

Dear Sisters and Brothers

Saprem Namaskar

Swami Vivekananda Jayanti, which we are celebrating every year, becomes the culminating point of the Samarth Bharat Parva. Swami Vivekananda meditated on the Rock on 25, 26 and 27 of December 1892. His was the unique meditation. It was not for his own salvation but for Bharatmata, to make her again Jagatguru. He envisaged the strong India, the confident India, and the awakened India. After this meditation, he just offered himself fully for the rejuvenation of India. There was no looking back; there was no calculation about personal comforts and personal dreams for him. He just jumped into the work without thinking of the future. That is how the world got Swami Vivekananda and India got a seer who foresaw vibrant India. Thus, this meditation on the Rock on 25, 26, and 27th of December becomes very important landmark of his life, which turned a less known sanyasi into the nation- builder.

Therefore, the period from 25th December to 12 January, the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda we celebrate as Samarth Bharat Parva. Fortunately during this period also comes a very sacred day - Kalptaru Day on 1 January - when Sri Ramakrishna granted his devotees whatever they desired for. The birth of Sri Ramakrishna was for the protection and prorogation of Sanaatana Dharma and its followers. He encompassed our whole spiritual and cultural history in his life and message. He personifies our culture and tradition. Thus, our culture, our society, our Sanaatana Dharma is the Kalpataru, which would grant us all the four Purusharthas. The focus of this celebration would be taking the strength and culture of our country to the youth and motivating them to work for enhancing it. The nation is built by sacrifice as well by manliness i.e. not going by easy way but dare to do difficult things in the interest of the country.

As stressed by Swami Vivekananda India has a destiny to fulfill, a message to deliver, a mission to accomplish. He very forcefully said, "We must go out, we must conquer the world through our spirituality and philosophy. There is no other alternative, we must do it or die. The only condition of national life, of

awakened and vigorous national life, is the conquest of the world by Indian thought." Thus, we have to work for the regeneration of India - not only for our sake but for the sake of the humanity, nay the whole world!

But then, to fulfill our national mission we first need to have confidence in ourselves. The Samartha Bharat Parva is thus to focus on the strength of India in different fields and to motivate the youth to work for her regeneration. The focus on the present strength of India would increase the confidence of the people of India. Otherwise, today self-denigration and self-derision has become our national habits. It is because of this, we are not aware of our strengths. Therefore, considering ourselves weak we keep looking at the West. That is what Swami Vivekananda had said, "All power is within you; you can do anything and everything. Believe in that, do not believe that you are weak; do not believe that you are half-crazy lunatics, as most of us do nowadays. You can do anything and everything without even the guidance of anyone. All power is there. Stand up and express the divinity within you."

In our Kendra Prarthana, too we invoke Iswara to give strength in body and courage in mind. Here the prayer is not of an individual but of "We" who are the children of immortality. As only Hindus believe that they are not born sinners but are born in Iswara and go back to Iswara again, the "we" in Kendra Prarthana denotes all those who share the Indian ethos. Thus the lines "Prabho dehi dehe ..." is also a prayer for increasing our strength as a nation.

Swami Vivekananda said, "Endless examples can be cited ...to show the marvelous poetry of the Upanishads. But one other idea I must note, that the language and the thought and everything come direct, they fall upon you like a sword-blade, strong as the blows of a hammer they come. ...No signs of degradation are there - no attempts at too much allegorizing, too much piling of adjectives after adjectives till the brain becomes giddy... If it be human literature, it must be the production of a race, which had not yet lost any of its national vigour. Strength, strength is what the Upanishadas speak to me from every page. This is the one great thing to remember, it has been the one great lesson I have been taught in my life; strength, it says, strength O man, be not weak. Are there no human weaknesses? - says man. There are, say the Upanishads, but will more weakness heal them, would you try to wash dirt with dirt? Will sin cure sin,

weakness cure weakness? Strength, O man, strength, say the Upanishads, stand up and be strong. Ay, it is the only literature in the world where you find the word "Abhiih", "fearless", used again and again; in no other scripture in the world is this adjective applied either to God or to man. Abhiih, fearless!" Thus, the message of strength of our Upanishads, which was reiterated by Swami Vivekananda again and again should be focused in Samartha Bharat Parva and Vivekananda Jayanti program.

Through the competitions and workshops, the strength of India can be celebrated. A PPT presentation is also attached which can be shown in the schools and colleges or the exhibition can be organized on it. The PPT is only indicative. The characteristics and greatness related to your areas can also be added to it. During these days, the names of all those should also be remembered who laid down their life while fighting the terrorist attacks. The relatives of such brave warriors can also become the part of the celebration. Even those local persons who have made great contributions for India can be called. It is the respect and honour of those who sacrifice and work for nation will motivate the youth to become like them. And somewhere we also would develop the habit of looking for them and acknowledging them, establishing them. Few slides on Sister Nivedita are also added in the presentation. If you want, you can increase that. She too had lived to make India great in each field.

If you are making/updating this PPT please send it to us for sharing with other branches.

Thus let us celebrate Samartha Bharat Parva and Vivekananda Jayanti on as large and grand scale as possible.

With warm regards
Yours Sincerely
Nivedita