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Bulletin- International Conference on Spiritual Wisdom for  
 Changing Times  
 at Mount Abu, Feb 5-8 1999.

"A revival of social and spiritual values is the need of the hour in order to bring about a holistic sustainable development in the society," said Justice G.B.Patnaik, the Supreme Court judge. He was speaking at the Inaugural Ceremony of the International Conference on Spiritual Wisdom for Changing Times organised by the Brahma Kumaris here.

"Pursuit of economic gains has resulted in the erosion of all human and social values. Real development is not based on monetary growth or economic and scientific empowerment. Peace is out of people's mind due to loss of values in modern times and the whole world is on the brink of disaster. In the present context, the Conference has become successful in focussing people's attention towards imbibing values in their lives," the learned judge of the apex court further observed. He hoped that the suggestions and methods discussed in the Conference would greatly contribute to a harmonious and prosperous society.

Values - Our True Religion:

In her scintillating spiritually charged address, Rajyogini Dadi Prakashmani, Chief of Brahma Kumaris said that good actions are the true wealth that earns us the reward of love and respect from all including God. Hence, she asked the participants to make a strong resolve to renounce all vices and to receive the reward of unlimited happiness in life.

"Spiritual knowledge guides and empowers human beings to

perform righteous deeds. The true religion of all human beings is to perform value-based actions. The Conference would bring about a spiritual rejuvenation and mark the new birthday of each participant," she also said.

#### Rays of Hope:

B.K.Jayanti, Director of Rajyoga Centres of London, threw light on the rays of hope that have been emerging in the scene of darkness in the world. She said, "There has been a marked shift in the 90s towards spirituality. The importance of values in the area of development were officially acknowledged in the International Conferences in Copenhagen and Istanbul. There is also a growing realisation that solutions to personal and social problems lie in our minds and not outside. In the field of science too, there is an increasing interest in the subject of consciousness. At the turning point of this millennium, humankind is faced with several choices and there is an explosion of information. In this kind of situation, each of us have to extract valuable knowledge and apply it in our practical lives. The best yardstick to follow for development of self and society would be to ask ourselves whether our thoughts, energy and time are being used in a worthwhile way."

#### Mastery Over Matter :

In his welcome address, B.K.Nirwair, Secretary General, Rajyoga Education & Research Foundation said that spiritual knowledge was the only means to find contentment, peace and love in our lives and that one has to learn to have mastery over matter through soul consciousness in order to find enduring peace and happiness.

#### The About-Turn Situation of World:

Mr.Jeyraj Fernandopulle, Minister for Plan, Implementation and Parliament Affairs, Government of Sri Lanka conveyed greetings from the people and the Government of Sri Lanka. He said, "Today, people are ready for change because there is chaos and degradation in every sphere of life. Religious conflicts, economic inequality, racial discrimination, emotional turbulence and selfish motives have resulted in fragmented nations, societies and families. The greatest need of these changing times is a spiritual philosophy and methodology, such as taught by the Brahma Kumaris, which enables people to improve the quality of their lives. Spiritual Wisdom would provide the right kind of knowledge required to bring a turn-around in the world's situation. The right kind of education which teaches people to choose

the right values that ultimately bring benefit to the self and the society is the best way to build a better society." He also informed that the Sri Lankan Government has initiated Value Education at the school level and is promoting such efforts as are being carried out by spiritual and social organisations.

Mr. Durga Shankar Patnaik, Minister for Labour and Employment, Government of Orissa, said there was much chaos and confusion in life due to lack of spiritual wisdom. The values people were searching for are to be found inside and not outside. Material comforts can provide transitory happiness but inner empowerment would bring about true and lasting peace and joy, he further added.

To Make Rivers of Goodness Overflow :

B.K. Shiv Kanya, Zonal Incharge of Tamil Nadu and National Coordinator of Politicians' Service Wing, felt that the problems and solutions were aplenty but the crucial issue was that of applying the latter. She further said, "People had taken recourse to evading and escaping issues. At the heart of every problem lies the question that each one has to ask themselves, i.e. what is my responsibility and how can I help restore values in society. Rajyoga Meditation helps understand the real self and dig deep to find the rivers of goodness that have dried within. Each individual has to use a broom of pure thoughts to clear away all the dirt within and a brush of spiritual wisdom to paint a beautiful picture of a better world through their attitudes, behaviours, words and thoughts."

Values for the Rescue :

Mr. K.M. Panchal, Secretary, Gujarat Legislative Assembly, said that lack of character, selfishness and greed were the root causes of today's problems. A leader with a strong character can build a strong society, he said. He suggested that accountability, integrity and transparency were some of the qualities, if imbibed, which could lead to a better governance.

Speakers at the 1st Plenary Session of the Conference were of the opinion that the real spirituality is missing in our life as a result of which we are witnessing so much of sorrow in the world. According to the speakers the only way out to exercise social evils is to impart spiritual education at all levels.

The Real Social Service:

In her address, Mrs. Mridula Sinha, Chairperson, Central Social Welfare Board, Government of India, New Delhi, said "Service to humanity is the real social service." She added that one should take some time out of the busy work schedules for self introspection which can ultimately give proper direction in our life.

#### Spirituality -- Your Cup of Tea:

Rajyogini Dadi Hridayamohini who chaired the Plenary Session clarified that spirituality and religion are totally different aspects. "Religion could have different meanings to different people. But spirituality is one for everybody. Spirituality is nothing but knowing the self and the Supreme Soul who is also the Supreme Father and having constant lovable communication with Him and becoming aware of our original qualities such as peace, purity and virtues. When there is a missing link of spirituality in our life then all the problems start," she said.

Narrating the Brahma Kumaris experience about the power of yoga and spiritual powers she said "Through spiritual powers we achieve success in our life and even the impossible becomes possible." She emphasised that through spirituality one can learn how to have control over the self, mind, intellect, attitudes and behaviours.

#### Science & Spirituality, Partners for Progress :

In his keynote address Ramesh Shah, Chairperson, Jurists' Wing, stressed the need for introducing spiritual, ethical and moral education in schools. "Today these values are missing in our society due to some misunderstanding of spirituality with religion. Since the ethical, moral, human values are part of spirituality and since spirituality was mixed up with religion, people ultimately distance themselves from these living values. Science is also recognising spirituality. Science and spirituality should work together to build a better world," he added.

#### Aspects of Spirituality:

While sharing her worldwide and personal experience, B.K. Mohini, Director of Rajyoga Centres in America said, "Spirituality is nothing but doing what you think and talk. Learning to think positively with clarity of mind; acquiring the power of judgement by keeping the intellect good and clean; good interaction with others through good relationship; improving the self by imbibing values,

virtues; serving others; leading peaceful life, and communicating with God, are some aspects of true spirituality."

The 'Mr. Wise' Session:

In another Plenary Session, B.K.Asha, National Coordinator of Administrators' Wing, dissected, analysed, and enabled the audience to see the viscera of the topic, 'Godly Wisdom for Re-establishment of Golden Age', by interviewing speakers, Dr.Jitendra Singh, Minister for Higher Education, Rajasthan, Mr.V.N.Narayanan, Chief Editor, Hindustan Times, B.K.Carolyn and Dr.Nirmala from Australia with B.K.Brij Mohan, Editor of 'Purity', playing the role of 'Mr.Wise'.

'I'll Spread the Message':

Minister Dr.Jitendra Singh observed: "If we really want to establish a Golden Age on this earth, we have to learn the values of life and to understand the lessons given by our saints and the Brahma Kumaris. Money and materialistic possessions are not the aim of our life. Being a minister, it is my duty to change the direction of the youth and the general public and I will take the Mount Abu Message of Spiritual Wisdom, that is, the nectar churned in the Ocean of Knowledge, to the people, educationists and all alike."

'Golden Age Spreads from Mt.Abu into World':

Mr.V.N.Narayanan's speech was spiced with sporadic humour and serious scientific thoughts along this line: "God gives man highest wisdom about what is good and what is bad; yet He gives man also the right to choose between the two. Quantum physics has taught us that without being observed facts under objective scrutiny anything can be scientific. Godly wisdom is not like something offered on plate. It has to be realised. Upanishads define Food, Life, Knowledge, Technology and finally Bliss are Brahm (reality) in ascending hierarchy. Golden Age is already here. The Brahma Kumaris are living in it. Let us expand it from Mount Abu into the whole world."

Vision & Mission of 21st Century:

In the Valedictory Session, B.K.Mruthyunjay, Executive Secretary for the Brahma Kumaris said, "Value-based society must be the vision and mission of the 21st Century." He also proposed the resolution which was passed unanimously. The participants urged the governments, media and general public to integrate spiritual wisdom into their respective fields

of operation and bring about a spiritual renaissance by promoting the awareness and practice of spiritual and moral values.

They also acknowledged that there was a growing recognition that a new paradigm was required to deal with the multitude of changes that were sweeping the political, economic and social institutions all over the world. It was time to apply spiritual wisdom to sort out the current problems and find solutions for establishing lasting peace, prosperity and happiness for all, they agreed.

#### A Unique Action Plan:

The Speaker of the Gujarat Legislative Assembly, Mr.Dhirubhai Shah, was really the speaker of the day. Lecturing like a seasoned spiritualist, he said, "All our problems are due to identity and identification. We are actually souls separate from our bodies. Body is like a caravan sarai and soul leaves one body and takes on another. But we are confusing our souls with bodies, thereby wrongly identifying ourselves with perishable bodies. This is the root-cause of all our sufferings and sorrows. So we are all in the darkness of ignorance. It is no use, as Swami Vivekanand said, crying, 'It is dark! It is dark!' when we are in the dark. Rather light the lamp of spiritual wisdom and dispel darkness. The Action Plan for this is: Go deeper and deeper into values of all times and Rajyoga taught by this Institution of Brahma Kumaris. Whatever little free time you have, do meditation. I thank the Brahma Kumaris who have the ability to promulgate the spiritual wisdom deeper into the head and heart of people."

#### The Phenomenon of Peace:

Mr.Bhag Raj Chaudhary, Minister for Forest and Environment, Government of Rajasthan, opined that the world would be a better place if developed nations would extend the arm of cooperation to the developing countries. Each person can contribute to world peace by first creating a peaceful environment at home and workplace, he said.

#### Spirituality, the Unifying Principle of Religions:

Extolling the importance of spiritual education, Mr.Abdoulaye Debye, Chief Suffi from Senegal said that the modern education system has given rise to a sense of ego, illusion of power and unnecessary desires in people. He felt that spirituality was the unifying principle of all religions and the relevance of Sufi teachings were confirmed

after his visit to the Brahma Kumaris Academy here.

#### Year of Reflection & Meditation:

Ms. Daniella Adeline, Director, Ministry of Finance, Seychelles Island, informed that the Government of Seychelles had declared this year as the year of reflection and meditation. She said that after coming to Mount Abu, she had seen the practical benefits of meditation.

Other noted speakers include Dadi Ratan Mohini, Chairperson, Youth Wing, Prof. F.A. Mediansky from University of New South Wales, Australia, Neville Hodgkinson, Medical Correspondent for London Times, Dr. Girish Patel, Mike George, Management Consultant, Christopher Drake, Solicitor, England & Hongkong, Caroline Ward, International Co-ordinator, Women of Spirit, Australia, Dr. Christine Page, Doctor and Author, United Kingdom, Povindar Kumar Mehta, Professor Emeritus in Civil Engineering University, California, B.K. Karuna, National Co-ordinator for Media Wing, B.K. Om Prakash, Chairperson of Media Wing, B.K. Amir Chand, National Co-ordinator for Social Service Wing, N.R. Pandya, Deputy Director, Rural Development, Ahmedabad, B.K. Sarala, Zone Incharge for Brahma Kumaris Centres in Gujarat, Justice Keshav Prasad Mainali, Appellate Court, Janakpur, Nepal, Justice C.K. Buch & Justice A.S. Quereshi, Gujarat High Court, Justice V.S. Kokje, Rajasthan High Court, Gulab Batra, Secretary General, National Union of Journalists, Neha Sharad Joshi, Cine Artist from Mumbai, Bal Krishna Sajeev Suwal, Human Service Society, Kathmandu, Cheick Alyn Daw Diop, Cheick Reunion Island, Senegal, B.K. Vivien Von Son from University of Mexico, P.B. Patni, Director & Deputy Commissioner, Social Welfare Department of Gujrat, etc.

Rajyoga retreats, a multi-disciplinary get-together, question-answer sessions, cultural programmes and sharing of spiritual experiences were also part of the Conference.

The Conference was attended by over 2,000 delegates from 42 countries and leaders and dignitaries from 13 spheres of professions. Over the three days, in 26 seminars and five plenary sessions, participants deliberated upon various topics that explored the role of spirituality in professional, social and personal lives.

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