

Dear Sister and Brothers

Saprem Namaskar

The Gurupurnima of this year is on 9th July. We celebrate Gurupurnima on the Vyasa Jayanti as the gratitude to our Guru Parampara. This tradition of Guru starts with Ishwara but Vyasa Jayanti – Ashadhi Purnima is celebrated as Gurupurnima because it was Maharishi Veda Vyasa who edited and organized the various Richas -the supersensory, the eternal knowledge -that were received by various Rishis. He also made a systematic arrangement by assigning the various shakhas of Vedas and various vidyas to different communities and families and instituting the Guru-Shishya Parampara. That is why in spite of so many invasions the considerable portion of Vedas and the various Vidyas were protected and have survived till this day. Thus this is the day to remember gratefully all the gurus of our culture and also in our life.

For us in Vivekananda Kendra Ishwara is our Guru. The best name of Ishwara which is beyond language and which encompasses all forms and names of Ishwara is Omkar. Thus we keep Omkar as our Guru. It represents all Guru-tradition. Out of our five Utsavas, some Utsavas are not generally celebrated as public functions but we solemnly celebrate them for enhancing the inner strength of Karyakartas. Gurupurnima is one such Utsava.

This year the theme that we are focusing upon is ‘Water the Roots’. ‘*Water the roots of the tree.., and the whole tree is watered*’, said Swami Vivekananda. Vedas are the roots of our nation. What is meant by Vedas? – The Vedic vision of Oneness and the Vedic principles.

Our country has become independent; the Hindus may awake and be organized but unless we rebuild our national systems and our personal lives on the Vedic vision of Oneness and on Vedic principles the real nation-building would not take place. The historical compulsions made us to adopt certain practices but that is not our tradition or our roots and as the time changes we need to connect to our roots through proper attitude and practices.

The very purpose of Vivekananda Kendra is this. Eknathji said that a thought movement is required which draws its inspiration from Vedas. Swami Vivekananda also said, ‘Conquer the world with your spirituality’. Eknathji explains this as, “*The remedy for the ills of our country, therefore, lies in launching a mighty movement of right thought sweeping the entire country. It has to be a two-pronged move. On the one hand, it is to be aimed at (1) transforming our people’s inherent God-wardness into the right spiritual urge rising out of the teachings of the Upanishads, namely, (a) each soul is potentially divine and (b) faith in God, in turn means faith in one’s self, i.e. in one’s potentiality to rise to divine heights. On the other hand, it is (2) to convert the spiritual fervour thus released into works of national reconstruction*”

Later this is explained in further details in our Kendra Prayer. We can focus on five Vedic principles that we see in our Kendra Prayer.

1. Dhyeyamarg Yatra which focuses on watering the roots i.e. if there is Tyaga, Seva and Atmabodha in practice, practicing Vedic Principles proceeds without difficulty

2. Vayam Suputra Amritasya noonam- striving for excellence, for tremendous confidence and manifestation of the best in us.
3. Our Aaradhana of Ishwara is by serving the Aarta and Vipanna without any personal gains (Nishkam Budhdhya)- Selflessness in work
4. Tava eva aashisha poornatam tatprayatu – We should strive hard but the work goes to culmination with the blessings of Ishwara, whatever he has planned. Thus, have humility in work and submit to Ishwara’s plan.
5. Jeevane Yavadadanam syat pradanam... - To give far more than we receive – Not to be calculative in life

To practice all these we Karyakartas have to focus on few things

1 Samay Niyojan – unless we learn that we cannot work. What is essential what is not so essential. We should not lose time in gadgets. We should have our own restrictions, may be, we can call it Vrata for the use of it so that we are not devoured by it.

2. Vani Samyam – Hanuman was chosen by Sri Rama by listening to his vani. His Vani had four characteristics Adirgham – Talk precisely – unless we are clear in our goal and plan of work we cannot talk precisely. Avilambitam- Tell immediately – unless we are in knowhow of our work or are aware of our Karyakshetra we cannot talk or tell about it immediately. Asandighdham – Do not tell with ambiguity. We can speak Asandighdham only if we are clear about work, always alert about the work and honest, Avyatham – it should not create pain, anxiety in others. Unless we have empathy about others we may not talk Avyatham.

3. Atmiyata – The whole existence has come from one Atma Chaitanya. Ekoham Bahusyam – I am one let me be many. Thus, the Omkar Upasana is nothing but experiencing Oneness. To have feeling of Oneness for all. The very basis for our work is Ekatmata or Atmiyata about our family, society, nation and creation.

4. Nirahankarita – To feel the Atmiyata one has to give up the puny I; ‘I and mine’, and then alone we can work in a team. This ‘I’ is the big obstacle. Many times a Karyakarta may be very active, capable but if his ‘I’ is working in every action, he cannot create a band of workers and expand the work.

5. Look within and the traits, which are useful for the work we should develop it further and which are not useful for the work, let us make a plan to reduce it over the period. No one else may correct us if we are already having team responsibility. We ourselves have to critically look within and correct.

Ultimately watering the roots means gradually also transforming ourselves to embody the Vedic principles in our life.

It is only when a challenging task is ahead the best in us is manifested. It also helps us to develop the qualities, teamwork required for that. Therefore, for this year each Nagar has chosen three

‘To do - Karaneeyam’ points out of the ten that were decided in Adhikari Baithak. The detailed process planning for those three Karaneeyam also must have been done by every nagar. If not it can be done before Gurupurnima and on Gurupurnima day we can offer it to Omkar.

On Gurupurnima day, the Nagar can take up Abhyas of Kendra Prarthana in which the discussion or discourse can be on above five points of Prarthana or Nagar can have the workshop on the five qualities mentioned above or preparation of outer and inner that is required for achieving these three objectives. The outer preparation for the three Karaneeyam is listing and preparing for all human and other resources required, necessary micro-planning etc. The inner preparation is our resolve, commitment and enhancing and augmenting our qualities required for the three Karaneeyam. For Example if suppose we have decided to increase the number of Yogavargas, then even though the Varga Shikshaks would be taking the Vargas, the other Karyakartas should take up study and practice of Yoga so that the atmosphere will be such in Kendra that people would get motivated to come to Kendra and learn Yoga. Thus, the three Karaneeyam should possess and enrich the minds of all the Karyakartas in the Nagar. Gurupurnima should be the occasion to resolve and to prepare ourselves to create such atmosphere.

With warm regards

Yours Sincerely

Nivedita