. But as he wanted to be anonymous, I could do little to satisfy their curiosity. Quite a few questions were asked and they wanted replies from Shiva Swarupananda. I was looking forward for an opportunity to see him and get his answers for these questions.

I spotted him in an Arangetram of a Bharata Natyam dancer in Chennai. He was enjoying the recital fully immersed as though in Anand Sagar. After the programme, I met and greeted him. He was in a very ecstatic mood. "How a man with philosophical bent of mind is in a dance programme?" I asked him smilingly. He also laughed and said "Are you not sailing in the same boat?" and added "Bharat Natyam is not an entertainment. It is a Shastra. It elevates one and all--the performer, the accompanying artists and the audience to a level of ecstasy

where mere intellect cannot reach. This is a practical expression of co-ordination of *Druka*, *Drushya* and *Drushta*. At a culminating point the distinctness of the three melts into the Absolute Anand described by the Scriptures as Brahmananda. This process is used in our tradition to drive home many spiritual ideas and incidents depicted in the Ithihasas and Puranas, so that general people, at all rungs of Sadhana, get benefited and pursue the goal--Ishwar Anubhuti.

I was getting a new input for my curiosity, but I had some other agenda at the back of my mind, therefore I said "I want some of your time to get answers for the questions from the Yuva Bharati readers". We fixed the time and place for the meeting and left.

As I planned, we met in the garden of an Ashram; with a question bank in my bag, and their answers in his head.

I took out the first question: "You have said our nation has not enslaved any other nation and our people have not converted the followers of other faiths to our religion...er..Dharma, then why we are branded as Fundamentalists?"

Shiva Swarupananda listened to the question once again and started 'Let us understand this word Fundamentalists. Fundamental means basics, rudimentary-ideas. It is not a bad word by itself. We do study fundamentals of physics,

fundamentals of computer science, fundamentals of music, etc. There are text books also by such names. In Europe and other western countries, few intellectuals revolted against the approaches of some cults in their countries. These approaches were based on some dogmas and taboos, not verifiable by scientific inquiries. In fact asking question was considered as blasphemy, because for these cults, these dogmas and taboos were the very foundation of their faith. As these foundations for fundamentals were irrational and illogical, they were not acceptable to modern thinkers.

These fundamentals therefore became despicable. Thereby, the followers of these principles were branded with an adjective fundamentalists--those who are not rational, logical and open-minded. Now look at our principles--that is fundamentals of Sanatana Dharama. The fundamental principles of Sanatana Dharma are i) essential Divinity of Srushti ii) essential Purity of all the members of the creation and iii) essential Unity i.e., oneness or interconnectivity of life. These have withstood critical inquiry from the thinkers of the past, present and also futuristic approach of modern science. We are not only **not afraid of questioning**, but welcome questions and have conviction, which can be transmitted to the questioners. So, the fundamentals of Sanatana Dharma or Hinduism are pure,

inclusive and divine. So if we are stuck to them and therefore are fundamentalists, then being fundamentalist is not derogatory. In India the pseudo-intellectuals and half baked neo-theologists call us fundamentalists without understanding the real purport of the world. A Hindu fundamentalist in this true sense of the word will be a boon to mankind and not a curse as one of the exclusive and narrow-minded faiths and cults. After completing his lengthy reply. Shiva Swarupananda looked at me, as if for approval. I had a bug in my brain. "But overall understanding of Hinduism is that of one ridden with child marriage, oppression of women, dowry system, burning of widows in the name of sati, looking down on the working class as untouchables, depriving people of their legitimate rights in the name of castes, etc. How can we explain this if we say fundamentals of Hinduism are pure, divine and inclusive?"

Shiva Swarupananda said with conviction. "These practices, which you are referring, are not part of any of the basics of Sanatana Dharma or Hinduism. There is no scriptural sanction for such practices. These practices have their roots in the life style and social compulsion imposed on us by the impact of series of invasions of uncultured tribes from western Asia, not for a few years but a few centuries. Survival of the society was at stake. As

and when situations eased, even for a brief span of time, social reforms were pushed through by spiritual leaders. Seeds of Selfishness and narrow-mindedness were somehow planted by the invaders and quite a few of the undesirable features were perpetuated for centuries. However, these features never became part of fabric of the Sanatana Dharma. Social Reformers and Spiritual leaders did their best for this. So fundamentalists Hindus do not subscribe to these practices. Those who practice this are not fundamentalists but the perverted one. The next question was “What are these labels **saffron brigade** and **cultural police** attached to the Hindu thinkers and teachers?”

Shiva Swarupananda burst into an unusual peal of laughter and said “This questioner must be interacting with people who are reading the literature of the self-styled rational intellectuals with their leanings on leftist political thinking. These people have their own definition of freedom. “**Saffron Brigade**” or “**Cultural Police**” are not labels but can be worn as titles. Let us go to the origin of the thinkers, whose Indian descendants are coining such words.

In medieval Europe, orthodox thinkers were oppressing the majority of the populations in all walks of life. Some of them rebelled against this oppression and their reaction was termed as struggle for free thinking. Though the quest for

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freedom was genuine, the method was not creative but reactionary. So, later, opposing whatever has been prescribed by the tradition became the fashion. Freedom has come to mean old should be rejected and new things to be advocated not necessarily on merits but snobbishness. This helped the ushering of communist ideas over capitalistic ideas though both are patently European materialistic ideas. When these ideologies migrated to Bharat as a part of expansionistic designs of both the groups, they were encountering a way of life, which was patently free and open minded. Here the quest of freedom was not a reaction to anything but a natural birthright. Economic status was not at all a parameter to become a guide or leader of the society. Centuries of political oppression by invaders and colonial forces could not extinguish this glow of quest for freedom. In fact, Swaraj- "freedom is my birth right" and Gita Rahasya by Lokmananya Tilak gave spiritual dimension to the freedom struggle. So these European politico-economic pressure groups-Capitalism and Communism, had to wage a full time war against the cultural and spiritual forces. They developed various designs to fight Like Mecaulyan Education, so called radical or rational thinking, and advocating the freedom to react against the cultural and spiritual tenets. They started corrupting the minds of Indian youth

through these weapons. The natural response had come from the saffron-clad selfless spiritual personalities and the elders who bear the torch of Bharateeya Samskriti--Indian culture. Such thinkers were therefore a "thorn in the paw" of these materialistic thinkers--capitalists and communists alike. In spite of political freedom achieved in 1947, these ideologies, prompted and supported by MNCs and Proselytizing faiths continued to take on on these defenders of Spiritual Tenets of Bharat; as they found a common enemy in them. That is why the phobia of these "Saffron Brigade" and "Cultural Police". Maintaining Cultural Purity and defending our Spiritual treasure is not the work of Government's army or the police. It has to be done by selfless Spiritual leaders wearing saffron robes and the leaders of the society who are dressed in the Culture of the land. So being a member of a Saffron Brigade or a part of the team of Cultural Police force is to fulfil our moral, ethical and spiritual responsibility towards the new generation.

We have to protect our younger generation by specifying what is freedom as against the waywardness, in the name of freedom. Cultural inputs in dress, food, behaviour, literature, education, interaction with opposite sex will make a responsible, healthy and strong nation. Then it can be the voice raised against beauty contests, Valentine's day,

denouncing of gods, goddesses and reverential personalities or insistence on following dress-code, banning degenerative films and literature, and encouraging the use of indigenous products. In our culture, freedom, i.e., Swa-tantra is preceded by Anushasan i.e., discipline, as also, in the most modern Constitution of India, Fundamental Rights are to be read with Directive Principles. Freedom is not a reaction but pro-active and creative. Thinkers who have European forefathers will do good to understand this. Our society needs Saffron Brigades and Cultural policing". Shiva Swarupananda gave a convincing smile and asked, "What is the next question?"

The question was, "Why are we bugged with so many festivals and celebrations? In other faiths there are very few festivals, and in what way, observing so many festivals is going to help us?" Shiva Swarupananda was telling in a relaxed mood. "Our cultural is not comparable with other faiths. None of them is more than 2000 years beyond. So they have very few personalities and occasions of the past to take inspiration from their role models and their deeds are numbered. Sanatana Dharma came up with some basic values of life from time immemorial. The values are ancient but not aged and old. These values have been lived by the heroes braving all sorts of challenges spanning across thousands and thousands

of years. Whenever we recall these situations, our faith gets strengthened in these values again and again. In the process of celebrating festivals and rituals we recall the great works done by our forefathers and adore the innumerable role models of the past. So these are our strength and not to be looked upon as burdens. Of course, we should understand the significance of these festivals. Our festivals unequivocally emphasize the victory of truth over untruth, values are enshrined against the evils of the society. Evils come again and again by default, but at the same time our inherent strength also brace up to combat them. Our festivals also go in tune with the changes on Earth, Atmosphere and Cosmos. Festivals usher in subtle changes in food, clothes, habits and do's and don'ts needed to cope with the corresponding changes at these levels. It provides an occasion for distribution of wealth and some sections of society spend money which goes to other sections of the society who barter their, skills, creativity and services. It is not just spending money for celebration but distributing the wealth generated and supporting and encouraging skills, talents, arts, etc. The festivals do prescribe some self-restrain on people through rituals, vratas, etc. at the same time they teach us to enjoy by sharing as the Isha Upanishad says "*Tena Tyaktena* of energies. Moral, Ethical and Spiritual values are instilled. The Durga Puja or

Dassera celebration is a mirror of all these reflections. So also Deepavali and embodiment of values. Every day of the year is a festival.

This builds a positive, proactive, creative and dynamic approach to the life as spelled out in the Vedanta and other Scriptures.

I smiled and asked, "Is this the reason you were spotted yesterday in the Arangetram of a Bharatha Natyam?"

"Yes. Particularly the Arangetram", he said, "these are performed by young budding artists. They not only display the

skill in the performance but exude the moral and cultural values by respecting the elders and the traditions.

They do imbibe the values sung in the songs and stories, getting registered in their subconscious mind. They learn to co-ordinate themselves with other members of the team. A real display of *samanvay*. Our festivals also teach us to be in tune with our Tradition, Nature, Society and the Creator--the Ishwar".

I took leave of Shiva Swarupananda with a deep sense of satisfaction.

“I LOVE INDIA”

SISTER NIVEDITA

I love India as the birthplace of the highest and best of all religions, as the country that has the grandest mountains, the Himalayas, the country where the homes are simple, where domestic happiness is most to be found, and where the women unselfishly, unobtrusively, ungrudgingly serve the dear ones from early morn to dewy eve.

India, is above all others, the land of great women. Wherever we turn, whether history or literature, we are met on every hand by those figures, whose strength She mothered and recognized, while She keeps their memory eternally sacred.

I believe that India is one, indissoluble. National unity is built on the common home, the common interest and the common love. I believe that the strength which spoke in the Vedas and Upanishads, in the making of religions and empires, in the learning of scholars, and the meditation of the saints, is born once more amongst us, its name today is NATIONALITY. I believe that the present of India is deep-rooted in her past, and that before her, shines a glorious future.

O! nationality, come thou to me as joy or sorrow, as honour or as shame! Make me thine own!!



VIVEKANANDA KENDRA SAMACHAR

TEZPUR

The Universal Brotherhood Day was celebrated with great enthusiasm on 11th September 06. Swami Vishwatmananda, Secretary of Ramakrishna Math, Itanagar, was the chief guest and Mr. Prafful Chandra Goswami, the former Vice-Principal of the Tezpur College was the guest of honour. Both Swami Vishwatmananda and Mr. Prafful Chandra Goswami beautifully summed up the teachings of Swami Vivekananda and exhorted people to follow them. Around 250 people participated in the function.

KALLUBALU

On 9-9-06 Rakshabandhan was celebrated. Su Sri Uni Didi expounded the relevance of Rakshabandhan in our present day-to-day life. On 15.8.06, Independence Day and Sree Krishna Jayanthi were celebrated. Ma. Balakrishnanji, Vice President of Vivekananda Kendra was the chief guest. On 22.8.06 Ma. Eknathji's Punyathithi was observed in the school. On 27.8.06 Ganesha Chaturthi was celebrated on 30.08.06 and 31.08.06 there was a Pratibhakaranji competition in Harapanahalli Govt. school.

On 5th September Teacher's Day was celebrated and there was a Kho-Kho competition for students versus teachers. On 11th September 06, Universal Brotherhood Day was celebrated Dr. R. Nagaratna Didi, the Chief Medical Consultant of Prashanti Kuteeram was the Chief Guest.



VKVs IN ARUNACHAL PRADESH

Sri Krishna Jayanti was celebrated fervently in all the Vidyalayas of Vivekananda Kendra.

Ganesh Chaturthi was celebrated with devotional zeal in all the VKVs in Arunachal Pradesh. In Niauxa, a training unit has been set up to teach tailoring to the village women.

PORT BLAIR

Raksha Bandhan was celebrated on 9th Aug., Independence Day on 15th Aug., and Sri Krishna Jayanti on 16th Aug. at Port Blair, Hut Bay, Ranchi Tekri, Chouldari, Kadamtala, Rangat, Basantipur, Pahalgaoan and Diglipur in the Andamans. In all, 5000 Rakhis were tied. Independence day was celebrated in all these places after the Prabhat Pheri in which 2500 students participated. Janmshtami was celebrated involving 5000 school students in various competitions.

Universal Brotherhood Day was celebrated in all these places from 11th to 20th September. Various competitions were organised in these places for 2000 students.

To mark the centenary of the Cellular Jail, a skit competition was organised with the theme 'history of cellular jail'. Sri M R Bhakta, Hon'ble Membr of Parliament was the Chief Guest at the Port Blair function and Sri Kuldeep Rai Sharma, Congress President of A&N Islands was the Chief Guest at the Chouldari function. A total number of 4000 people participated in these functions.

