



**The Warmth of Love Integrates Humanity**

[...] We Indians, we like everybody to change. Of course, Babuji wants everybody to change, but Indians seem to want Europeans and Americans to become more Indian in their outlook, which is not what Babuji meant. Babuji meant inner change, change in character, but not change in the colour of the skin, and the height of the body. [...] And we Indians should therefore develop the ability to change ourselves, too. Not lose your Indianisms, not lose your culture, but accept the fact that this world is full of cultures, and traditions and languages - all of them beautiful, all of them very human. As we say in India, the blood that flows through our veins is all the same. Our loves, our hates - they are all the same. Our aspirations - they are universal; our needs basically are the same.

So this sameness that is human should be emphasized. The cultures that we bring to this world from our various nationalities, regions, geographies are worth preserving - not flaunting, **preserving**. And it is good to shed this ego and arrogance about what we call our own culture. There is no such thing as our own culture. You can have a bunch of roses, but you can also have a bunch of flowers all different, and it looks more beautiful. Beauty comes from variety. There is the individual beauty, there is the beauty of variety, variegated beauties. All Nature is beautiful, deserts are beautiful. [...]

So this tendency to be indi-



*Shri P. Rajagopalachari  
Berlin, June 1, 2006*

vidual in a community where we share values, where we cherish the same values, where we have the same aspirations, the same goal, that is what should weld us into a strong unified community which can grow. You know, after all when you want to create a ripple in a pond, a tiny pebble is enough. [...]. Each one of you should be able to drop a pebble in this ocean of humanity, and create what? These tiny wavelets in circles, which will spread to infinity. [...] Each one of us in our own humility, in our own humble approach, loving approach, has to put a small part of ourselves into this ocean of humanity and create that wave which will go on and on forever, because the ocean is limitless. This is what I would like all of you to participate in, to work with your heart. [...]

What brings us together must be our sameness, our oneness, our commonness. And all that distinguishes us, separates us, must be put away. God created us in various colours, various shapes, various sizes. That we cannot

change. But, God did not create Hindus and Muslims and Christians and Buddhists. God did not create culture and language - these are ours. [...]

Sahaj Marg is trying to dissolve these barriers, not break them down, but dissolve them. Dissolve them with what? With the warmth of love. [...] Why can't we give this warmth and melt off all these barriers which are our creations? [...]

Divisiveness can be carried on infinitely. Integration in one stroke. Human beings are human beings. Overnight, we can become citizens of this world without any barriers of nationality, geography, politics. [...] What separates us we must throw off as not good for humanity. It may be good for me, but for us it is not good. So let us adopt that which is good for us, that which will make us grow bigger and bigger. And bring Sahaj Marg into a bigger and bigger body of, what should I say, people, nations, the world itself. And this sort of approach, I tell you, has been blessed from time immemorial, is being blessed and will always continue to be blessed.

Thank you.

*Talk given by Rev. Master at Chicago, Illinois, USA on August 1, 2003*

**Thus speaks:**

**Lalaji**

• *Faith can be said to have strengthened when one's link with God is established so firmly that it is not separated even if one tries to do it. One should feel oneself helpless to do so. Effort should be made to develop such faith.*

**Babuji**

• *God helps those who help themselves is a common saying which is literally true.*

**Chariji**

• *How to bring God into our lives is the question. The first need, of course, is to recognise that we need Him.*

• *We have lost touch with Him. We have lost the enormous support, inner support, moral support, life support, that He can give us.*

**About this newsletter:**

"*Echos d'Afrique*" was launched in January 2006 to serve as a communication medium on the development of Sahaj Marg in Africa. It includes excerpts from Mission's books and the teachings of our Masters as well as brief articles on Sahaj Marg practice and activities in the centres in Africa.

After an initial series of six French issues, this newsletter is henceforth extended to English-speaking readers, following Master's earlier decision to group all African (save for South Africa) and Indian Ocean centres as one region. In this respect, the name is changed into "*Echoes of Africa and Indian Ocean*". It will be published on a monthly basis, in two language versions, French and English.

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## About Sahaj Marg in Africa and Indian Ocean

### Introduction

The Africa and Indian Ocean Region includes 18 countries where some Mission's activities are being carried out or are foreseen. These are: Angola, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Congo-Brazzaville, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Gabon, Kenya, Reunion (Island), Madagascar, Mauritius, Nigeria, Senegal, Seychelles, Tanzania, Tunisia and Zimbabwe. The current article is a follow up to a status report on Sahaj Marg in the Region included in the fifth issue of Echos d'Afrique which dealt mainly with Francophone Africa. It provides a synopsis of the situation in the remainder countries; save for Seychelles and Tanzania with which no direct communication has been established as yet. Countries are at different stages of Mission development. Three countries have a small number of active abhyasis and preceptors (Botswana, Kenya and Zimbabwe). Reunion has 3 established Mission centers. In Angola there is a preceptor but no other abhyasi, whereas in Ethiopia and Nigeria, there are abhyasis but no preceptor.

### Situations in 7 selected countries

**Botswana** - There are 5 regular abhyasis, of whom 1 preceptor and his wife, both living in the capital city, Gaborone, whereas 3 abhyasis live about 350 km from Gaborone and the fifth one lives farther, about 1000 km away. The major constraint reported by the preceptor can be summarised as follows: *"The most important thing we have noted over the years here is that most people here are expatriates and usually migrate in a short span of time to different countries or just return to their own countries. ... What we need here is a core group of dedicated abhyasis before we can grow in numbers and quality. But since there is a high turnover of abhyasis, and most people migrate in short periods, the result is new and few faces every time."*

**Kenya** - Out of 12 abhyasis in the capital city and 3 in Kisumu, western Kenya, only 5-6 are regular, including the preceptor herself.

ship program in December 2005. According to him, there is some interest on meditation from his compatriots.

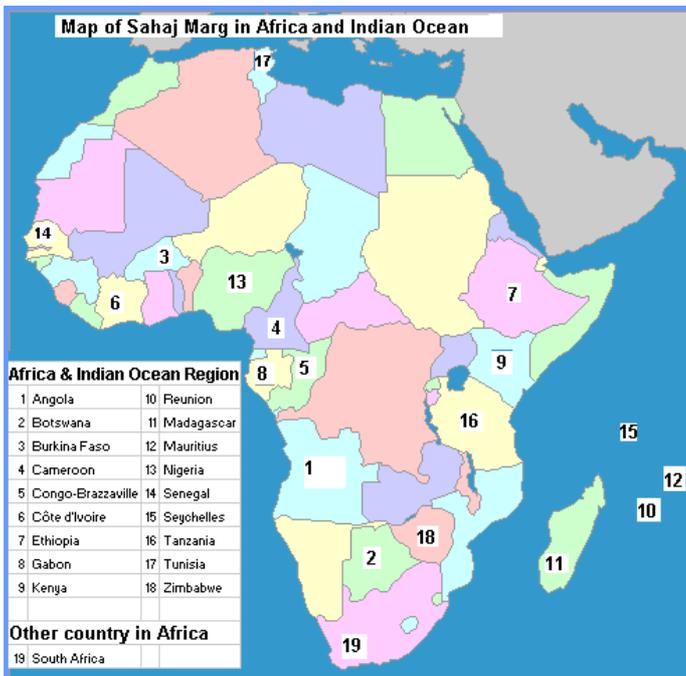
**Ethiopia** - The person coordinating the small group there may have by now, moved back to India. About 5-7 other people very occasionally meet for satsanghs when there is a visiting preceptor. The challenge is to keep the group together in the absence of a dedicated coordinator. The group has not had much Sahaj Marg socialization because of a lack of a preceptor. Their only Sahaj Marg reference is a lot of books they received from a visiting preceptor.

**Nigeria** - The number of practicing abhyasis is currently small: 2 in Lagos and 1 in Kaduna, closer to Abuja, the capital city. However, the situation seems promising as 15 people are showing keen interest in being introduced. Ten of them meet every Sunday at an abhyasi's place for meditation.

They are all in dire need of Master's assistance through a preceptor. In this respect, arrangements are underway for 2 preceptors from Cameroon to fly over to Lagos in July to give introductory sittings to identified candidates, give individual sittings and organize satsanghs.

### Conclusion

The critical issue as far as the expansion of the Mission in these countries and some others in the Region is concerned is the sustainability of Sahaj Marg activities. In countries where the majority or the most active abhyasis come from India or Europe, this is characterized by a two-tier turn-over: amongst foreigners and in the smaller and ever-changing group of locals. This is compounded in societies deeply rooted in other religious and traditional beliefs by suspicion about a system yet regarded as a foreign graft. Specific actions need to be taken to enhance efforts being made by dedicated abhyasis in the centers. As for further sowing the seeds of spirituality in the countries, we pray to Master for this.



**Zimbabwe** - 4 abhyasis are considered as regular: 1 in Harare, the capital city, and the other three, including a sister preceptor in Bulawayo city.

Countries	Regular abhyasis		
		Of whom Preceptors	Centers
Angola	1	1	-
Botswana	5	1	1
Ethiopia	7	0	-
Kenya	6	1	-
Nigeria	3	0	-
Reunion	19	3	3
Zimbabwe	4	1	-

**Reunion** - The 3 centers of the country are located in the North (at St Denis, the capital city: 1 preceptor and 5 other abhyasis), in the West (St Leu: 1 preceptor and 3 other abhyasis) and the South (St Pierre: 1 preceptor and 8 other abhyasis). Like in Botswana, there is a high turn-over as a lot of abhyasis live in Reunion on professional assignments and return to France at the termination of their contracts.

**Angola** - The Mission was recently introduced and has only 1 abhyasi who was made preceptor during a SMRTI scholar-

## With Master in Berlin, June 2006

After an international seminar in Vrads Sande, Denmark, Master reached Berlin, Germany on May 31, 2006, for a 3 day visit and we were privileged to join Him there and enjoy His blessings and teachings.

He stayed in a hotel in the eastern part of Berlin, where most of the abhyasis who followed him also stayed.

He presided over three group meditations, one in his studio on the day of his arrival, the second one in a small meditation room of the Berlin SRCM Center and the third one at an abhyasi's place, on the next day.

He also spent a lot of time talking with abhyasis, answering their questions and distilling precious teachings as He uses to do.

We have recorded as much of what He said as possible, some highlights of which are reported herein whereas other aspects will be included in subsequent issues of *Echoes of Africa and Indian Ocean*.

We wish to share with you a brief statement He made as an introduction to the group meditation at the Berlin Center, as well as a special message to brothers and sisters in Africa.

### What essentially we all are: human beings

"I will confess that I am not here in Berlin, I am with sisters and brothers, and I am happy to be with you all. I emphasize this because we are all separated by geography, by history, by colour, by language and religion. We will forget all this, and

come back to what essentially we all are: human beings. That's why I want to say that it doesn't matter to be in Berlin, Timbuktu or Tokyo, as long as I'm with my family. Thank you for having me here."



*Chariji's brief address before a morning sat-sangh in Berlin, Germany, June 1, 2006*

### We should be what we are

On June 1, 2006, I asked Master to give a special message for abhyasis in Africa. He provided a long message which will be published in next issues. Only a very small portion is given herein.

**Master:** "I am telling Iranians, you know, that you are of the East, you have forgotten your culture, you know, you are aping the West, you know, and you are going to lose."

**Question:** Should we revert to, try

to retrieve our culture?

**Master:** Yes, but you see this is like a banana plant, you know, in depression. What is a banana depression? Oh, I would love to follow orange, lovely circle, you know, and this orange colour. Look at me, long and...and suppose... darkness it's your beauty... Suppose it goes into depression all my friends are small you know. .... **We should be what we are. A banana should aspire to reach perfection**, not be the best, ... as they say one carat diamond or ten points diamond can be perfect and is better than useless hundred carats pieces of stones. We are not wanting quality or wanting quantity, size, understand? So we should be content first, oh I am black, and all these women, they spend hundreds dollars on sun tan and going naked on the beach... .

*Chariji – Berlin, June 1, 2006*

## Towards Master's Visit to Africa

In Berlin, on May 31, June 1 and 2, 2006, Master expressed on three different occasions, his wish to visit Africa. A suggestion was put forward that his trip would include Cameroon, Gabon and Nigeria, if possible.

All brothers and sisters living in Africa, as well as African abhyasis from the diaspora are invited to start the preparations now, both logistically and spiritually. A committee for the organization of the visit is being set up. Master will be kept informed of the preparations, step by step.

How we foresee this visit is heartily ex-

pressed by a brother from Cameroon who wrote:

"The good news

Words are failing me to greet the announcement of the visit of our Revered Master in our place, in Africa. So far, some of us had the opportunity to meet Him here or there, in India or Europe..., but now, He invites Himself physically in Africa. This news is hailed with a lot of joy, emotion and it is applauded. It never happened in Douala that an announcement, soon as after a deep Sunday sat-sangh, sparked a round of applause.

In any case, as far as I am concerned, I am bathing for some time in such profound bliss and rapture that sometimes I found myself tottering.

I would like quite simply to say that He is welcome. In terms of preparation, this entails a lot of work at several levels on our part, all of us. As far as I am concerned, I shall co-operate; I declare myself ready..."

## Daily Reflections

### Turn inside

Saturday, May 20, 2006

Spirituality speaks of the need to be humble. It tries to say, "Friend, look into yourself. What is it you have really enjoyed?" If you drink all the wine in this world you will not see the end of enjoyment. In fact, the more you drink the less you enjoy. In this futile search to find more pleasure in taking more of something, one who seeks it in wine ends up a drunkard with his liver diseased, and ends up in a death which he did not deserve. Another seeks it in money and ends up owning the world but miserable. Same thing with power, with women, with drugs -you name it, it is the same truth--anything. That is why when we reach the material exaltation in any sphere you find the exaltation of misery. Therefore, the spiritual way says, "Turn inside." It is not that we denigrate the material life, because the material life is necessary. It is in the material life that we have to try and achieve a spiritual existence and, having stepped into the spiritual life, to

seek an emancipation which we may call liberation, realization. Which only means that we must use this material life as a vehicle to take us from this side to that side of existence, like a boat to cross a river, or a car to take me from my home to my workplace.

*Taken from the book "Heart to Heart vol. 4", chapter "What is spirituality?", pg no: 141-142 -by Chariji.*

### True Aspirant / Seeker

Sunday, May 28, 2006

Seriousness in the seeker is the first prerequisite for success in the spiritual adventure. As Master has said, there are numerous worshippers of God, but few seek Him! There seems to be a mysterious force or law working in the universe, which ordains that where a sincere seeker exists, Nature so modifies the condition of his personal existence as to make him a sort of magnet, which inevitably attracts to him persons and events which will play a significant and active role in the furtherance of his search. As his personal search deepens, the law works, and more and more in his favor, strength-

ening the forces of attraction towards himself, finally, at a certain stage, bringing to his very door a guide who can then take charge of him and assume responsibility for his further progress on the inward path.

*Taken from the book "The Principles of Sahaj Marg, Set 1, Vol. 2," chapter "The Goal of Spiritual Endeavor," pg. 167 -by Chariji.*

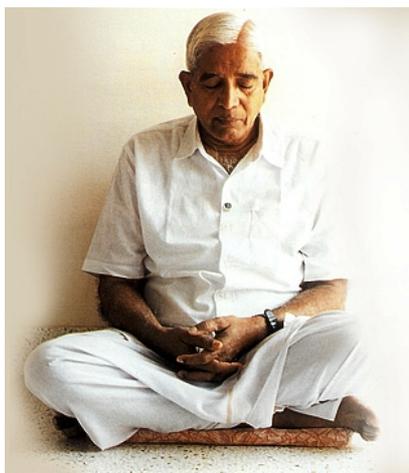
### Equality

Monday, June 19, 2006

One rises to prominence only when he thinks himself to be humble. Humility brings forth what arrogance cannot. One must, therefore, never part with this noble virtue, be he great or small, high-born or low-born. God belongs to no caste, creed or society, hence there must be no difference between man and man on that basis. This is a godly quality and one must try to imbibe it within one's self. If instead we look down with hatred upon the low and small we swerve away from the path of duty or dharma.

*Taken from the book "Complete Works of Ram Chandra Vol. 2", chapter "My Pain", pg 7 - by Babuji*

## CELEBRATING MASTER'S 79TH BIRTHDAY IN 2006



A special issue of this journal will be devoted to the celebration of the 79th birthday of our Revered Master. It will include contributions from the various centers on how the celebrations will be organised, in terms of program, meditation hours, specific events, readings, etc.

Center-In-Charge are reminded to provide such information to Echoes of Africa and Indian Ocean by July 10 for onward publication.

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