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SWAMI RANGANATHANANDAJI MAHARAJ ATTAINS MAHASAMADHI

Most Revered Swami Ranganathanandaji Maharaj, President Ramakrishna Math & Mission, Belur Math, passed away on 25th April 2005 at Kolkata following a brief illness. He was aged 96.

Hailing from Kerala, Swami Ranganathanandaji was initiated into the Ramakrishna Order in the year 1933 by Swami Shivanandaji, a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna. Revered Swamiji served at Mysore and Bangalore for about 12 years and then in Karachi, Rangoon and many other centres. He became the Vice- President of the Order in 1989. In 1998, Swamiji was unanimously elected by the Board of Trustees as the 13th President of the Ramakrishna Order of monks.

Swami Ranganathanandaji was hailed as India's greatest spiritual ambassador of our times. He toured all over the world delivering lectures on spirituality, Indian Culture, the Bhagavad Gita and the Upanishads. He authored several books, the major ones being 'The Message of the Upanishads', 'Eternal Values for a Changing Society' (4 volumes), 'A Pilgrim Looks At The World' (2 volumes), 'Universal Message of the Bhagavad Gita' and 'An Exposition of the Gita in the Light of Modern Thought and Modern Needs'. His book on the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad was the last to be published. He authored more than 50 books and booklets in addition to about 600 audio tapes and 50 video tapes which contain his talks on a variety of topics: Education in the Modern Age; Education and Ethical Values; Vivekachudamani; Srimad Bhagavatam; Re-education of the Educated; and The Bhagavad Gita.

He had a special affinity for the Mysore Ashrama since he entered Sanyasa while he was serving in the

Mysore Ashrama. He used to describe Mysore as his spiritual home. When Maharaj was elected by the Board of Trustees as the President of Ramakrishna Math & Mission, he was recuperating in a nursing home and the news of his new responsibility was conveyed to him by one of the Vice-Presidents there itself. At that time Maharaj is reported to have exclaimed, 'What! The cook of Mysore Ashrama to be the President of the Sangha?' This was the typical way in which he remembered the Mysore Ashrama. He visited Mysore in the year 2001 when he laid the Foundation Stone for the Golden Jubilee Block on 22 February at the Vidyashala. His last visit to Mysore was in 2003.



Swami Ranganathanandaji was a great thinker, scholar, writer and an orator. Simplicity was one of the hall-marks of his greatness. He never possessed anything other than the simple items which covered his bare necessities. He had a unique sense of social concern which was recognized widely. He was a recipient of the prestigious Indira Gandhi Award for National Integration.

Describing Ranganathanandaji Maharaj as "a swamiji of indomitable spirit and a great Spiritual Leader", Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, the honorable President of India, in his condolence message said, "He was a noble soul who immersed himself in the mission of spreading the message of the Vedanta to Humanity throughout this planet." The Prime Minister of India Dr Manmohan Singh mourned that the world had lost a true sanyasi, in every sense of the term and added "We are all poorer today."

May Swamiji's noble qualities and his exemplary life continue to inspire us.



From the Secretary's desk

We have pleasure to place in your hands, the January-June 2005 issue of Voice of Vidyashala Alumni. This half of the year has sadly witnessed the loss of three noble and spiritual personalities: Most Revered Swami Ranganathanandaji Maharaj, President of Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math, Revered Swami Keshavanandaji Maharaj, former warden of Vidyashala during fifties and sixties and Rev. Swami Purushottamanandaji Maharaj, President, Belgaum centre. In addition, a senior alumnus, Sri Tulsidas Dasappa, an inmate of the hostel and a former Member of Parliament is also no more. This issue carries our heart-felt and respectful homage to them.

On the positive side, the Association has embarked on another land mark, launching the Bangalore Chapter of the OBA – an attempt to further strengthen the network. We bring you a report of the event in addition to other regular features.

The Old Boys' Retreat program is scheduled to be held on 9th and 10th July 2005 (Saturday and Sunday). This program is structured to provide Old Boys a rejuvenating experience and will be held at Ramakrishna Institute of Moral and Spiritual Education which boasts of a wonderful and peaceful ambience. Let us seize this opportunity to recharge our spiritual batteries and further strengthen our network. Let us participate in the retreat in good number and benefit from this program.

OBA gets Bangalored!

The alumni meet at Bangalore was held at the R V Dental College Auditorium on 27th March 2005. The meet was well attended by over 220 alumni members. The meeting began with invocation by young alumni of the batch of 90s followed by reverential respects to Swami Purushottamanandaji who passed away recently.



Sri N R Ashok (SSLC Batch of 1975), a civil engineer by profession who has specialized in deconstruction work, was named the secretary of the Bangalore Chapter. In his address, Ashok emphasized the importance of networking. (You will find excerpts of his speech elsewhere in this edition of VOVA).

The prime objective of the Bangalore meet was to arrive at a mechanism for continued and daily communication between old students across batches. In order to do this, a four-page suggestion sheet was handed over to all attendees, wherein they shared their opinions on ways in which one could foster greater friendship amongst the members. Future activities of the chapter will be planned based on the suggestions given.

This meet triggered a chain of nostalgic memories of alumni both of senior and recent batches. Among the alumni who shared their views were Dr Medappa (an inmate of the hostel), Sri W.P Krishna (Batch of

78), Sri Diwakar (Batch of 78), Dr G Jagadish (1977-1981), Sri Premnath Setty (1965), Dr K V Ramesh (1964), Sri B S Rishikesh (1997-2002), Sri Ashwath (1980-84), Sri A Karthik (1993-96). The memory trips



Core Committee

went on till late in the afternoon. The meeting ended with a brief vote of thanks followed by informal discussions on various subjects during lunch.

Plaques of honour were presented to four members- Sri R Parthasarathy, Dr Sujaya Kumar, Sri K Narendra and Sri B R Dwarakanath—in recognition of their contribution to the Vidyashala OBA.

Swami Muktidanandaji the Correspondent of Vidyashala said, "In this world of inter-relatedness and inter-dependence, social bonds extend beyond the limits of family. Having studied in Vidyashala, we all have a distinct cultural and social identity. We should harness whatever we have for mutual good. In fact, it is our obligation to stand for each other."

Swami Sureshanandaji exhorted the alumni to build institutions of learning. He opined that the Bangalore Chapter of the OBA could, to begin with, consider starting under its auspices a residential college on lines of SRKVS.

SWAMI KESHAVANANDAJI MAHARAJ MOURNED



We regret to announce the passing away of Srimath Swami Keshavanandaji Maharaj on 4th April at the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal, Hardwar Dist. Uttaranchal State. He was aged 90.

Swami Keshavanandaji served in the Vidyashala from 1956 to 1972 in the twin capacity of warden and Dispensary-in-charge. He was popularly known as 'A Block Swamiji' and also 'Doctor Swamiji'. A multifaceted personality, the swami was known for punctuality, meticulousness in whatever he did, and for his shrewd diagnosis of health problems. He was a voracious reader and was gifted with an excellent memory. Once when accosted by an enthusiastic student, he baffled him by readily rattling off a long passage from the message of Swami Vivekananda! He had two more faculties not known to many. Indian History was his favourite subject and he had great mastery over it. He was a good singer and his melodious voice would fill the prayer hall and the Vidyashala everyday during its calm hour between 5 and 6 PM.

The swamiji led a very simple and unostentatious life. He always preferred wearing Khadi (Dhoti and Kurta). He had deep faith in the Divine Trinity. As recalled by young manastic member, the way he would stand in front of Holy Mother's temple at Belur Math gave the impression that he was in direct communication with The Holy Mother, This happened every morning and it was indeed a sight to see. The swami, during his retirement at the Sadhu Nivas at Kankhal, would often narrate with tears, several incidents from Mother's life where she

showered her bountiful affection on one and all without discrimination of any kind. While narrating this, he would be overwhelmed and would stop sobbing only with great effort. He would always recall his blessed association with the senior monks of the Ramakrishna Order. 'Their very life was a lesson and message for us', he would say.

Before coming to Mysore, Srimath Swami Keshavanandaji had served in different centres of the Ramakrishna Order like Shillong, Cherrapunji, Vrindavan(near Mathura),Karachi and Rangoon (in Myanmar). After serving in the Vidyashala, he served at Vidyamandir (College for Men at Belur Math) and also in the Library of Belur Math. He had a desire to spend his last days by the side of the Ganges. He had, in fact long back predicted that his end might be in water ! The local tradition in Hardwar is to consign the mortal remains of a sanyasin into the Holy Ganga. Swamiji's prediction did come true!

Srimath Swami Keshavanandaji had a special love for the Vidyashala. He liked the salubrious weather of Mysore and the calmness of the campus. He liked the quiet city, the Ashrama with its holy background and the simplicity of the devotees. He had a great affinity for the alumni of Vidyashala. He would recall with gratitude the services rendered by them and by a few parents as well. The alumni who had the opportunity of serving him in various ways will always feel gratified for having served a 'noble sadhu'.

In his honour, special prayers and offers were arranged at Hardwar. On this occasion nearly 900 invitees including about 400 Sadhus of the area were fed. Special offerings were made at the Mysore Ashrama also on the thirteenth day of his passing away.

SRI TULSIDAS DASAPPA IS NO MORE



Sri Tulsidas Dasappa, an alumnus of Vidyashala and a former Member of Parliament, passed away in Bangalore on 19th April 2005. He was aged 75 years. He is survived by his wife, son and a daughter. His body was laid to rest with full State Honours at his Das Bhavan farm at Srirampura, Mysore.

The late Tulsidas Dasappa was an inmate of the erstwhile Ramakrishna Students' Home from the year 1939 to 1941. He had

earned reputation as a principled politician. He was a Member of the Lok Sabha from 1967 to 1980. He had a deep concern for the welfare of the poor students and showed keen interest in starting and maintaining hostels for their benefit.

He was an admirer of the Vidyashala and its activities. Both his sons, the late Lokesh Das (Batch 1975 to 78) and Sri Amaresh Das (Batch 1978 to 83) studied in Vidyashala. Sri Tulsidas Dasappa was a member of the Managing Committee of the Old Boys' Association for a few terms.

May his soul rest in peace.

A HOMAGE TO SWAMI PURUSHOTTAMANANDAJI MAHARAJ

ಶ್ರೀಮತ್ ಸ್ವಾಮಿ ಪುರುಷೋತ್ತಮಾನಂದಜಿ ಮಹಾರಾಜರು ಫೆಬ್ರವರಿ 25ರಂದು ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಲೀನರಾದರು ಎಂದು ತಿಳಿಸಲು ವಿಷಾದಿಸುತ್ತೇವೆ. ಪರಮಪೂಜ್ಯ ಶ್ರೀಮತ್ ಸ್ವಾಮಿ ಯತೀಶ್ವರಾನಂದಜಿ ಅವರ ಸಮಯದಲ್ಲಿ 1960ರಲ್ಲಿ ಬೆಂಗಳೂರಿನ ಶ್ರೀರಾಮಕೃಷ್ಣ ಮಠವನ್ನು ಸೇರಿದ ಸ್ವಾಮೀಜಿ 1993ರವರೆಗೆ ಅಲ್ಲಿನ ವಿವಿಧ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಸಕ್ರಿಯವಾಗಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಿದರು. ವಿವೇಕಾನಂದ ಬಾಲಕ ಸಂಘ ಮತ್ತು ವಿವೇಕಾನಂದ ಯುವಕ ಸಂಘಗಳ ಸ್ಕೂರ್ತಿಯ ಸೆಲೆಯಾಗಿದ್ದುದಲ್ಲದೆ ಆಶ್ರಮದ ಭಜನೆಗಳನ್ನು ಜನಪ್ರಿಯಗೊಳಿಸಿದ ಕೀರ್ತಿ ಅವರದು. ನಗರದ ವಿವಿಧೆಡೆ ಪ್ರಾರಂಭವಾದ ಸತ್ಸಂಗ ಕೇಂದ್ರಗಳನ್ನು ನಿಭಾಯಿಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದರು. 1993ರಲ್ಲಿ ಕೊಡಗಿನ ಪೊನ್ನಂಪೇಟೆಯ ಕೇಂದ್ರದ ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷರಾಗಿ ನೇಮಿಸಲ್ಪಟ್ಟು ಆಸ್ಪತ್ರೆಯನ್ನು ಹಾಗೂ ಆಶ್ರಮವನ್ನು ಪುನರುಜ್ಜೀವನಗೊಳಿಸಿದರು. 2000ರಲ್ಲಿ ಬೆಳಗಾವಿಯ ಕೇಂದ್ರವು ಸಂಘಕ್ಕೆ ಸೇರ್ಪಡೆಯಾದಾಗ ಅದರ ಕಾರ್ಯದರ್ಶಿಯಾಗಿ ನೇಮಿಸಲ್ಪಟ್ಟು ವಿಶಾಲವಾದ ದೇವಸ್ಥಾನವನ್ನು ನಿರ್ಮಿಸಿ ಉತ್ತರ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದಲ್ಲಿ ರಾಮಕೃಷ್ಣ - ವಿವೇಕಾನಂದ ಭಾವಧಾರೆಗೆ ಭದ್ರ ಬುನಾದಿಯನ್ನು ಕಲ್ಪಿಸಿದರು.

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದ ರಾಮಕೃಷ್ಣ - ವಿವೇಕಾನಂದ ಭಾವವಲಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಸ್ವಾಮಿ ಪುರುಷೋತ್ತಮಾನಂದಜಿ ಮಹಾರಾಜ್ ಒಂದು ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟವಾದ ಭಾಷನ್ನು ಮೂಡಿಸಿದವರು. ಗಾಯಕರಾಗಿ, ಲೇಖಕರಾಗಿ, ಉಪನ್ಯಾಸಕರಾಗಿ, ಆಡಳಿತಗಾರರಾಗಿ, ಸಂಘಟಕರಾಗಿ, ಜೊತೆಗೆ ಮಾನವೀಯ ಸಂವೇದನೆಗಳ ಶ್ರೇಷ್ಠ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಯಾಗಿ ಅವರು ಜನಮಾನಸದಲ್ಲಿ ನೆಲೆಗೊಂಡಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಅವರ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿತ್ವಕ್ಕೆ ಈ ಬಗೆಯ ಹಲವು ಮುಖಗಳಿದ್ದರೂ ಅದರ ಕೇಂದ್ರಬಿಂದು ಮಾತ್ರ ಆಧ್ಯಾತ್ಮಿಕತೆಯೆ. ಇದರ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣದಲ್ಲಿ ಒಂದು ಕಡೆ ದಿವ್ಯತ್ರಯರ ಜೀವನ-ಸಂದೇಶಗಳಿದ್ದರೆ, ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ಕಡೆ ಅವರ ಗುರುಗಳಾದ ಪೂಜ್ಯ ಸ್ವಾಮಿ ಯತೀಶ್ವರಾನಂದಜಿ ಅವರ ಪ್ರಭಾವಶಾಲಿ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿತ್ವ, ಮಾರ್ಗದರ್ಶನಗಳಿವೆ. ವ್ಯವಹಾರವನ್ನು ಪರಮಾರ್ಥದ ಎತ್ತರಕ್ಕೆ ಎತ್ತಬಲ್ಲ ಸ್ವಾಮಿ ಯತೀಶ್ವರಾನಂದಜಿ ಅವರ ಪವಿತ್ರ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಯನ್ನು ಅವರು ಮತ್ತೆ ಮತ್ತೆ ಮೆಲುಕು ಹಾಕುತ್ತಿದ್ದರು. ಇದನ್ನು ತಮ್ಮ ಬರಹಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಒಂದೆರಡು ಕಡೆ ಅವರು ಸ್ಮರಿಸಿರುವುದೂ ಉಂಟು.

ಕನ್ನಡದ ರಾಮಕೃಷ್ಣ - ವಿವೇಕಾನಂದ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯಕ್ಷೇತ್ರಕ್ಕೆ ಪೂಜ್ಯ ಸ್ವಾಮೀಜಿ ಅವರ ಕೊಡುಗೆ ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟವಾಗಲು ಹಲವು ಕಾರಣಗಳಿವೆ. ಅವುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಮೊದಲನೆಯದಂದರೆ ಈ ಕಾಲದ ಓದುಗರನ್ನು ನೇರವಾಗಿ ತಟ್ಟಬಲ್ಲ ಅದ್ಭುತನಗೊಳಿಸಿಕೊಂಡ ಭಾಷಾಶೈಲಿ. ಧರ್ಮ-ಆಧ್ಯಾತ್ಮಗಳ

ಭಾಷಾಪ್ರಯೋಗಗಳು ಹಳೆಯ ಜಾಡಿಗೆ ಸೇರಿದವುಗಳಾಗಿಬಿಟ್ಟರೆ ಆ ಮೂಲಕ ವಸ್ತುವೂ ಅಪ್ರಸ್ತುತವಾಗಿಬಿಡುತ್ತದೆ ಎಂಬ ಎಚ್ಚರವನ್ನು ಅವರಲ್ಲಿ ವಿಶೇಷವಾಗಿ ಗುರುತಿಸಬಹುದಾಗಿತ್ತು. ಬರೆಯುವಾಗಲೂ ಜನರನ್ನು ಮಾನಸಿಕವಾಗಿ ಎದುರಿಗಿಟ್ಟುಕೊಂಡೇ ಬರೆಯುವ ಕ್ರಮ ಅವರದು. ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟಪಡಿಸಬೇಕು, ವಿವರಿಸಬೇಕು ಎಂಬ ಕಾಳಜಿಯನ್ನು ಅವರ ಬರವಣಿಗೆಯುದ್ದಕ್ಕೂ ಗುರುತಿಸಬಹುದು. ಹೀಗಾಗಿಯೇ ಅವರು ಜೀವನಚರಿತ್ರೆಗಳನ್ನು ಬರೆಯುವಾಗಲೂ ಘಟನೆಗಳನ್ನು ಕಾಲಾನುಕ್ರಮಣಿಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ನಿರೂಪಿಸುವುದರಲ್ಲೇ ತೃಪ್ತರಾಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಆ ಘಟನೆಯ ಮಹತ್ವವನ್ನು, ಅದು ನಮ್ಮ ಬದುಕಿಗೆ ಹೇಗೆ ಪಾಠವಾಗಬಹುದೆಂಬುದನ್ನು ವಿವರಿಸುವುದರ ಕಡೆಗೂ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಗಮನಹರಿಸುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಇದು ಒಂದು ರೀತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅವರ ಉಪನ್ಯಾಸಗಳ ಧಾಟಿಯೂ ಆಗಿತ್ತು. ಸಮೂಹವನ್ನು ಉದ್ದೇಶಿಸಿ ಮಾತನಾಡುವ ಕ್ರಮಕ್ಕಿಂತ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಗೆ ಮುಖಾಮುಖಿಯಾಗಿ ಅವನ ಮನಸ್ಸನ್ನು ತಟ್ಟುವ ಹಂಬಲವನ್ನು ಅವರ ಮಾತಿನ ಧಾಟಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ವಿಶೇಷವಾಗಿ ಗುರುತಿಸಬಹುದಿತ್ತು.

Revered Swami Purushottamanandaji passed away recently in Belgaum. He was the President of the Ramakrishna Ashrama, Belgaum. Earlier, he had served as the President, Ramakrishna Sevashrama, Ponnampet, Kodagu Dist. He had special affinity for the Vidyashala old students and always readily agreed to deliver lectures during the Annual Retreat for Old Boys whenever requested. Our alumni were fond of listening to his lectures and Bhajans and remember his affection.



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ಹಾಗೆ ನೋಡಿದರೆ, ಜನರನ್ನು ತಲುಪಬೇಕೆಂಬ ಕಾಳಜಿ ಅವರ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿತ್ವದ ಮುಖ್ಯವಾದ ಲಕ್ಷಣವೆಂದು ಹೇಳಬೇಕು. ಹಾಡು ಮಾತು ಬರವಣಿಗೆಗಳ ಮೂಲಕ, ಸಂಭಾಷಣೆಗಳ ಮೂಲಕ, ಪ್ರವಾಸಗಳ ಮೂಲಕ, ಅಷ್ಟೇಕೆ ಕಟ್ಟಡ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣದ ಮೂಲಕವೂ, ಇದನ್ನು ಅವರು ದೊಡ್ಡ ಪ್ರಮಾಣದಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ಮಾಡಿದರು. ಅಲ್ಲದೆ ಈ ಕಾಳಜಿಯಿಂದಾಗಿಯೇ ಅವರು ಸಾಧಕರಿಗಾಗಿ ಬರೆದರು, ವಿದ್ಯಾರ್ಥಿಗಳಿಗಾಗಿ ಬರೆದರು, ತ್ಯಾಗಿಗಳಿಗಾಗಿ ಬರೆದರು, ಗೃಹಸ್ಥರಿಗಾಗಿ ಬರೆದರು. ಅವರ ಬರವಣಿಗೆಗಳ ವಸ್ತುವೈವಿಧ್ಯವನ್ನು ಆ ಹಿನ್ನೆಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ನಾವು ಗುರುತಿಸಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ. ಜೊತೆಗೆ ರೂಪವೈವಿಧ್ಯವೂ ಕಡಿಮೆಯೇನಲ್ಲ. ಜೀವನಚರಿತ್ರೆಗಳ ಜೊತೆಗೆ ಲೇಖನಗಳು, ನೀತಿಕಥೆಗಳು, ಪದ್ಯಗಳು, ನಿಘಂಟು, ಸ್ತೋತ್ರಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಹರಳುಗಟ್ಟಿದ ಚಿಂತನೆಯ ಮಾಲೆಗಳು. ಅಲ್ಲದೆ ಬರೆದುದನ್ನೂ ಆಗಾಗ ಬರೆಯಲಿಲ್ಲ; ಅಕ್ಷರಶಃ ಹಗಲೂ ರಾತ್ರಿ ಬರೆದರು; ಇನ್ನೂ ಬರೆಯುತ್ತಲೇ ಇದ್ದರು.

ಆ ದಿನ, ಲೇಖನ ಬೇಗ ಮಾಸಲಾರದು. ಅದಕ್ಕೆ ನಮ್ಮ ಭಾವಪೂರ್ಣ ನಮನ.

(ಕೃಪೆ : ವಿವೇಕ ಪ್ರಭ ಏಪ್ರಿಲ್ 2005)

We welcome articles to VOVA from members in the form of snippets, short stories, etc, Contact: Staff Secretary, Old Boys' Association. Sri Ramakrishna Vidyashala Yadavagiri, Mysore 570020 Phone : 0821 - 2417555.

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