



## Master's Message, July 24, 2006

Dear brothers and sisters,  
I am happy to remind you all about a Message that Babuji Maharaj has given us, which has been printed in Whispers. He says these celebrations are meant to focus our total attention – body, mind and soul – on the remembrance of the Master – our great Masters. They are not meant as a festival, even though there is an element of celebration. They are not meant for enjoyment, but there is the permission to enjoy the inner state that should be created on such occasions, such wonderful, spirituality, grace-filled occasions. Which in short means that we must use these occasions for spiritual upliftment, each one for himself or herself, being in total remembrance of the great Master, for whatever time we have to spend here together.

Diversion from this objective, this goal, this aim, will only mean that we are wasting our resources of time, frittering it away, flippantly, in unwanted pursuits. Even I like samosa! But we should not crowd the canteen, even while lectures are going on, because we are afraid that the samosa will be over. I am told there is a great rush on our canteen. That is certainly a tribute to the quality of the

food that the Mission offers. But it is certainly not a tribute to your attention, because during the course of your meditation, and the rapt attention that is necessary here, when you are listening to lectures, listening to the wonderful music that our brother and sisters have provided - our souls should dance, not our bodies. A bhajan [devotional song] is meant to evoke within us certain feelings of love, devotion, and have the ability



to bring down the grace on us, even as we sit in rapt attention.

I do hope that the words, the meaning of these words, will enthuse you all to treat these celebrations, these occasions, these bhandaras [spiritual gatherings] with a certain solemnity of atmosphere – even though there must be a pervasive undercurrent of joy and happiness. In another Message, Babuji Maharaj says when there is no joy, there is no spirituality. But joy must not be manifest; it

must be in the heart – inner joy, inner bubbling of the spirit – which must transport us into an unknown, unseen world which we call the Brighter World, even though it may be only temporary.

So, dear brothers and sisters, I urge you to use these occasions not merely wisely, not merely attentively – but to bring your entire soul, your body, your mind - everything together into one focus on the great Master who is guiding us out of this existence,

into another existence, which we cannot describe, but which we can feel in every sitting in meditation, if you are bent on finding it. I have numerous abhyasis who ask questions: "What do you feel?" "Well", I said, "That question can be asked only by somebody who has felt nothing

ing." And for one who has felt nothing over the years, it's impossible to describe what you can feel, and what you cannot feel. It depends on you! Sahaj Marg offers, you take; Sahaj Marg guides, you move towards the destination; the guru leads, you follow. If these three things are there, the Goal will surely be reached in this lifetime.

May my Master bless you all with it. Thank you.

*P. Rajagopalachari*

## Thus speaks:

### Chariji

- You know, the thing which most upset me in the beginning of my life with Master, was that there were always abhyasis dying or sick, [...], and it never visibly seemed to bother him. I used to think he was a heartless person. People would come weeping, even from his own locality, from his own village, and saying so and so died only two hours ago. He would only put on a long face and say, "It is very sad," nothing more than that. Now, I used to think, that on one side he has a heart which loves everything in the universe, but you never see a tear in the eyes of that old man. What is this contradiction? Then, I learnt the secret of it in meditation, [...]. **For him there is no death. We die, but for him there is no death.** For whom is he to weep? It would be crazy to weep for somebody who is not dead. So, that is the mystery, [...].
- In most societies, we are happy when a child is born, and we weep when somebody dies. But there is one society where the opposite is done. They weep when a child is born, and celebrate when a man dies. That is a sensible attitude. A soul which was free, in bliss, and which had liberty, is suddenly imprisoned in a stupid human body here. Is it not a matter for grief? So they weep. And death is a liberation from this prison – they celebrate it. I think it's a very healthy attitude. Don't you think so? It doesn't matter which society or where! But the fact is there!

## Contents

Master's Message...	1	Personal stories	3
Thus speaks...	1	Daily Reflections	4
Nigeria: A Center is Born	2	Celebrations in centers	4
Love the living	3		

## Nigeria: A Center Is Born

We depart from Douala, Cameroon, on Friday, 21 July 2006 at 10:20 p.m., and reach Lagos, Nigeria, at 11:40 p.m. After immigration formalities, we are happily surprised to be cheerfully welcomed outside the airport terminal by Philémon Onuoha and his friend Emmanuel Atokwu. We introduce ourselves to one another and Emmanuel drives us to an hotel located 20 minutes off the airport. But, for some reasons, Emmanuel loses the direction to the hotel, and he drives round in circles for some 90 minutes. We will understand later, at the end of our stay in Lagos, why Master keeps us riding until that late in the night.

### July 22: First introductions

We eventually reach the hotel and go immediately to our rooms for a well-deserved rest from 2:00 a.m. to 7:30 a.m. - when Brother Raj Kumar and his wife Usha wake us up. They left their home at Victoria Island, much earlier as they were eager to be given individual sittings. At 8:00 a.m., I receive a phone call from the Region-in-charge, who wants to hear the story of our safe arrival under Master's protection. We spend the entire morning with Raj and Usha as well as another brother, Atul Prabhakar, who wants to be introduced into Sahaj Marg. Around midday, we are joined by Philemon Onuoha and a group of relatives (his father, sister and 2 brothers) and three friends. We were expecting them at 9:00 a.m., but they could not make it due to unforeseen transportation hitches. After 1 hour and half of free exchanges, introductory sittings are given until late in the evening to 7 aspiring candidates.

### July 23: More introductory sittings

On the second day, further introductory sittings are given to an increased number of

people at two different places. At Raj's home, Armand attends to aspiring candidates identified by Raj while I remain at the hotel with those who came with Philemon. At the end of the day, we are invited for dinner by Raj and Usha.

### July 24: birthday of Chariji

We initially planned to complete all the introductions before the group meditation scheduled at 11:00 a.m. at Raj's, but unfortunately all expected candidates arrive late. Therefore only 5 abhyasis who arrived on time attend the satsangh. After meditation we address the latecomers about the importance of discipline and the need to respect the hours of meditation in Sahaj Marg.

After a particularly succulent meal, we complete several introductions in order to allow the relevant new abhyasis to attend the last meditation - 5:00 p.m. - which brings together 12 brothers and sisters. The pervading ambience is very good and pleasant and there is abundant flow of transmission.

### July 25-27: Last sittings and talks

Other final introductory sittings and discussions with brothers and sisters are held from July 25-27. A meditation group is also conducted at Philemon's home on July 26.

### 15 abhyasis in Nigeria

All in all, 11 people have been introduced.

With Raj and Usha as well as 2 abhyasis living in another city — who could not make it to Lagos, the total number of abhyasis in Nigeria is henceforth 15.

The group of 13 abhyasis we have met in Lagos comprises 8 Nigerians and 5 Indians. Two (2) of them live in Abuja, and 1 in Imo State in East Nigeria. In terms of gender distribution, these are 4 sisters and 9 brothers. In addition to Philemon who was remotely introduced by Master, the group is composed in majority of Philemon Onuoha's friends and relatives. There are also Indians living in Lagos in Raj Kumar's circle. All newly introduced brothers and sisters have not yet displayed the same level of aspirations and commit-



ment, nevertheless, the group shows strong potential for fast expansion.

*Report from M.B.M. & J.A.N.*

### Master's Order

#### ORDER

Nigeria – 20060731\_1

Centre Designation

July 31, 2006

As the President of Shri Ram Chandra Mission, I hereby declare Lagos, Nigeria as an active Centre of the Mission. All Mission related activities in this centre shall be coordinated in consultation with, and with the approval of, brother Michel Mouyelo-Katoula, the Mission's Regional-in-Charge for Nigeria.

P. RAJAGOPALACHARI

### How will the Center function?

It is expected that, **every week**, two meditations will take place: on Wednesday at Philémon Onuoha's, and on Sundays at Raj Kumar's.

Also, **every month**, preceptors from Cameroon have volunteered to go in turn to Lagos for 3 days - from Friday to Monday - to give sittings, introduce new aspirants and conduct satsanghs.

## Love the living...

*In the first issue of "Echos d'Afrique", January 1st, 2006, reference was made to a wide range of resources on-line, which all abhyasis and aspirants of Sahaj Marg could use for their spiritual benefit. Salient Features are one of those resources, presented in the form of a series of compilations on various topics included in the Sahaj Marg literature. They can be downloaded from: <http://www.sahajmarg.org/smrti/education/publications/salfeatures/index.html>*

*Master's comments - which we have titled Love the living - as well as other excerpts on page 4 are extracted from Series 7, Death. They are inserted herein to provide Master's answers to questions raised by some brothers and sisters on fear and death.*

We have somehow developed this old tradition of worshipping dead people, dead things. The living father of the family rarely has as much respect as after his death [...]. When he is alive, the son cares very little. When he is dead, because it is a matter of show, a matter of selfishness that if I don't do this, something may happen; if I do it, I may get good. Therefore they do it with a certain degree of fervour. They don't care about spending some money, but when the father is alive and he asks for two rupees worth of something to eat, generally the son gets angry. [...] It is a common experience of all of us, miserable human beings, that we love our parents more after they are dead. While they are alive, they are nuisances to us. They trouble us with their demands for discipline, for performance.

And when they die, we work off our self-felt, self-created guilty feelings by expensive shraddhas, expensive ceremonies, putting up big pictures on the walls. Why is it that we have to love the dead and not the living? I mean, this is a very sordid bit of human existence, that somebody has to die before they earn our love. What is the use of weeping for the dead? Shall we not weep for the living? [...] **Love the living; it's no use loving the dead.** Fathers die, mothers die, and we put their pictures at home and with great devotion we put a garland and light a lamp. According to my Master, this is the most destructive thing that we can do which holds back these souls from their own progress in the after-life. What should we do with the dead? First of course we bury them or cremate them;

that is physical disposal. As far as the mind is concerned, love them and forget them. When you remember, pray to the Master, 'May that soul receive peace.' That is enough. If you want to remember them on the day of their departure, try to forget it, you will remember them better. If memory comes, sit in meditation for ten minutes or fifteen minutes. Pray to the Master, "Almighty Master! My departed father, mother, brother, sister - may your Grace flow towards him or her. May he or she receive peace." [...] It is better to sit in meditation and think of the departed souls. Surely they will benefit more by it. And if he is a preceptor he should transmit with the idea that the transmission will reach the soul wherever it may be."

*P. Rajagopalachari*

*Salient Features - Series 7 - Death*

## Personal stories

### How I discovered Sahaj Marg

In 1999, I helplessly went through a period of turbulence with particularly violent upheavals insofar as all what I considered as the foundations of my life collapsed in an irremediable way: separation from my husband, death of my mother, decline of my professional activities. It seemed that I was seriously ill-fated and I got weaker and weaker. I lost all my points of reference. As originally catholic, I was praying much, not with the purpose of retrieving what I lost because I realised that a cycle of my life was then completed. I found myself praying to meet a living spiritual guide who could hold

my hand and speak to me – I did not mean to break with Jesus, though some doubt started to arise about him. I was feeling in a subtle way that I needed something else.

As I was granted a scholarship to attend training courses in South Africa and Sweden, I left for Cape Town. At the end of the training, I went to Johannesburg, to withdraw to some place and pray. I spent 5 days in Johannesburg during which I fasted and prayed God to show me the way, my way. Before the 5<sup>th</sup> day, I called home and my daughter told me that Cécile, a friend from Paris, kept calling me. When I returned to Cameroon, as soon as I entered

my apartment, the telephone rang: it was Cécile! She announced the arrival to Cameroon of one of her friends who was a member of a spiritual movement. She asked me to take care of her as this would be her first visit to Cameroon to support a group of people who used to meditate in the suburbs of Douala. I accepted with joy to seize that opportunity to be helpful to Cécile. Florence (Cécile's friend) arrived the following day or two days after Cécile's call. She called me in the morning and wanted to see me. We met in my office, at work. Florence made a very good impression to me: she was serene and I was struck by her

radiance. She spoke about Sahaj Marg, which I had never heard about before. She made reference to a Master living somewhere in India, and mentioned various notions: meditation on the heart, samskaras and many other things which I did not understand at all.

I stared at her at the end of her comments and told her: "I have not grasped anything of what you have just said to me, but I am convinced that you are the person that God sends to lead me to my Guide, I will therefore follow you..."

*MBM*



## Daily Reflections

### Fear of Death

You know the only fear is the fear of death. There is no other fear. A man is afraid of being sick, it is because he is afraid of dying as a result of that sickness. The fear of death is the base of all fears. If there is no fear of death, there can be no other fear. Please take it as an assurance. You are afraid of a lion. Why? Because you are afraid of being killed by a lion. [...] Any fear in any situation is essentially the fear of death. And if that is removed, there should be no other fear. A person who has no fear of death cannot be afraid of anything else. What else is there to be afraid of? If fear of death is removed, there can be no other fear. Fearlessness can come at one stroke by removing one single fear which is the breeding ground of all other fears.

*P. Rajagopalachari*

### Fear of death is the fear of liberation.

Spiritual aspirants who are growing all the time should have lost this idea of the fear of death long ago. Death doesn't

exist you see. If I take off my shirt and put it in the wash basket it doesn't mean it is dead, nor does it mean that I am dead. Both are still there, the only thing is they are not together. The shirt is somewhere, I am still somewhere. So when I am dead, my body is somewhere, I am still somewhere. What is there to worry about? What is there to be afraid about? So you see, the idea of the fear of death is a limiting factor. It still means that we are seeking liberation, being afraid of that same liberation. Fear of death is the fear of liberation. This is something we must all understand very positively. As long as we are afraid to die, we will not be liberated, but we will continue to be imprisoned within that cycle of birth and death of which we are so afraid. That means one who is afraid of death will have to die again and again and again until he loses his fear of it.

*P. Rajagopalachari*

*Religion and spirituality*

### The Soul And Its Journey

All of us are constantly travelling from somewhere to somewhere else. The journey has necessarily to be undertaken in a

vehicle of some sort and the vehicle must have a surface prepared for it to ride on. And of course we go to a place which we have to reach – the destination. Therefore, we have the way upon which we must travel, the vehicle in which we travel, and the destination to which we are travelling. If perchance, the vehicle breaks down on the way, the intelligent traveller gets out of the now useless vehicle and takes another vehicle. This change of vehicle will be necessary as many times as the vehicle becomes unserviceable, so long as the destination has not been reached. Once the destination has been reached, vehicles are no more necessary. Once the destination has been reached, the way too becomes a thing of the past. So the important thing which we must ever keep before us is the goal, the destination. The way and the vehicle are but the means to our arriving at our predetermined destination.

*P. Rajagopalachari*

## Celebrations of Master's Birthday

### Pointe-Noire, Congo-Brazzaville

Brothers and sisters gathered at 9:00 a.m. for the celebration of the Birthday of our beloved Master. The satsangh took place from 11:30 a.m.-12:30. After a brotherly brunch, all abhyasis focused on the analysis of Master's life: (i) The human aspect of His life: His childhood, His schooling, His professional life; (ii) The spiritual aspect; His Swatiska or Spiritual quest, at the feet of His Master, His Method and His Work.

The exchanges were fruitful in terms of knowledge, amazement and joy. Through an impulse of heart, a brother said: "Master

is here with us, as ever, and for Eternity." The feeling shared by all abhyasis on this auspicious day is that: Master who always "give", has given more on this birth anniversary than usually. It is up to us to seize this Grace and to keep this condition in order to be uplifted more and more up to the Perfect Union with Him in His Grace...

*F.N*

### Nairobi, Kenya

We celebrated Revered Master's Birthday on 24th July, Monday. Morning satsangh was held at 9- A.M. Evening satsangh was at 6:30 in the evening. It was held at our new residence by Master's Grace. After

meditation, we read Master's message from Special Issue of Echoes of Africa. After that we listened the audio tape of Master from the series - The Unification of Humanity- Youth- a Time for Aspiration. Then we had dinner together. Previous day, Sunday satsangh was held in the morning and in the evening, individual sittings were given.

*V.B*

### Contributors:

Design and layout: MMK, JN

Editors:

JN: Jeanne Nanitelamio

MMK: Michel Mouyelo-Katoula

### Contributions were received:

For page 2:

From: Sister Mariette Bissene and  
Brother Jean Armand Nkoma  
(Cameroon)

For individual stories on page 3:

From: Sister Mariette Bissene

(Cameroon)

For reports on page 4:

From: Brother Fidèle Ngouala  
(Pointe-Noire, Congo-Brazzaville)  
and Sister Veena Bhatia (Nairobi,  
Kenya)

Communications intended for *Echoes of Africa and Indian Ocean* must be addressed to echosdaf@yahoo.com,

Fax: (1) 309 41 81 655 or (32) 27 06 23 70