

GEN/06

26.10.2008

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Saprem Namaskar.

This year in Akhil Bharatiya Adhikari Baithak, in which the Nagar Adhikaris also had joined for two days at Kanyakumari it was decided that the Gita Jayanti would be celebrated with family get-together. Gita is not a book to be studied at the fag end of life but it is to be studied for knowing clearly its purpose and to practice it in life. For that reason as one grows, it is to be studied. There cannot be a better place than family for learning this. Since three years we as an organisation have been giving importance to Hindu family and its dimensions. Thus from this year onwards it was decided that we link and integrate this focus on family with our celebration of Gita Jayanti.

Gita tells a man to understand the total picture and in that whatever be the role, it is to be played as our duty. Gita inspires man to do his duty. It is in the family that child learns from the elders to do its duty sincerely. But what are our duties to the family members, to the society, to the nation, to the whole creation can be understood only if our vision about the existence is clear. Bhagavadgita gives that vision. Gita says – "Atmaupamyena sarvatra samam pashyati yojarjuna.." (VI. 32). Look at everything as the expression of the Self.

'Prajapati created the mankind and along with that Yagna so that man could prosper and all the desires of the man would be fulfilled (III.10). Then, he told that, "With this Yagna you nourish the Gods and may those Gods nourish you; thus nourishing one another, you shall, attain the Highest Good." (III.11) What does Yagna mean? Yagna is any self-sacrificing work, undertaken in the spirit of self-dedication for the blessing of all. Yagna is any action for oneself, family, community, society, nation, creation into which individual is ready to pour himself forth entirely in the spirit of service and dedication. Yagna is nurturing, strengthening the expanding layers of existence of self like family, community, society, nation and the whole creation.

Yagna- the spirit of self-dedicated activities, the linkage with the Virat is seen everywhere: the Sun shines, the moon appears, the sea throbs, the earth bears, trees flower and bear fruits – all in a spirit of sacrifice and self-dedicated motherly love with never even a trace of attachment or any kind of self-arrogating motives. The whole world of cosmic powers and nature's phenomena function instinctively in the service of all. Even when life is developed and multiplied at all levels; we can easily recognise different degrees of Yagna-

activities, which keep up the harmonious growth of existence. Thus, Yagna implies that any achievement is possible if a person knows how to act in the discipline of co-operation with larger collectivities.

Individual gets nurtured in family; hence, his expansion of consciousness is possible primarily in the family. Family is an expanded and organic existence of an individual. Similarly the expanded form of family is community and so family works in harmony with the community. Expanded form of community is society therefore community works to nurture the society. The enlarged form of society is nation and therefore the purpose of society is to re-build and develop the nation. The purpose of existence of the nation is to contribute for the advancement of whole creation, because nation is the part of the world. The whole creation is the expression of the Self or Paramatman. Therefore, the real development and expansion of an individual is realising one's real nature as Paramatman.

Thus the goal of human life is to be one with the Atmatatva which has expressed in all these collectivities and which is also beyond all this. Living a life and striving to be one with this all –pervading divinity is Yoga. The way to do it is Yagna. A person with vision of Oneness can appreciate the Oneness underlying all the diversities and therefore cherish the diversities and do not denounce it. Similarly the Yagna way or Yoga way of life alone can add to the harmony and prosperity of the existence. Gita teaches us this and therefore Gita is considered very important in life. India has to give to the world this message of Oneness of the existence and prosperity by sharing and nurturing the larger expressions of one's own self – like family, community, society, nation and whole creation. Today we see that India is facing many dangers from outside and from within. But unfortunately we as a nation are unwilling to face it or even acknowledge it. The 'national will' needs to be strengthened in facing these difficulties. The awareness about the purpose of our country and also the problems that we are facing needs to be taught through the families.

The family is not just the collection of individuals but it is a single unit, the basic unit of the society with three objectives. .

1. The purpose of family is striving for Dharma, Artha, Kama, Moksha
2. Family is meant for the propagation of Sanatana Dharma
3. Family is for Prajanana that is prakarshena Janana means bringing out a generation which is physically, mentally, intellectually, culturally and spiritually better than the earlier generation. In short, family is a basic unit where man-making and nation-building is possible.

The meaning of Grihasthashrama- a stage of life - where man exerts to achieve the above three objectives. If we focus on our families in right sense then we can

very easily face the cultural invasion. Old age homes, destitute homes, orphanages are a sign of failed society, of ungrateful generation.

We can say that the Ideal family should be five dimensional (5-S) –

1. Sukhi – happy, contented
2. Swastha – healthy
3. Sampanna- not lacking but with needs fulfilled
4. Samskarksham – able to mould children with proper values in life
5. Samaj Dharana with national consciousness.

We cannot say that we would have only some dimensions like for example say Sukhi and Sampannata and not others. All are interlinked with each other. If a family ignores national security, the happiness, health and wealth of the family gets affected. We would have to focus on all these dimensions in our programme on Gita Jayanti. Some of the action points for the ideal family could be as below.

For ideal and healthy family –

- Regular worship of Kuldevata
- Regular Snan, Dhyan and Vyayam by all in the family
- Once in a week oil bath by all members as well as Bhajan, Naam and some reading of good books together for sometime that relaxes and brings relaxed atmosphere. The stories and good anecdotes of the ancestors also to be told. All these nourish the family physically, intellectually and emotionally.
- Once in 15 days to skip one meal, It could be linked to the traditional days like Ekadasi or Poornima and Amavasya etc It could be also linked to the schemes like Amrut Surabhi – keeping aside handful of rice/aata for the poor.
- Celebrate all the cultural festivals meaningfully and relating to the needs of time –thus making them relevant
- Once in a year the children should go with parents – whole family -should go out to live in some better atmosphere like Tirtha-sthan, some Ashrama etc
- Family should get associated with good work in the society; children should have the experience of working with others in the society for the good of the society.
- Awaken the Bhava (Formation of attitude and feelings) too and not just information and rituals in bringing up children. Make them aware of the present scenario and challenges. Thus the literature – books and magazines in our house should be carefully chosen without falling into the trap of 'prestige'

Thus, in our programme of family get-together we can have the lectures, discussions, games etc. If the focus of the family is shifted to the nation then the problems within the family also fall in their own places and do not lead to disintegration. If we could organise the programme for nurturing of families of all the acquaintances of Kendra (whether in contact due to Vargas or Utsavas or are just well-wishers), imbue them with social, cultural and national consciousness. This would help in developing the society where the diversities with all their distinctness and richness unite with one another with the grand vision of Oneness

- the vision of Swami Vivekananda, "I do not see into the future; nor do I care to see. But one vision I see clear as life before me that the ancient Mother has awakened once more, sitting on Her throne-rejuvenated, more glorious than ever. Proclaim Her to all the world with the voice of peace and benediction."

With best wishes and prayers

Yours Sincerely

B Nivedita
Vice-President