

# SATSANG



## Charaiveti, Charaiveti

by Navendu Tripathi

How does one write about a walk which has covered almost 3000 kilometers and has lasted for almost 200 days?

There are only two words that come to mind for this walk which started from Kanyakumari and is intended all the way to Kashmir: Charaiveti, Charaiveti. That is: keep walking, keep walking.

But where does one find the indomitable spirit at the age of 66 to lead a 7500 km walk and walk relentlessly in the scorching summer sun, across all kinds of terrain and weather hazards? Perhaps this spirit, is the universal spirit which shapes people like Sri M once in a millenium for higher purposes like Manav Ekta, Human Unity, for the benefit of mankind.

In its wake so far, the Walk has passed through 4 states and perhaps over 200-300\* villages/towns/cities meeting people speaking Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada, Marathi and countless dialects and all the varied faiths practiced in India. Religious and political leaders from different faiths have joined the walk at various stages. Chief Ministers of all states passed so far have personally welcomed Sri M and some have walked with him. Maharashtra has gone to the extent of declaring him a state guest. MPs, MLAs, Administrative Officials and local leaders have walked and supported the walk in all ways possible. The most amazing experience is the manner in which the people of our land, the masses- have embraced Sri M and the ideals of this walk with open arms. They have welcomed him as a guest or even as a demi-god with aratis at various places.

People line up to meet and greet him along the walk every single day. At many places the local musicians/drummers have welcomed him and lead the walk with all their pomp and glory in the wake.

Sri M in turn has embraced the local cultural and religious nuances of every place he has touched. Not only has he visited every temple/samadhi, mosque/darghah, church, gurudwara, synagogue, math/ashram and all other religious institutions along the way, he has also spoken in the local language where he could and dressed up like locals to be a part of them. So while he sports a traditional Marathi 'phe-ta' right now, he has also dressed in various traditional gears of Karnataka and Kerala along the way.

He has even met and addressed transgenders and convicts in jails and all the various other sections of society to highlight the essential unity of all humankind. The visual montage of the walk so far is also as diverse and colourful as the Indian landscape and its culture. Rivers, hills, lakes, fields, sun, rain, metros, cities, towns, villages. dhotis, lungis, sarees, headgears of all shapes and sizes and yet an underlying unity which makes all of them connect instantly with the purpose of the walk and Sri M.

Worthy of mention are also those who have left everything behind literally to walk along with Sri M along the way. This group of 60 odd people include retired DGPs and corporate honchos, some young men and women who felt this walk was more important than their jobs (which they willingly quit) to join this walk. The

great-grandson of Mahatma Gandhi, Sri Krishna Kulkarni is one of the people walking all the way. According to him, "I am taking part in this Padayatra mainly for two reasons. One I always wanted to connect with my great grandfather about whom I have heard a lot from my grandmother and mother. Another reason why I am on this Yatra is to find out what has kept our country united despite so much diversity in cultures and various other spheres. No scholar or a book authoritatively provided answers to my queries. So, I wanted to experience firsthand the unity in diversity in this great country by myself during this journey with my teacher, Sri M." (Interview with Bangalore Mirror - <http://www.bangaloremirror.com/bangalore/others/A-Gandhis-walking-across-the-nation-will-you-be-there/articleshow/46488435.cms>).

Shri Ajay Singhji, the retired DGP of Karnataka, who now sports a beard like Sri M, has been walking alongside him with a smile on his face, keeping him company and waiting on his every word. His wife, Mrs. Tara Singhji- a retired IAS officer has also walked alongside every step. And such is the story of each of those 60 odd blessed individuals who have chosen to walk with Sri M all the way.

The two highpoints of the walk have perhaps been the flagoff at Kanyakumari and Vivekananda Rock Memorial attended by various dignitaries and the walk through Bangalore which again attracted huge crowds and celebrities from various fields of art.

Also, in some small towns such as Ma-



dikeri, the whole town seemed to have joined the walk with all their energy and zest.

What is most important though is the message Sri M and the walk has been trying to share wherever they have passed through. Here is an excerpt from one of the satsangs,

“Each one sees only one perspective and concludes the Truth from that whereas the essence is vast and infinite. The central Truth is so expansive and encompassing

that when it is understood, there can be no quarrel. Truth is all-inclusive. Religion is one’s personal experience and it is important to live one’s life without impinging on the others’ right to their own faith.”

While many have come forward with financial contributions and yet others have physically volunteered to organize the walk, it would be a once in a lifetime opportunity to walk even a few steps for this noble cause and with such a noble soul.

In his appeal, Sri M has said, “I invite you

to join me in the Walk of Hope for peace and harmony. You can join at any place or time, depending on your availability. Come, be a part of this soul-seeking journey across India. Let’s walk together, hand in hand, for a united and inclusive India.” With 5000\* kilometers and 7 states still to cross, there is enough opportunity for every soul out there who wishes to witness and be a part of history in making.





# Sri M's Address to Sportspersons in Pune

Salaam. Nandan just said that it is a privilege to have me here. For me, it is a privilege to be here. Thank you for inviting me. It is a beautiful campus. I have come here before and this is the kind of surroundings that universities should have where there are trees and the environment is so good. Also, it is a privilege for us padayatris to have such sportspersons who are sitting here with us, such as Smt Anjali Bhagwat and Chandrashekhar. Nandan Bal himself is quite a star in the tennis field. I must not forget to tell you Padmashri Pralahdji Tipanya from Madhya Pradesh, one of the greatest Kabir singers in the folk style and Sri Ram Dasji who is an exceptional tabla player are also here with us. And, also all the people who helped me hit a ball on the tennis court.

I want to start with a little story. When Swami Vivekananda was travelling abroad, in a small little town near Philadelphia, he saw a group of students trying their hand at target shooting. There was a rubber duck floating on the water and they were supposed to shoot at a small spot on its wing – you know it can't be easy because it was moving, and the experts were trying their best. And, Swamiji seeing them from a distance went to them and said, can I try? They asked, do you know how to shoot; have you ever shot a gun? Swamiji said, no, teach me how to shoot. They said okay and they instructed him – hold the gun on your shoulder, fix the target and shoot. It must have been an air gun. So, he took the gun, fixed a pellet, spotted the target and shot. He was the first man to shoot the target. How did he do it? When they asked him that, he said, it is the secret of Yoga. When you say yoga, it is not only doing asanas. Yoga is bringing about a calm, quiet, concentrated state of mind. From the point of view of yoga, concentration is not straining, it is relaxing. When you are concentrating, you are completely relaxed. When a Yogi is meditating, if you put those instruments on the head and check the waves, you will find that the waves are very calm. There is calmness and a state where there is no tension or stress. When there is tension or stress, one often misses the target.

The definition of yoga is *chittavritti nirodha*. There is a big controversy on what yoga is nowadays. I was speaking to someone and he said he likes yoga but he cannot do it because he has a problem with the belief system. I told him – look, if you go to a doctor and he says do some yoga, will you die because of your belief system? These are silly things. Yoga makes your body fit, it makes the mind calm. And above all, it makes your mind work. It does not stun your mind. On the contrary, it sharpens the mind. If you think a mind that relaxes is a dull mind, you are completely wrong. You know if I say this thing you might think that I am boasting, but I am not, it is a fact. I am 66 years old now. We have been walking from Kanyakumari and are walking towards Kashmir. We have finished 2700 Kilometers. We have been walking – this is a padayatra, not a rathayatra. When I started many people asked me, how will you do it? Now, we have covered 2700 kilometers. Believe me, I am doing well. My fellow padayatris are also okay. There are knee pains and leg pains – but everyone has those. Even when you who play tennis and you are tired, you rest and then, start again. What do you do? You rest and you move forward again. Some people have doubts; they say it is madness to walk like this. But it is a deliberate attempt. At the age of twelve, I started practising yoga. I practice half an hour to forty five minutes every day. Of course, there is diet. Also, one should not get lost in the 'eternal' spirit that comes in bottles and so on. If you take a few precautions in your diet and then do yoga, it will do one much good.

One will move forward on the path of Yoga towards its ultimate aim – spiritual fulfillment. But, for the time being, let us leave that out. Now, the definition of Yoga according to Yoga Sutras, is Yoga *chittavritti nirodha* – getting rid of distractions of the mind. There is no harm in having positive thoughts. It is getting rid of the distractions, the negative thoughts that take the mind up and down and making the mind completely calm. It starts with the physical, one must be physically healthy. Unless one is physically healthy, one cannot sit even for 2 minutes. One must be able to sit with

an erect spine; all the Yogasanas are either bending forward or bending backward. One should sit steady without the back support. In fact, I get uncomfortable if there is a back support.

If you sit straight, I assure you, your spine will turn out to be first class. Do exercises that are good for your spine. Yoga is also good for your endocrine system – the ductless glands that are in the system.

There is an asana called the Matsayasana which massages the adrenal glands in the system. Adrenaline is the hormone that controls fight or flight response. When you practice Matsayasana, you will be able to control this so that when you go home and your wife has not put enough salt in the food, you don't blow up (laugh)! Yoga is a way of controlling this.

You have the thyroid glands here. There is a lock called Jalandhar bandhana that gives a beautiful massage to the thyroid glands. If anybody has what is spondylitis – it is not so easy to get it out, but you can try it. We have what is called the Simhasana. If you do it at home, please warn someone or they may think that something has gone wrong with you. Start with standing on all fours and put your tongue out – the tongue-out actions automatically massages the neck – and roll your eyes as if you are a lion just about to spring on the prey. In Simhasana, you make a noise, like sucking the air in – don't worry; they make such noises in karate also.

Now, I will go onto the mind. Rishi in Sanskrit means a scientist; if the word Rishi only had a religious connotation, nobody would have called Vatsayana, who wrote the Kamasutra, a Rishi. Rishi means one who examines, one who studies, in any field. Einstein can be called a Rishi. Like this, Marx can also be called a Rishi; right or wrong, he studied and spent all his time studying.

So, Rishis were those who did experiments. The rishis did an experiment, they studied the breath. They found out that when the mind was quiet the breath was calm. On the other hand when one was agitated, the breath too was very agitated, and erratic. The Rishis said that if there is a connection between mind and breath, is it possible to bring about a change in

the mind by changing the breath? This started off the experiments in Pranayama. According to Yoga, when the mind is calm and undistracted, this is called dharana. Meditation – dhyana is simply an extension of dharana.

There is a simple one which I think is useful to everyone, including sportspersons. Before you start a game, before you play a game, if you practice this for ten fifteen minutes, you will find that your concentration will improve. This is not to say that you should meditate while playing. In Yoga, there is something called Pratyahara. It is doing one thing at a time. You all know what will happen if one meditates while one is driving. This is not medi-

tation. Meditation is not being in some vague kind of space.

I am going to tell you a simple technique which can help everyone. Don't worry, it is free, there are no cheques to sign. This is what is called in our tradition as 'hum sa'. You can sit down anywhere – here, under a tree, anywhere. Sit down and take in a deep breath slowly. Breath is something that we pay no attention to. Food and water you can live without for some time, but breath you cannot live without for even one minute. And it is something we pay least attention to. What you do for a change is pay attention to it. Give the respect it deserves. When you breathe in, follow your breath in your mind. Hold for

half a second and exhale. Give complete attention to it. Do this practice for about five to ten minutes with complete attention. For that time put away everything else; the thoughts will not be there because the breath is being watched. Do that for ten, fifteen minutes and then go about doing whatever you need to do.

So, thank you very much for listening to me and I hope you understand the benefits of these practices. The more your practice, the more perfect it becomes.

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti!

# Visit to Alandi

*Journal of Hope, Day 182 : 12th July, 2015*

**T**oday was a special day for Walk of Hope for it reached Alandi. This town on the banks of the Indrayani River, is a pilgrimage spot, quite well known as the place where the 13th century saint, Sant Jyanesvar gained his samadhi. Born in the year 1271, Sant Jyanesvar was a saint, poet, philosopher and yogi of the Nath tradition – the same tradition that Sri M belongs to. His commentary on the Bhagavad Gita called 'Jyanesvari', and the outpouring of his devotion to God and all the great saints called 'Amrutanubhava', are considered to be milestones in Marathi spiritual literature. In the months of June and July, there is a 'palkhi procession' that carries Sant Gyanesvar's sandals (symbolically) in a Palkhi (carriage) that starts from Alandi to reach Pandharpur on Ashadhi Ekadashi. This 150 km procession, covered by foot, is joined by hundreds and thousands of Varkari devotees. This big festival in Alandi is held every year on Kartika Vadya Ekadashi (eleventh day of the dark fortnight of Hindu month of Kartik) close to the day Sant Gyanesvar entered Samadhi and is attended by devotees in huge numbers.

WOH reached a few days after the Varkari yatra had left to Pandharpur and Alandi was still teeming with people. The banks on the river Indrayani were a hive of activity. Some people were taking a dip, some sitting quietly and many were washing

their clothes. Despite an average footfall of near six lacs during the time of Palkhi yatra, the Dakshinamukhi temple was clean and very well kept. There are narrow cobblestone roads that go all around the temple surrounded by shops that sell uniform ware – variations of prayer beads, white and yellow-coloured sweetmeats, articles of worship such as red kumkum (vermilion powder considered holy) and tulsi leaves.

There are vendors squatting in nooks and corners selling more of the same. At every turn, there is someone to apply a holy mark made of sandalwood paste. The sky is blotted with electric lines running here and there. The air is heavy with fragrance of sweets and myriad scents. There is a constant din of untraceable noise, of people talking and whispering, of hawkers selling their goods, of vehicles moving. Hundreds of people move through these narrow streets every day, so the stone on the walls are worn around their edges and have become silken smooth.

A special darshan was organised for the padayatris and they were led, one by one, into the two feet by two feet space that has Sant Jyanesvar's samadhi. Padayatris felt very grateful because the queues were unimaginably long, winding around the temple many times and one would normally have to wait for hours to get a darshan. After darshan, which took about an hour, the yatris sat quietly with Sri M in a small

hall next to the samadhi for half an hour! Following this, the walkers left for a town walk in Shirur. As it entered the town, about 40 young workers joined the walk. The three-kilometre walk through the small town lasted an hour or so. After that, the yatris were welcomed at the Ram Mandir by a special group of about 60 to 70 people. The reception was special because it was organised jointly by the local Muslim and Hindu communities. Leaders from both the communities welcomed Sri M and the padayatris. Sri M offered prayers at the temple and performed aarti. After a quick refreshment break, Sri M addressed the gathering briefly.

"Namaskar and Salaam to all of you. I do not feel like saying too many things. These days, I have stopped speaking and I walk more. This walk is our talk. This is because many people talk on the stage but do not do anything.

We thought that we will walk for Manav Ekta. The message is this, be it a man or a woman, the person is born of a mother's womb. In the span between birth and death, this whole circus goes on. If it is like this, why is it that we fight? Why can we not live with love towards other beings?

This land is the land of saints. From Sant Gyaneshwar, from Tukaram – you read the works of any saint – they say that we are all One. They say that the Supreme Being is within. This the Sufis call Khuda ka



noor— the jewel of the Beloved within the heart. If this is within everyone, then what is the violence for?

Yes, there can be difference of opinions, a difference in religions, a difference in ideologies, in name and in many other things. But we are all human beings first. When there is violence, the pain that is felt in this home is the same pain felt in the other's home. People know this but they forget this sometimes for many reasons. This is our message.

For this, we have been walking from Kanyakumari. We are doing this padayatra to tell people – do not forget this; whatever happens, do not forget that you are human beings. Walking is nothing new here, Varkaris walk every year. That too is a message of humanity and oneness. They walk with great devotion. Whenever I see Varkaris, I say to them that you are with our padayatra too – you are walking that side, we are walking in another direction – both are movements.

We are all one – this is my experience. When Babaji's hand was placed on my head, I had this experience that we are all One, there is no difference. Man and woman are maybe different on the outside but the soul is the same for both of them; at the level of soul, there is no difference. With this thought, we are walking. We have covered 2800 Kilometres. People ask me that in this era of jet planes, why are you walking? I say to them that throughout the

ages when any good work was done, it was done by walking on the ground. That is why we too are walking.

I feel, this is my faith, this is our belief, that a seed will be planted in the heart of human beings. This seed will, in time, grow into a strong tree; its fruits will be peace and harmony and its fragrance will be love. India will become strong this way. As is said, Loka Samasta Sukhinoh Bhavantu, will also happen. 5000 Kilometres are still left. I have faith that in April 2016, we will reach Srinagar. If it is God's will, we will reach there.

What am I to say more than this? This is all I have to say. I am happy we came here to this small place. I feel very happy that you welcomed us with so much love. Is there a Church here? We want to go there with everyone. It is my faith that the padayatra will reach Kashmir. Janaki Nath sahaya kare jab; Kaun bigad kare nar tero – When Ram is on your side, who can cause you harm?

(Speaking to a person who had requested Sri M to say a few words on meditation) “You asked me to speak about meditation. I invite you to Shirdi and Nashik where we will have a special Satsang for this. Please read my autobiography and ‘Jewel in the Lotus’. We can meet later and discuss these things. I want to say this one thing. If there is any prayer, be it in the form of worship, or devotional singing, or meditation. Or be it in the form of Namaz.

Namaz is from the Persian language and not from the Arabic language. It comes from the word Namahand means to bow down or surrender. What does someone who does Namaz do? He bows his head down and comes up, bows down and comes up, and he keeps on doing this. I want to say that if you do any work, if you do anything, do not forget remembering the Lord. Do this daily for half an hour to one hour. What will happen this way is that whatever work you do, the hand of God will be on your head. If anything does not go right, know that it is God's doing – there is a lesson in it for you – so that you learn from it and become better.” Following this address, the padyatris walked another two kilometres to a satsangi's residence. Many yatris had a very pleasant surprise waiting for them— everyone in the building had simply opened their homes for them. 10 -15 of them rested in each home. Those who stayed here had moved out to make space for the padyatris. People from the neighbourhood pitched in and helped organize food and comforts for the yatris. In their experience, simple people have only love to share in abundance. There was no Satsang in the evening so everyone spent the rest of the day at leisure after lunch.

*Journal of Hope is a daily record of the padayatra published on [www.walkofhope.in](http://www.walkofhope.in)*

Sant Jnaneshwar Samadhi Mandir





# Nirahar Satyagraha

5th July, 2015

On 5th July 2015 Sri M observed a day-long fast, Nirahar Satyagraha – Aatankvaad Aur Himsa Ke Khilaf ( Against Terrorism and Violence ) at Shaniwarwada, an 18th century historic fort in Pune, the seat of the Peshwa rulers of the Maratha Empire. This is hoped to be the beginning of a movement to spread awareness against terrorism and violence. The ‘Nirahar Satyagraha’ is based on the defining principle of ‘Satyagraha’ (polite insistence on Truth) that peacefully claimed India’s right to independence and self-determination during the freedom struggle. It is about exercising the non-violent force of truth to bring attention to the evils of terrorism and communal violence that undermines the social fabric of the society. ‘Nirahar Satyagraha’ and Walk of Hope have a common objective: both seek a significantly restored nation—fit enough to be bequeathed to our future generations.

The initiative expresses solidarity with victims of terrorism and communal violence and seeks to ameliorate their cause. It contests negative tendencies creating divisions between people of different faiths, which can go to the extent of encouraging, organizing and committing atrocities. It resolves to resist any individual or collec-

tive act of encouraging, organizing and committing atrocities.

The ‘Nirahar Satyagraha’ supports positive dialogue between religions of India and aims for an atmosphere of interfaith harmony. It seeks to ratify the principles of tolerance and respect for the other that is deeply entrenched in all the religions. This conforms to the Manav Ekta Mission’s core philosophy that humanity, regardless of differences, is built on the foundation of peace.

Sri M believes there is a need to pause and reflect on the way we live our lives; the need to walk away from non-conviction and misplaced faith leading to terrorism and violence carried out in the name of religion. Each one of us can make a difference. We are the architects of our lives and our society. Sri M had also announced earlier that, as the walk proceeds, many ‘Nirahar Satyagrahas’ would be organized at prominent locations along the route with the first one being held at Pune.

The act of collective fasting is expected to act as a catalyst to raise awareness and understanding—for humanity to live together peacefully. Everywhere, people are generally predisposed to peace and harmony and the ‘Nirahar Satyagraha’ seeks to manifest this—inspiring acceptance,

reconciliation and respect for diversity in each individual.

The Satyagraha, led by Sri M as a symbolic protest movement against Terrorism and Violence; towards unity, peace and interfaith harmony had around 3000 people participating with him. The event was also attended by various dignitaries.

A list of dignitaries who attended the event among others included – Sri Dattaji Dhankawde ( Mayor, Pune Municipal Corporation )

Sri Anil Shirole ( MO, Pune City )

Sri. Vijay Kale ( MLA, Shivajinagar )

Smt Medha Kulkarni

Sri Shamsuddin Tamboli

Sri Vishwanath Karad, Chairman, MIT

Sri Ghaisas Guruji

Sri Ezekiel Isaac Malekar

Sri Atulji Limaye

Sri Kishor Chavan

Sri Shardrao Kunte

Sri Pratima Joshi

Smt Lata Shrikhande

Sri Nirmal Shembekar

Pastor Dr Justus Devdas – Ex. Vice Chancellor, Spicer Adventist University

Smt Pritsudhaji Maharajsaheb – Sanskar Bharti, Mataji Maharajsaheb

Smt Nikhat Khan – Indian film producer



Sri M addressing the gathering before starting Nirahar Satyagraha



Breaking the fast



# WE ARE TWO YEARS OLD!

*By Dr. Priyamvada, Programme Manager, Satsang Swasthya Kendra.*

**S**atsang Swasthya Kendra was conceptualized with an intention of creating a project which offers education regarding health in preventive, curative and promotive aspects. Apart from rendering basic allopathic care, it also follows AYUSH (Ayurvedic) modality of treatment. These services are completely free of cost and are aimed at providing quality healthcare to Satsang Vidyalaya students, staff and surrounding tribal settlement (Sugali Thanda). Sri M inaugurated and blessed this centre on 9th March, 2013. It is a matter of great pride that

Phase-I of the Swasthya Kendra is now complete. It has an allopathic wing with specialists like ophthalmologist, cardiologist, dermatologist, dentists, and gynecologist rendering their services. It also has a fully functioning Ayurvedic Wing which was inaugurated on 19th December, 2014 along with the Swasthya Kendra's dental wing.

Coinciding with the start of Walk of Hope on 12th Jan, 2015, yoga classes were initiated at Swasthya Kendra. There are three batches one in the morning and two in the evening. With the seva of dedicated staff

and visiting consultants Swasthya Kendra has completed two successful years. Till date about 18063 patients have benefitted and more than 250 chronic care cases are receiving continued care.

Additional Programs like Rural Outreach, Support Group Meetings, Periodic Investigations etc, are being undertaken. We request your continued good wishes for this project that is close to Sri M's heart. Volunteering, Sponsorships and donations are very welcome.



Exercise demonstration at Rural Outreach Camp



Child from a rural school operated through facilitation by Swasthya Kendra



1st International Yoga Day at Madanapalle



Training in Ayurvedic techniques by Dr. Kalpana Moghe



# Nine Memorable Years Of PGS

*By Mrs. Sunanda Ali, Principal, The Peepal Grove School*

The Peepal Grove School has completed nine years. In these nine years, both students and teachers have learnt that lessons can be fun, stimulating and demanding. All at the same time. Teachers try out different methods, while always trying to ensure that each student is catered to. They know that all students do not learn at the same pace, but the school does try to ensure that all students are constantly upgrading their skills and adding to their knowledge. Extra-curricular activities ( games, music,

dance, yoga, kalaripayattu, art, craft) are offered after classes and students benefit from attending them. However, they also enjoy lessons where they get the opportunity to express their understanding of concepts through mime, songs, skits, drawing, painting, oral or power- point presentations. Rote- learning is not encouraged and students are expected to challenge teachers with questions which try to go beyond the syllabus.

Classrooms are dynamic spaces with room for discussions and debates. Reflection and introspection is also encouraged and

by learning to live together, students learn life-skills like collaboration and conflict resolution. Visitors frequently offer workshops in different areas. The school welcomes students, and adults who are interested in deeper aspects of living and learning.

Adults who are interested in being part of this community for short periods can contribute in different ways. The school, located in verdant surroundings, away from city life, offers a holistic lifestyle. All in all, a memorable nine years.



If you think about it, it's actually very sad. All of us are wrapped up in our own lives; we don't even stop to think that- hey, if the earth finally does end...then we're going to end too. We're going to die along with it too. Wouldn't it be better if we paid a bit more attention to earth now? Than worry and panic when we're dying along with it?

We don't all have to be big eco-friendly people, we could do small things. After all- small things make a difference too. We could start at home, avoid using plastic bags; don't leave the lights, fans, AC's, TV and electronic devices switched on unless you really need them; to make sure you close the taps properly...haven't we all learned this in the best boarding schools in India? Don't we see it in magazines and websites under "how to not kill your planet?" section? And yet, why don't we do it? Simple: we don't care.

What's the point? We're all going to die anyways. Why should I do it? One person won't make a difference. It's not cool (believe me I know people who think that way). So what? Let it die, it'll only die in a few decades and I won't be here to see it (Seriously?).

I'm too busy.

So let me get this straight, we don't want to do anything to save the land we live on...because....of the above reasons? Let the planet die because we're too busy thinking about only ourselves? Well here's an interesting fact: this planet is your home! Earth dies, you die. 50 years from now, I'm sure most of us will be alive and things are going to be very different. There won't be parks, no trees, and no lakes- you know why?

Because they're not going to last that long with these conditions! We may plant trees, hundreds of them but if the weather's too hot- say a 105 degrees and we all have to wear these crazy suits just to step outside our houses, the trees will not survive! Neither will lakes, ponds, oceans and any other water bodies. Already towards the 'polar' regions, the ice is melting- big time! Because of the heat. Global warming. We're not going to have enough water to even brush our teeth in the future! You can forget about bathing for sure!

Oh I forgot we probably won't have food either. Yep. You see we live in a world where everything and everyone is inter-dependant on something else. So the plants, meat, grains, everything we consume will

also be dead. See the livestock won't survive long because we won't be able to feed them let alone ourselves. So all your KFC, Barbecue wings etc are gone. No more of that. Then plants need water to grow and various other factors of course. But if we don't have water to drink, how can we spare water for plants? And if plants don't have water they can't grow, and so- no plants. No food. We'll be living on calcium, vitamin A B C D tablets. Sound tasty? I don't think so.

that what you want?

To live in a place where you don't have enough water to even drink? Where you have to wear suits to go out and walk around with oxygen masks just to step outside? Where the land is barren and brown? Where there is no food? Trust me, this is what's going to happen in fifty years or so IF we don't stop our own lives just for a minute, and look around the place where we're living: It's dying.

By Gowri Rekha  
Student of Class 12  
The Peepal Grove School



# The Ode to Hari - Part II

*Translation and Commentary by Vijay Chandra*

**H**ari Nama Keerthanam is a devotional and philosophical text in Malayalam. Its title translates into English as 'The Song of the Holy Name Hari'. It was composed by Thunchaththu Ramanujan Ezhuthachan in Kerala around the 16th century and is immensely popular for its lyrical and devotional quality. This poem is also much loved by Sri M who often quotes the verses during his talks. This is a beautiful translation and commentary by Sh. Vijay Chandra. Part 1 of this was included in the previous newsletter)

3. Oh the blissful, oh the merrifol  
I, the ego let me not feel,  
If at all I feel the 'I'  
Let 'I' be all and everything  
Help me to see the all in all,  
Giver of boon, Hari Narayana.

The Lord is not only blissful, but full of merriment also. The allusion here is to the various games (leelas) of Krishna, especially with the maidens (gopikas) of Vrindavan. In fact, the word in the original text is gopikaramana or one who made the gopikas happy. Many question the propriety of gods making merry with their consorts and indulging in human like activities of pleasure seeking. The Hindu Gods are a projection of human nature. They encompass everything. It is a telling lesson to the ordinary mortals that one need not forsake all the worldly things to attain the higher Self. There are many examples of holy men who continued to live with their consorts while pursuing a spiritual path. This also emphasises the basic plurality of Hinduism. Everything is laid before you. There is no one path. You have to choose what is best for you. Here a proper Guru can help you.

The prayer is to remove the ego, that is, the feeling of I, or ahamkara in Sanskrit. It is this feeling that is the root cause of our sorrow. But if this 'I' is merged with all that is apparently outside the 'I' then sorrow end and bliss fills. This advaitic concept is reiterated here. Not only one is in all, all is also in all.

4. The eye that sees the Sun and all,

The mind that is the eye of eye.  
What it is the eye of mind?  
It's the Self, the eye of eye of eye.  
Bliss endless this knowledge brings,  
Oh my Guru, the Lord, the Master.

How do we perceive with our sense-organs? The light rays from an object fall on our retina. But without the particular centre of the brain that interprets them we cannot see. Often we do not 'notice' all the objects that send their light rays to the retina that in turn send them to the brain centre. A man may be asleep with his eyes wide open. The mind has to be joined to the brain centre. But something more is required. Here we can seek the help of Swami Vivekananda. In his Raja Yoga he says:

"The mind takes the impression further in, and presents it to the determinative faculty—Buddhi—which reacts. Along with this reaction flashes the idea of egoism. Then this mixture of action and reaction is presented to the Purusha, the real Soul, who perceives an object in this mixture. The organs (Indriyas), together with the mind (Manas), the determinative faculty (Buddhi), the egoism (Ahamkara) form the group called Antahkarana (the internal instrument). ..... So we see that the mind is not intelligent; yet it appears to be intelligent. Why? Because the intelligent soul is behind it. You are the only sentient being; mind is only the instrument through which you catch the external world. Take this book; as a book it does not exist outside, what exists outside is unknown and unknowable. The unknowable furnishes the suggestion that gives a blow to the mind; and the mind gives out the reaction in the form of a book, in the same manner as when a stone is thrown into the water, the water is thrown against it in the form of waves. The real universe is the occasion of the reaction of the mind. A book form, or an elephant form, or a man form, is not outside; all that we know is our mental reaction from the outer suggestion."

The bottom of a lake we cannot see, because its surface is covered with ripples. It is only possible for us to catch a glimpse of the bottom, when the ripples have subsided, and water is calm. If the water is muddy or agitated all the time, the bottom

will not be seen. If it is clear, and there are no waves, we shall see the bottom. The bottom of the lake is our own true Self: the lake is the Chitta (mind) and the waves the Vrittis (activities of the mind).

The Chitta is always trying to get back to its natural pure state, but the organs draw it out. To restrain it, to check this outward tendency, and to start on the return journey to the essence of intelligence is the first step in Yoga.

The Self has been called by various names. Brahman is the more common name of it in Indian philosophical writings. Some call it just 'That'. God is another name, though often it is taken to mean a personified entity. Kena Upanisad sums up the description:

'What cannot be spoken with words, but that whereby words are spoken. Know that alone to be Brahman, the spirit, and not what people here adore.  
What cannot be thought with the mind, but whereby the mind can think. Know that alone to be Brahman, the spirit, and not what people here adore.'

5. To sing the song of Hari,  
I seek the help of gurus  
And gods priests and learned men.  
Born on earth as man, let me  
Sing till death and so help me,  
Oh, my Guru, the Lord, the Master.

Among the lives on earth, life as a human is considered the rarest, so says Sankara, the 8th century Vedic scholar in his Vivekachoodamani. To live as a human is one of the nine blessings of this world, according to him. The precious gift of intellect is given only to man. The purpose of this gift is to discriminate between the temporal and the everlasting and to seek reunion with the latter. The journey is full of pitfalls. Doubts nag the mind, the senses drag it away and material attractions tempt it. We need guidance from those souls who have realised the Truth. The real Guru is such a person. Such a guru is like God. The poet seeks the blessings of his teachers, gods, priests and men of letters to compose this song and sing it till death. This is the path he has chosen for his journey. It is the path of devotion or Bhakti Marg



# You

*A Poem by Anoop Mandal*



**H**ow do I begin to write of you,  
What is left to tell of you,  
Are words enough to speak of  
you.

Of these days,  
When many incarnations are proclaimed,  
You stand as original,  
Nothing else,  
But as a true disciple to a true master, only  
Claimed.

Of these days ,  
Where men in high perch fall,  
You indeed are a gem ,  
Whose only talk is a long walk ,  
Thus,  
Above the artificial and superficial,  
You stand tall.

Of these days,  
When humility and modesty are rare  
Currency, with your own personal conduct  
You show us our inner bankruptcy.

Of these days,  
Where its easy to simply loose the way and  
Go adrift the shore, you, anchor of many  
Ships, allay fears of moving away from  
Ones inner core.

Of these days,  
Where,  
In this small peice of land,  
In this small country,  
In this small planet ,  
In this small galaxy,  
In 1 of 84 other small universe,

In all this smallness,  
I think of being this big man,  
You,  
The knower of life's many mysteries,  
Annihilate my many falsities,  
To show me , what is true selflessnes.

Of these days,  
Where life means facing the heat,  
Like mid-noon sun's fierceness,  
By mere hearing you,  
One is at peace,  
As if staring into full moon's nightly  
Calmness.

Of these days,  
Where unconditional love is a word some-  
Where lost, your acceptance of me and my  
Way of being, indeed shows that it is  
Indeed real, beyond any treasure and its  
Innumerable cost

Of these days,  
Where it is easy to think of immortality,  
You , break this fallacy, by reminding us of  
Mortality, hoping that now atleast, we will  
Walk the path of true spirituality.

Of these days,  
Where few search for life's meaningful-  
ness, You, give them courage to encounter  
and Explore this emptiness.

Of these days,  
Where one lives in the prison of time,  
you,  
Forever remind us of our timelessness,  
By yourself completing this journey to

Own's consciousness.  
Of these days,  
Where one behold many titles,  
You,  
By seeing your core,  
Have even forsaken both Mumtaaz and  
Madhu, to be simply Maanav.

Of these days,  
Where one lives in broken spirit and  
Division, you, by being simply Maanav,  
Show us the power of one's own self , and  
Way to live in one-ness and unision.

Of these days,  
Where one's suffering is often one's own  
Doing , you, still taking responsibility for  
Us, showing that heart where infinite com-  
Passion is flowing.

Of these days,  
Where it is easy to forget and fall,  
You,  
Still not giving up on us,  
Forever forgiving us all.

To such a master,  
What can i even offer,  
Except these limited words.

May my heart be ever filled with this un-  
known feeling, As it is right now.

By sharing this,  
I hope those reading too are filled with  
this Unknown love.



# Young and Old Walk for United India

*As Reported in Times of India, Pune*

**I**t was in 2014 that Pranav Kumar, 24, enrolled for the Manav Ekta Mission's "Walk of Hope" from Kanyakumari to Kashmir as it gave him an opportunity to travel throughout the length and breadth of the country.

The 'padyatra' reached Pune on 1st July 2015 with about 70-odd participants, who have already covered a distance of 2600 Kms passing through Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka and part of Maharashtra over the last 17 days.

Five months into the 18 month mission of spreading the message of communal peace and harmony, Kumar says he is already enriched by the chance of experiencing the real India.

Like Kumar, there are scores of citizens and even foreigners who have embarked upon the nationwide 'padyatra'. Though each member has his own objective, all are united in their belief in the larger goal –

reminding people about human unity.

Kumar said, "While the social message of the walk is very relevant, for me, having always lived in cities, this walk is to experience the rural life up close. I now understand what sort of life villagers lead. I am thoroughly enjoying the exploration of my own country. I loved the 33 Km walk through mountains and dense jungles near Bhagamandala and even the beauty of Madikeri. I plan to continue all the way up to Kashmir."

Having lived in India and in the US, Geeta Betrabet, 51, says it is her own way of standing up to terrorism. With her family history that goes back to the Indian freedom struggle, Betrabet is happy to continue the tradition. Sharing her reasons for participating, she said, "Both India and America have been victims of terror attacks. While everyone just talks about inter faith harmony, I feel this is a fabulous op-

portunity to show support to the cause."

Asked about the challenges of the long, tedious walk, Betrabet said, "I have hurt my ankles and knees, but while I am walking in silence behind my Guru, Sri M, the pain doesn't bother me at all."

Age has little to do with a mission for V. Ravindranath, who celebrated his 80th birthday while 'walking' through the streets of Pune. The oldest member of the 70-member group, Ravindranath who retired from the Indian Navy, says his years in defence forces taught him never to discriminate on the basis of caste, creed, language or religion.

"I am willing to walk till I drop. The subject is very close to my heart and the walk is helping me evolve spiritually" said Ravindranath. More than a physical journey, it's a walk with our inner selves, says Lina from Lithuania.

*Geeta Betrabet, 51*



*Pranav Kumar, 24*





# Satsang Vidyalaya 2014-15

**S**ri M's mission to give free and quality education to the deprived in the rural area around Madanapally was addressed comprehensively in many ways:

- Academic guidance was provided by Ms.Sunandaji, the Principal of Peepal Grove School (PGS) and Mr.Viraj, the Academic Co-ordinator of P.G.S. through timely and sometimes weekly orientation program at PGS.
- Satsanga Vidyalaya (SV) was given the certificate of recognition as a full-fledged high school this year by the State Board Of Education in Andhra Pradesh. Mr.Ravindran and Mr.G.Sreenivasulu

(Headmaster- SV) were together responsible for pursuing this to a successful end.

- This academic year the first SSC batch appeared from SV to achieve a flying 100% result.
- SV is among the 35 schools which can boast of 100% results in SSC in Chittoor District where there are nearly 42,000 schools.
- Overall SV has 98.30% result in school examinations from U.K.G. – IX grade (It would be 100% if couple of students had appeared for their exams!).
- SV also has co-curricular activities like art & craft, games and Yoga. Efforts are

on to appoint a part-time music and dance teacher.

- Some students regularly go to Swasthya Kendra to learn 'Basic Health Guidelines' and 'First Aid' and then they monitor cleanliness in the school.
- The alumni of the SV had regular get together on weekends. Three of them were sent to Bangalore and after getting trained at Unnati (an NGO) they are now employed in reputed MNCs.

The year has ended on a positive note and efforts will continue to ensure that next academic year will be as productive.

## Walk of Hope in Gujarat: Itinerary

[www.walkofhope.in](http://www.walkofhope.in)

08.08.2015 : Peth to Sutharpada, 17 Kms  
09.08.2015 : Sutharpada to Kaprada, 18 Kms  
10.08.2015 : Kaprada to Vadkhambha, 15 Kms  
11.08.2015 : Vadkhambha to Mota Pondha, 15 Kms  
12.08.2015 : Mota Pondha to Vapi, 16 Kms  
13.08.2015 : Camp at Vapi  
14.08.2015 : Vapi to Pardi, 16 Kms  
15.08.2015 : Pardi to Gundlav, 23 Kms  
Independence Day.  
16.08.2015 : Gundlav to Bhatha, 23 Kms  
17.08.2015 : Bhatha to Navsari, 23 Kms  
18.08.2015 : Navsari to Sachin, 15 Kms  
Parsi New Year.  
19.08.2015 : Sachin to Kadodara, 15 Kms  
20.08.2015 : Kadodara to Kamrej, 17 Kms  
21.08.2015 : Camp at Kamrej Cross Road Dada Bhagwan Temple  
22.08.2015 : Kamrej Cross Road Dada Bhagwan Temple to Om Anand Ind, Kim, 18 Kms.  
23.08.2015 : Om Anand Ind Kim to Patel Wadi, Ankleshwar, 22 Kms  
24.08.2015 : Patel Wadi, Ankleshwar to Baps - Zadeshwar, 18 Kms  
25.08.2015 : Baps - Zadeshwar to Palej Cross Road, 22 Kms

26.08.2015 : Palej Cross Road to Gurukul, Kandari, 15 Kms  
27.08.2015 : Gurukul, Kandari to Ideal School 20 Kms  
28.08.2015 : Ideal school Campus to Vadodara, 15 Kms ( Onam.)  
29.08.2015 : Camp at Vadodara (Raksha Bandhan.)  
30.08.2015 : Vadodara to G S F C, 7 Kms  
31.08.2015 : GSFC to Harihar Gurukul, 19 Kms  
01.09.2015 : Harihar Gurukul to Anand, 19 Kms  
02.09.2015 : Anand to Santram Mandir Nadiad, 20 Kms  
03.09.2015 : Santram Mandir Nadiad to Mahemdawan cross road, 20 Kms  
04.09.2015 : Mahemdavad to Hathi Jan B Nanji 18 Kms  
05.09.2015 : Hathijan to Rani Shakti Bhavan 20 Kms (Janmashtami.)  
06.09.2015 : Rani Shakti Bhavan to Gandhi Ashram, 3 Kms  
07.09.2015 : Camp at Rani Shakti Bhavan  
08.09.2015 : Raj Bhavan to Vastral, Revabhai Satsang Hall, 16 Kms  
09.09.2015 : Vastral Revabhai Satsang Hall to Kanij - Ranchod Rai Mandir, 19 Kms  
10.09.2015 : Kanij - Ranchod Rai Mandir to Sihuj Chiripal Vishram Gruh, 18 Kms

11.09.2015 : Sihuj Chiripal Vishram Gruh to Jasuba Farm, Nani Khadol, 13 Kms  
12.09.2015 : Jasuba Farm, Nani Khadol to Navdeep Nivas, Dakor, 19 Kms  
13.09.2015 : Navdeep Nivas Dakor to Sevaliya Village, 24 Kms  
14.09.2015 : Sevaliya to Tuwa, 18 Kms  
15.09.2015 : Tuwa to Godhra, 18 Kms  
16.09.2015 : Camp at Godhra  
17.09.2015 : Godhra to Sant Road, 21 Kms (Ganesh Chaturthi/Vinayaka Chaturthi.)  
18.09.2015 : Sant Road to Limkheda, 25 Kms  
19.09.2015 : Limkheda to Dahod jain Derasar 26 Kms  
20.09.2015 : Camp at Dahod  
21.09.2015 : Dahod to Hanuman Temple MP (Jabua Road) 25 Kms

Those who are interested in joining the walk may contact:

Prashant Thacker - State Coordinator  
81418 88800  
Udayan Shah - Administrator -  
98240 25450  
Sunil Dawda - Route Mgmt. Coordinator  
98250 21423