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Hare Rama! SETU seeks blessings from **Param Puja Guruji, Gokarna Mandaladheeshwara, Srimad Jagadguru Shankaracharya Shree Shree Raghaveshwara Bharati Mahaswamiji** on the occasion of the Indian Independence Day! Let this be a time for us to seek independence too. Let us seek Freedom from any negative thoughts and bad influences that could stop us on our spiritual journey towards the purpose of our lives.

This is the time to be thankful to the Lord that He gave us time, as well as action to fill it with. He gave us food, as well as hunger to relish it. But, all our actions must be with discrimination, between good and bad. When we build a house, we create a door to admit all those who are welcome and keep out those who are not. We do not keep the doors wide open for all and sundry to come in as and when they please. Similarly, we must screen the impulses and motives that enter our mind; keep out the demeaning, the debasing, and the negative. We must learn to admit only the highest wisdom of the scriptures, the wisdom of the experience of the ancient sages. Being surrounded by good thoughts makes us think well, be good and do good.

In this issue we shall read about anger, realization of dreams, and learn about teaching! We will also start a new freedom movement, learn how one must take care of the four wives in one's life, and start a new journey to discover and unearth some hidden treasures. Also, we will find out the importance of a stick, yes a stick, in Guruji's own words! Read all this and more in this issue of SETU! Wish you all a Happy Independence Day! Harerama.

- Rajalakshmi Kameshwar Joshi

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH - JULY

On 4th July, Guruji visited the **Emami Paper Mill** at Balasore in Orissa. Later, Guruji **distributed food and clothes** to the poor and needy people assembled in the mill premises.

From 4th July 2010 to 15th July, Guruji was in Kolkatta. On 7th July, Guruji graced the **Bhagwat Saptah Programme** held in the Mahalakshmi Temple premises, Kolkatta. Guruji also participated in the Rajat Jayanti (Silver Jubilee) celebrations of the **Krishna Janmotsava** held in the Emami premises. Shri R.S.Agarwal and Shri R.S.Goenka, Founders and Jt. Chairmen Emami Limited, also participated and sought Guruji's blessings on the occasion along with their respective families.

On 24th July, Guruji formally entered Gokarna and performed **Vyasapuja** on 25th July in Ashoke, Gokarna on the occasion of **Gurupurnima**. Many prominent personalities like Vishweshwara Hegde Kaageri, the State Education Minister, Basavaraj Horatti, the Ex- Minister of State for Education, The Deputy Commissioner of Karwar District Shri Amarnarayan, Shri Dinakar Shetty, MLA, Shri Go Madhusudhan, MLC, Smt Usha Agarwal, Emami Group and many other distinguished guests attended the Pooja and sought Guruji's blessings. Almost 3000 shishyas attended the Gurupurnima function to seek Guruji's blessings and received the special "**Vyasmantrakshate**".

Guruji is observing His 17th **Chaturmasya** at Ashoke, Gokarna. The Chaturmasya commenced on 25th July, (Shri Vikruti Samvatsara Ashaada Shudda Purnime) and will continue upto to 23rd September 2010 (Bhadrapada Shudda Purnime).

GURUJI'S SCHEDULE OF EVENTS FOR AUGUST

In the entire month of August, Guruji will be at Ashoke, Gokarna for observing the Chaturmasya Vrata. During this period of Chaturmasya, many Dharmic, cultural and social programmes will be held.

In August, two **Dhyana Saptahas** will be conducted, the first one from 31st July to 6th August and another one from 14th August to 20th August. The participants will receive guidance from eminent teachers in the field of Yoga to pave the way for reviving the ancient ideal Bharatiya way of life.

As part of the **Pravachana Malika**, discourses will be conducted on Saturdays and Sundays between 5 to 6 p.m. Pooja Guruji will speak on Adishankara's Composition "Shivananda Lahiri".

All shishyas and devotees are requested to visit Gokarna at least once during Chaturmasya and seek Guruji's blessings. For further details regarding Guruji's schedules or any events, please contact : Mrs. Rajalakshmi Kameshwar Joshi - 09821007838 (rajalakshmi.j@gmail.com)

EVENTS PLANNED FOR AUGUST IN MUMBAI

Kumkumarchane will be held at various places in Mumbai. For more details and to participate, please contact:

Mrs. Savitri Bhat (Andheri) – 26778466 • Mrs. Nalini Bhat (Thane) - 25810394 • Mrs. Chandrakala Hegde (Dombivali)

OTHER EVENTS IN MUMBAI IN JULY

On 11th July, a meeting was held at Pejaware Matha to discuss the further action in the Koti Rudra Yagna at Gokarna. The meeting was conducted under the guidance of Shri Bheemeshwara Joshi, Dharmadarshi of Hornadu Annapoorneshwari temple. The other Guests of Honour included Shri Aikal Harish Shetty, of the Bunts Association, Shri M.K. Janardan, Shri Atrijalu, Shri Sampekatte, Shri Hebbar, and Shri V.D. Bhat.

On 25th July, (Gurupurnima), Kumkumarchane was held at the residences of Rati Hegde (Andheri) and Nalini Bhat (Thane).

KOTI RUDRA YAGNA AT GOKARNA



L-R: Shri K.S.Bhat, Shri Kumar Sampekatte, Shri Krishnakumar Atrijalu, Shri Bheemeshwar Joshi, Shri Aikal Harish Shetty, Shri M.K.Janardan, Shri Rajashekhar Hebbar

The Koti Rudra Yagna, being conducted in Gokarna is the only one of its kind in history. This is an event, the likes of which has never happened before, and may never happen ever again! In order to enable shishyas from Mumbai to understand its importance, significance and participate in this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, a meeting was held at Pejaware Matha. The distinguished speakers spoke about different aspects of the Yagna, and made us all aware of the necessity to conduct such a Yagna.

The meeting started on a beautiful note with Carnatic Music. Smt. Veena Bhat and her team enthralled everyone present with her recital. Here is a brief description of the information conveyed by the visiting dignitaries:

Shri Kumar Sampekatte informed us about the project "Koti Rudra".

The Rudra chant, each of which takes 20 minutes, will have to be chanted one CRORE times in the Mahabaleshwar Temple premises in Gokarna. This is an exclusive opportunity indeed!

Shri Rajashekhar Hebbar then spoke about how the "Cultural Deterioration" is affecting India much more badly than the twin monsters of "Terrorism" and "Naxalism". He explained the scientific benefit to society, of some events taken up by Guruji in the past, like the Ramayana Mahasatra (when the Rama Taraka Japa Yagna took place) and the Vishwa Gou Sammelan. He also informed us of Guruji's resolve to plant ONE CRORE SAPLINGS to coincide with the one crore Rudra Chants. Trees will be planted on every weekend as a measure against rising levels of pollution in the entire world. Thus, the religious, social, and ecological causes will all go hand-in-hand. Knowledge, awareness and chanting of the Rudra Japa are also the major reasons why this event has been initiated by Pujya Guruji.

Shri Bheemeshwara Joshi then explained how the Chanting is being done in the temple premises because the intention is "Sarve Janah Sukhinaha Bhavantu", i.e. welfare of the entire humanity. He explained the relation between the human body and prayer to God and also the reasons behind many spiritual and cultural rituals. He further emphasized how the Kotirudra chant will bring peace and welfare to entire humankind, and planting of trees will also bring environmental welfare. He urged one and all to participate in the event in whatever way possible and also support the cause of Gou Raksha always. He further applauded the Muslim country of Indonesia for positively following many Hindu rituals and symbols, since they understand their significance.

Shri Aikal Harish Shetty thanked Guruji for the blessings due to which the Bunts Samaj could build their Bhavan in Mumbai in just three months, which is simply unbelievable! He said the entire Bunts Samaj has benefited due to Guruji's blessings.

Shri M.K. Janardan spoke about the reason why an event like Kotirudra is to be conducted. He informed us all about the findings of the Crime department in LA, U.S.A., where a reduction in the crime rate was found after a community Rudra Chanting was commenced and carried on for 2 years. The crime rate shot back again to high levels after the chanting was stopped! They have now realized and recognized the value of Rudra Chanting. He also made a statement that "Science can only explain those things that we know about, but there are a million things in Nature, we are unaware about". He also discussed the practical aspects of food and accommodation for all the participants, at Gokarna. He also encourage all Bhaktas to participate themselves in the Rudra chanting, and in case they were unable to do so, he exhorted everybody to contribute in cash (in the form of Annadana at the temple or in the form of sponsoring the Japa) to the ongoing event.

We are thankful to all the speakers for the valuable guidance and a group of almost 20 persons will go to Gokarna for chanting Rudra during the Chaturmasya period. We request and invite everyone to come forward to participate in this event whole-heartedly and make it a success. You can participate in the Rudra chanting, which is of utmost importance, and also contribute in terms of Annadana or any other sponsorship.

A STORY OF NANDI

There lived in a village a cow called Mahamaya. She was very well looked after by the farmer in whose house she lived. She soon gave birth to a male calf who was called MahaNandi. The farmer and his children liked Mahanandi so much that he decided to keep the calf for himself and not give it away. Mahanandi grew up to be a very strong and even-tempered bull. He was so strong that even after doing work in the fields the whole day, he could pull a cart loaded with goods, all the way to the market place.

Once, the farmer needed a lot of money as his daughter was to get married. Mahanandi overheard him telling his wife that the moneylender had refused to give him a loan unless he mortgaged the fields. The farmer did not want to do this as the fields were his only property and that too, it was property which had been with the family for generations. Mahanandi knew that the farmer was a very good man who had loved his mother, Mahamaya and him unconditionally. Mahanandi came up with a plan.

The next day he told the farmer "Dear farmer, I know that you are in need of money. You have looked after me well and made me the strong bull that I am. Go to the village headman and tell him you would like to place a bet for a bag of gold coins, that I can pull 10 carts filled to the top with goods, on my own, for a mile." The farmer was surprised to hear this, but he had faith in Mahanandi. He told this to the village headman. The headman and his friends laughed and said that the farmer would lose all his money. The farmer was adamant on the bet. Finally it was decided that the event would take place on the weekend.

The day of the event dawned. Mahanandi too was excited. The whole village had gathered at the spot where Mahanandi was to drive the carts. Just when the event was about to start, the farmer, in his excitement and anticipation over his victory and receipt of the gold coins, suddenly became rude. He started whipping Mahanandi and screamed "Get going, you fool! I have fed you so much and made you so strong, now pay me back! Start moving, you rascal!" Mahanandi was shocked. He never expected his kind and polite master to beat him or talk to him so badly. He refused to move.

The farmer lost his bet and he had to pay up whatever gold he had. Everybody made fun of him and he went home a sad man. He kept crying that night, blaming himself for having trusted Mahanandi. Finally Mahanandi spoke "Master, did I ever refuse to do any work that you asked me to do? Was I ever troublesome or did I ever hurt any of you?" The farmer said "No, never." "Then why did you beat me and speak badly to me?" Mahanandi asked. The farmer was shocked and accepted that it was greed which made him go mad. He was truly apologetic. He saw the marks on Mahanandi's body and shed tears for having beaten him. He applied balm on Mahanandi and massaged him.

Now Mahanandi said "It's not too late still. Go back to the headman and his friends and place a bet for two bags of gold this time, that I will pull 20 cartloads of goods, all alone. Trust me, this time I will win the bet for you." The farmer did the same and the next weekend before the event, he told Mahanandi, "My good friend, help me. Do your best." To everybody's surprise, Mahanandi pulled all the 20 carts easily. The farmer won and had enough money for his daughter's wedding!

Friends, we too are like the farmer sometimes. In our greed, we look for short term gains and treat our Gou-mata and Nandi very badly. We forget that it is they who nourish us and give us the milk and grains that we eat. Let us all take a vow to protect them. Jai Jai Mata! Jai Gou Mata!



Guruji distributing food and clothes to the poor at Balasore, Orissa



"Phalsamarpane" to Poojya Guruji by Shri R.S. Goenka (L), Shri R.S. Agarwal(R) and families



Vyasmantrakshate distribution by Guruji on Gurupurnima at Ashoke, Gokarna



Guruji performing Vyaspuja on Gurupurnima at Ashoke, Gokarna

GREATNESS OF JAGADGURU SHANKARACHARYA



Desirous of being initiated into Brahman-knowledge, after receiving the permission from his mother to become an ascetic, Shankara in his new Kashaya dress went to the forest hermitage of Sage Govindapada. He approached the cave where the sage resided, and began to chant a hymn in praise of sage Govinda, full of the spirit of devotion to the Guru.

Vyasa Muni was the son of Parasara and Suka was the son of Vyasa. Suka had as his disciple Gaudapada, and Gaudapada had as his disciple, Govindapada. Govindapada was considered an incarnation of Adishesha, described in the Puranas as the serpent supporting the worlds, and it was from him that Shankara, who was to become the Jagadguru, wanted to learn. One may have an inborn knowledge of the Truth, but it is the scriptural dictum that one should be instructed duly by a teacher. No learning is complete without a Guru.

When the sage Govindapada heard Shankara's hymns in his praise, the sage came out of his super-conscious state and asked who was praising him thus. In reply, Shankara said the following, indicative of his great spiritual enlightenment: "Revered Sir, I am neither the earth, nor water, nor fire, nor air, nor sky, nor any of their properties. I am not the senses, nor the mind. I am Shiva, the divisionless essence of Consciousness." Hearing these words which showed the spirit of non-dualistic consciousness, the sage was delighted and realising that the boy was Lord Shiva incarnate, he extended his feet through the mouth of the cave, which the would-be disciple worshipped with all devotion and ceremony. In the coming days, Shankara devotedly served his teacher and soon became the object of his loving affection.

Highly pleased with the disciple's services, the sage imparted to him the knowledge of Brahman through the four Maha-Vakyas – Prajnanam Brahma (Brahman is pure Consciousness); Aham Brahmasmi (I am Brahman); Tat-tvam-asi (Thou art That) and Ayam-atma Brahma (This Atman is Brahman). He also taught Shankara the Vedanta Sutras of Vyasa, and through them, the innermost essence of the Vedanta Philosophy.

... to be continued (extracted from Shankara Digvijay)

THE ARTIST AND THE GURU

.. Dr. Sharada Jayagovind

What is Art? Dictionary defines art as a creative skill, craftsmanship, talent, something which appeals to the sense of beauty and so on. But none of these definitions satisfy me as I firmly believe that art is beyond all these. It is an expression of the soul, which elevates both the artist and the audience and takes them closer to God. It brings out the best in a person, and it is this spiritual aspect which binds fine arts to religion. In Hindu pantheon we have many artist Gods. Music which floated down the flute of Lord Krishna could make the three worlds stand still. The cosmic dance of Nataraja, the Narthana Sundara, is the expression of Creation itself. Goddess Saraswathi is inseparable from her Veena and its melody.

Yet, somewhere the idea has crept in that art and the artist are outside the religious sphere. Hence quiet often I am faced with this question - Why does the Srimath hold such huge cultural shows? Why does it promote arts like Yakshagana?

The answer is simple. We have forgotten that dance and music are branches of Vedas. It was my good fortune to see how Sri Guruji used to interact with great dancers like Ms. Padma Subramanyam and Ms. Nirupama Rajendran on the nuances of classical dance. Sri Guruji would grasp all technical details of "thala and abhinaya". It was a treat to watch Sri Guruji enjoy the jugalbandhi of a Yakshagana artist like Shri Prabhakar Mantapa and Dr. Padma Subramanyam, who demonstrated the intricacies of foot work to the Guru whose lotus feet we adore.

At the function held in Bangalore, in honour of the Yakshagana artist Shri Dareshwar, Sri Guruji explained the connection between art, religion and life. His Holiness said that the artist and the audience are like two sides of the same coin. Both create the art together.

Further there is a similarity between an artist and a Guru. Both bring the people closer to God. Both of them refine the minds of people through instruction. Yakshagana brings a sense of total involvement in the audience which often a religious ritual like pooja may not do. The distinction between the artist, audience and the characters is lost. This concentration; oneness is another form of 'Advaita'. The society has to acknowledge the contribution of fine arts to life and religion. The GURUPEETHA is in the forefront to do so.

When an artist dons the role of Sri Rama or Sri Krishna, he makes them come alive on the stage. He depicts the great Avatars to ordinary people like us in a pleasing manner. Any instruction which is enjoyable will last long. Hence as long as we live, art will provide us pleasurable instruction and eliminate the baser instincts like violence and meanness in us. Then, art becomes religion because spirituality is meant for the elevation of man from the realm of animal to human and divine.

When someone asked the famous playwright George Bernard Shaw why he was a vegetarian, he replied, "Because I don't want to make my body a cemetery of dead animals." Our body should be temples, not graveyards. Become a Vegetarian!

Without Love and Spirituality – Nothing...

God asked, "What do you want in this modern society?" I said, "I need a lot of money. I want to buy good food, clothing, house, car and all the material comforts." God gave me a lot of it, I was comfortable.

God asked, "Do you need something more?" "I want a beautiful wife, good children, relatives and friends." God gave me all.

After some days, He again asked me, "Are you completely happy? Do you want anything more?" I said, "I want more education, intelligence and a better personality." He gave me those.

After sometime, God again asked, "Do you need anything else?" I asked for recognition and fame. I got them.

After a few months, I went back to Him and requested for Power, Influence, and Connections with politicians and bureaucracy. He gave me all those. Now I had everything to be happy and satisfied. I lived on.

He asked me after sometime, "Are you completely happy now?" I said "No." He asked, "What do you want now?" I said, "I need your closeness (Spirituality) and I need unconditional love from my family and friends."

This time He kept a condition: "Can you give something in exchange?" First, I agreed to give 50% of my wealth, influence, power, recognition. He asked for more...Ultimately, I agreed to give up everything I had, because without love and Spirituality, I found nothing was comforting me.

- Taken from 'Anmol Ratan', a collection of Good Thoughts by Shri Suresh Rath

BEAUTIFUL THOUGHTS

..... Suresh Oberoi

A rich King loved his fourth wife the most. He also loved his third wife, but whenever he faced any problem he confided in his second wife, and she helped him get through the difficult times. The King's first wife was very loyal and made great contributions in maintaining his wealth and kingdom. However, he did not love the first wife, although she loved him very deeply. He hardly took notice of her! One day, the King fell ill and knew his time was short. He thought, "I have four wives now, but when I die, I'll be all alone."

He asked the 4th wife, "I have loved you the most, endowed you with the finest clothing and took special care. Now that I'm dying, will you follow me and keep me company?" "No way!" she replied and walked away. Her answer broke his heart.

The sad King turned to his 3rd wife, "I have loved you all my life. Now that I'm dying, will you come with me?" "Not at all!" replied the 3rd wife. "Life is too good! I'm going to remarry after your death!" His heart sank further.

He then asked the 2nd wife, "I have always turned to you for help and you've been there for me. Will you follow me and be with me always, even after my death?" "I'm sorry, I can't help you out this time!" she replied. "The most I can do is walk with you to your grave." The King was devastated.

Then a voice called out: "I'll go with you. I'll follow you no matter where you go." The King looked up. It was his first wife. She looked so skinny due to malnutrition and neglect! The grieved king NOW took notice of her and regretted, "I should have taken better care of you when I had the chance."

In reality, we all have these four wives: Our 4th wife is our body. No matter how much time and effort we lavish in making it look good, it will desert us when we die. Our 3rd wife is our possessions, status and wealth. When we die, we cannot take any of it with us, instead it will then belong to others. Our 2nd wife is our family and friends. No matter how much they love us, the furthest they can stay by us is till the grave. And our 1st wife is our Soul; often neglected in pursuit of wealth, power and worldly pleasures. It is only our Soul that will follow us wherever we go. So, we must cultivate, strengthen and cherish it now, for it is the only part that will follow us throughout eternity!

"Soul is the only part that follows us throughout eternity" means that we are the SOUL ITSELF and not the body, not the relatives, not the wealth or Maya. Respecting the soul means, respecting the attributes, the qualities of the soul: Purity, love, power, peace, bliss, knowledge, joy and happiness. When we understand that we always say, "My hand, my heart, my head." (We never say I the hand, I the heart, I the head,) and realize, WHO IS THAT 'I' which says, "my hand, my heart my head," then we realise the qualities we have in our self: OUR-SELF. We have so many inbuilt powers!

Each person we are dealing with in our life is also a SOUL with a body, and not a BODY with a soul. We must treat everyone as a soul, with love, and accept that the other soul is also playing a PART in this DRAMA called LIFE. So from today, let's start believing that we are a peaceful, compassionate soul and BEHAVE like one. Other people, due to Agyan, Maya and illusion, do not understand that they are SOULS and not the body, so have compassion for them and accept them as they are, because they do not know the truth, and YOU know. They have come in your contact to be awakened. Wake them up (and yourself) slowly and gently, like you wake up your little baby!

JUST ONE QUESTION

...answered by Poojya Guruji

What does the 'Dande' (staff or stick) indicate in the thread ceremony? Why does the Vatu hold it?

Guruji's reply: Parents give their children many gifts in their lifetime. The most important and useful gift that the father can give his son, is the Upadesha of the Gayatri Mantra during the sacred thread ceremony. As I have said earlier, the Gayatri Mantra itself is so powerful that it works as a shield in the life of the child and protects him. Disciplined chanting of the Gayatri Mantra helps the child take the right decision at the right time in the right way. Just like the cowherd uses his staff to guide all the cattle on the right path, the 'Dande' or staff the boy holds is to remind the Vatu that he should guide his senses (Pancha Indriya) on the path towards Brahman. He should control his senses in such a way that his thoughts never wander on the wrong path, so that his mind is always applied towards his ultimate goal in life.

Log on to 'hareraama.in' to converse directly with Guruji and to be updated with the latest events in the Sri Matha

Long ago, thousands of years before the Western World woke up to enforcing environment-friendly measures, Indian Rishis and our sacred texts took many measures for the protection of the universe. They were so close to nature; they knew, loved and worshipped Mother Nature. Ancient Indian scriptures say we must plant 10 trees if, for any reason, we have to cut one. Today, our world is headed for an imminent environmental disaster or destruction simply because the knowledge in our Vedas, Puranas and many, such priceless treasures have been buried under layers of ignorance, waiting to be discovered.

Today Ancient Indian texts have become a matter of ridicule to many “modernized” people, who are unaware of the relevance and significance behind them. Hindus worship cows, plants, trees, water, rains, mountains, the wind, the Sun and everything in Nature; Nature itself. Why? Because, our ancestors knew that if something is delegated to the status of God, it will never be disrespected or left uncared for. Hence they taught their descendants to worship and respect every single aspect of their life that affects them in some way or the other. One simply has to understand the medicinal properties of the tulsi herb, for example, to understand why Hindus love and worship Tulsi Mata and nurture her in their homes. Similarly, if someone tries to understand the relevance of our ancient Indian books and rituals, they will realize the deep knowledge hidden in them.

Our Vedas, Puranas, and Stotras are very relevant even in today's times. For example, the Dashavatara or the ten Avatars of Vishnu, mentioned in our Puranas, can be equated to the concept of Evolution! Lord Vishnu's avatars of Matsya, Kurma, Varaha, Narasimha, Vamana, Parshurama, Rama, Krishna, Buddha and Kalki, can also be said to be the stages in which humans evolved. The first life forms were said to be aquatic (only living in water - Matsya), then amphibian (both water and land- Kurma), then land species – (Varaha.), then half-animal, half-human (Narasimha). The earliest Humans were short in build (Vamana), then evolving to stronger warrior-agriculturists (Parshurama). The avatars of Rama(idealist) and Krishna(strategist) signify mind development. We then came to an era of spiritual awakening (Buddha) and the avatar of Kalki in the Kali Yuga, the age we live in. Now doesn't all this put more light on what Dashavatara symbolizes?

Ancient India's contribution to knowledge of Astronomy is also immense. Did you know that our Vedas and Indian Astronomical texts had proclaimed that the Earth is round? Or that Indians calculated with precision the occurrence of eclipses, Circumference and Diameter of Earth and the Speed of light? The Ancient Indians were highly advanced in the fields of Science, Astrology, Palmistry, Alchemy, Philosophy, Spirituality and many more. They had mastered the art of Meditation and Mind Control too. Amazing!

Our epics and texts have within them, immense wisdom, and we hope to bring to you the essence of these texts through our newsletter. We will discuss in our future issues some very interesting texts and books in this journey towards discovering the wisdom in our Ancient Indian Texts, our National Treasures !

A Freedom Movement Of Another Kind.... www.gougram.org

From time immemorial, Bharath, the land of the holy Himalayas and Ganges woke up to the call of the cow. 'Amba' is the sweet call of love which filled the days with joy. But lo, today the call is fading, dying and is becoming a thing of past. The picture of the happy cow grazing on the meadow, the calf frisking around, the bulls walking majestically on the village lanes and streets, the bonding between the farmer and the oxen, these scenes cooled one's eyes and warmed one's heart. Then there was meaning and poetry in life.

The Cow was so intertwined into the fabric of life. It gave us food; it took us from place to place; it healed the mind and body; it was a treasure house of wealth. It also assumed the role of a warrior when occasion demanded. All these functions of the cow are relevant even today. But we have forgotten its significance in this age of plastic, when milk means, white sachets at our door steps every morning.

We palm off our responsibility by transporting the cows which have stopped giving milk, the male calves and the old oxen to the slaughter houses. At the time of Independence we had 77 breeds of Indian indigenous cows. Today only 33 of these precious breeds remain and varieties like Amrith Mahal, Red Sindhi, Krishna, Vechure, Punganoor are in very small numbers. The main reason for this state of affairs is the greed of man who wants quick money. He wants to become rich over night. As a result farms have become dumping ground for chemical fertilizers, food has turned toxic, and the farmers reel under the burden of loans and seek solution in suicide. Added to this is the environmental exploitation and ecological imbalance. We have to live in a world of polluted air, water, land and mind also. Global warming and technological waste are threatening us. The only ray of hope at this juncture is to return to the ways of our ancestors – The cow centred way of life.

The Vishwa Mangala Gou Grama Yathra marked the beginning of a righteous war and strengthened this hope of an auspicious life to our country and the world. It brought the message of joy and prosperity to the villages and the farmer, through the cow. The guiding spirit behind this great movement, Shree Shree Raghaveshwara Bharathi Swamiji, has dedicated His whole life to the cause of the cow. All the spiritual leaders of the nation lent support to this socio-economic revival of Bharath. All cow lovers came under the banner of this movement.

The war does not end with the Yatra. This movement goes on! Let us make this a true freedom movement. We need to revive the cow-centred villages, to reap the benefit of panchagavya, and we must remember to not consider the cow as just a milking machine. When we go back to the cow, the land will become free of chemicals, the food will be free of poison, gobar gas will light the villages and puts the farmer and the village on the path of sustainable development. **This is true freedom!**

Vande Gou Matharam!

- taken from the official website of Vishwa Mangala Gou Grama Yathra

Confucius, the famous Chinese philosopher said, "If you think in terms of a year, plant a seed; if in terms of ten years, plant trees; if in terms of 100 years, teach the people." These words itself underline the importance of one of the most respected professions in the world – Teaching. In India, we variously call our teachers as Guru or Acharya, the most respected of our elders.

Let us see what Teaching involves. The highest function of the teacher consists not so much in imparting knowledge as in stimulating the pupil in its love and pursuit. Even though often less acknowledged, the importance of a good teacher is enormous. They play a vital role in the overall development of the students. Not only are they responsible for imparting academic knowledge, but are also responsible for inculcating the right values and principles to their students. The importance of teachers is especially enormous during the formative years of children when they first join school.

In teaching others we teach ourselves. To be a good teacher, one has to research the topic for teaching, present it in an interesting way and follow up with the student till the student understands and absorbs the lesson. Therefore it is very important to have professionally qualified teachers to ensure the right development of students. At present there are several colleges and institutes offering Teacher's Training Courses in India.

Since the needs of the primary students are different from the secondary students, the primary teachers and secondary teachers are required to take up different teacher's training courses. Therefore there are different teacher's training institutes offering Basic training certificate (BTC) junior basic training (JBT), Diploma in Education (D.Ed), Primary teachers training (PTT), Bachelor in Education (B.Ed) and several other teachers's training courses. This apart, for teaching in Colleges, one has to have done the Masters in the required subject and/or has to have done the PhD in the required subject.

Lest one think that teaching is restricted to schools and colleges, please note the varied new age careers in teaching – Personality development, Image consultancy, Seminars held in developing camaraderie and team work at work places, Talks held for increasing Sales & Earnings, etc. etc. Every person aims at becoming better at work or in their personal lives and sometimes has to take the help of somebody else in achieving their aims. That somebody is his / her Teacher. If true Education starts at the Cradle and ends at the Grave, then being taught too is the ultimate reality of life. And the Sadguru who takes us away from the Darkness (of ignorance) and leads us to the Light (the Ultimate Truth) of our Lives, is the Ultimate Teacher.

This column aims at shedding light on the various professions / careers that one can take up. Your feedback and suggestions to improve on this column, is widely appreciated. Anyone can also contribute to this column.

Future belongs to those who believe in the "Beauty of Dreams"

.... Saumya Bansal

Dreams have always been a mystery to us. The stuff of legends, myth and fairy tale, dreams have always fascinated mankind. We can learn much from our dreams, if we only but listen with a trained ear. There is a certain degree of intuition, coupled with logic and a working knowledge of dreaming involved though.

Everybody dreams but very few try to achieve them. We ourselves should believe in our dreams; only then others will understand them. The strength comes from the "Ability to Dream" and the "Willingness to Achieve" them. Dreams need not be big. It becomes challenging when we try to achieve them. That makes them big and it makes us become great from being just good. The journey will obviously be difficult but then it's worth it as the contentment on achieving them is not comparable.

To see these dreams we don't need to sleep, they can strike anytime, anywhere. But yes, definitely sleepless nights will be needed to achieve them. "Dream" is a small word but it takes ages to achieve it. We spend years running after it, sacrifice many things, but when we it is met; it is only for a few days or minutes that we can actually enjoy it, because success is not everlasting. Thus, while dreams are in process of achievement, other important factors of life should not be neglected.

God will know it

..... from Gururji's blog

A tourist once visited a temple under construction where he saw a sculptor making an idol of God. Suddenly he noticed a similar idol lying nearby. Surprised, he asked the sculptor, "Do you need two statues of the same idol?" "No," said the sculptor without looking up, "We need only one, but the first one got damaged at the last stage." The gentleman examined the idol and found no apparent damage. "Where is the damage?" he asked. "There is a scratch on the nose of the idol." said the sculptor, still busy with his work. "Where are you going to install the idol?"

The sculptor replied that it would be installed on a pillar twenty feet high... "If the idol is that far, who is going to know that there is a scratch on the nose?" The sculptor stopped his work, looked up at the gentleman, smiled and said, "God will know it."

YOUR RESPONSES

SETU has been doing a fantastic job. You have helped build a SETU (bridge) between the Matha and its Disciples through SETU. Your hard work is really worth appreciating. Setu is full of knowledge and relevance to the work of Shree Shree Swamiji. In the editorial of this months (July) Setu you have explained the importance of Gurupurnima and Chaturmas. Please keep up the good work. I also request you to include the following address in your mailing list:

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....Raghavendra Bhat (Mumbai)

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To,

Disclaimer: All views and opinions expressed in the newsletter are those of the respective writers alone.

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