

DIVYA VANI
Volume 9 Number 2, 3 & 4

Feb., Mar., & Apr. 1973

A periodical Publication of
the "Meher Vihar Trust"

An Avatar Meher Baba Trust eBook
June 2018

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Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust
Ahmednagar, India

Source and short publication history:

Divya Vani = Divine voice.

Quarterly, v.1, no. 1 (July 1961), v. 3. no. 2 (Oct. 1963): bimonthly, v. 1. no. 1 (Jan. 1964), v. 2 no. 3 (May 1965): monthly. v. 1. no. 11 (July 1965), v. 12, no. 6 (June 1976): bimonthly, v. 1. no. 1 (Aug. 1976), v.14. no. 1 (Jan. 1978): quarterly, v. 1, no. 1 (Jan. 1979), Kakinada : Avatar Meher Baba Mission. 1961- v. : ill.. ports.

Subtitle: An English monthly devoted to Avatar Meher Baba & His work (varies).

Issues for July - Oct. 1961 in English or Telugu.

Editor: Swami Satya Prakash Udaseen.

Place of publication varies.

Publisher varies: S. P. Udaseen (1961-1965): S.P. Udaseen on behalf of the Meher Vihar Trust (1965-1969): Meher Vihar Trust (1970-Apr. 1974).

Ceased publication?

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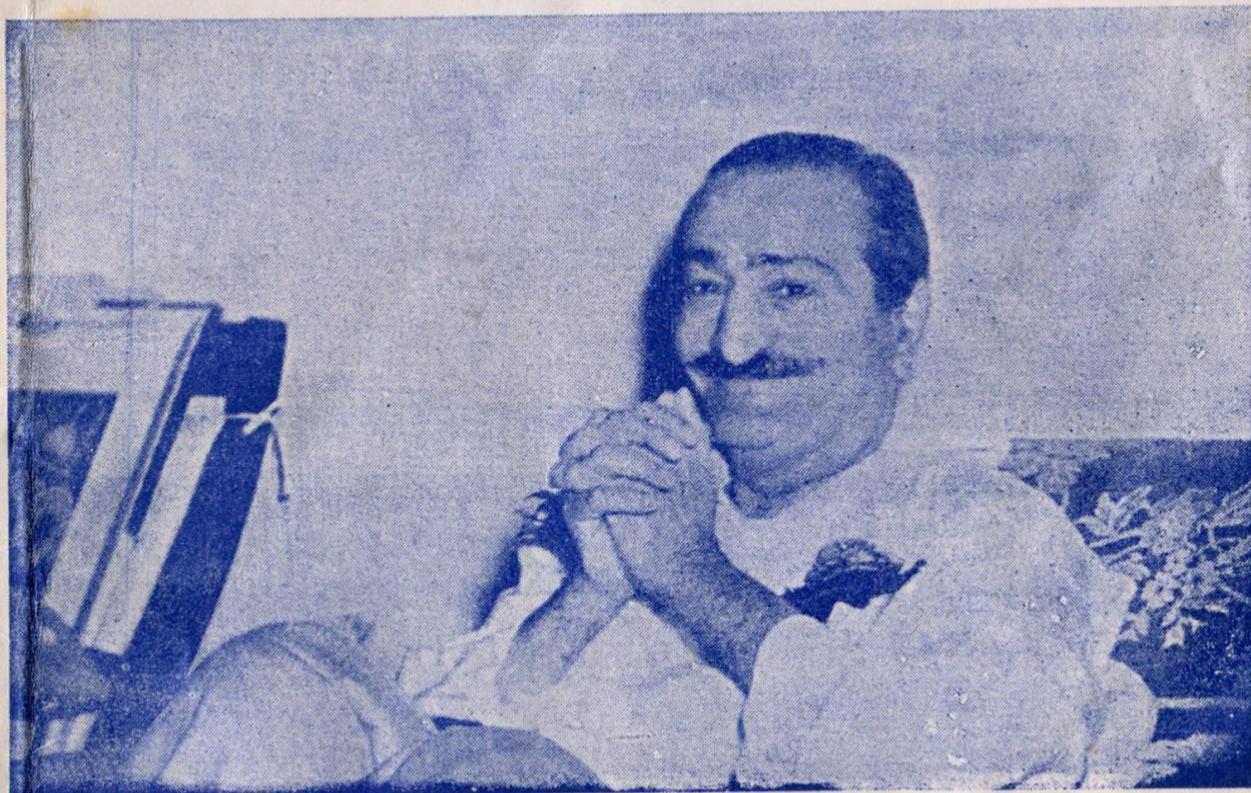
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MONTHLY

February,
Mar. & April 1973

divya vani

(DIVINE VOICE)



AVATAR MEHER BABA

EDITOR
SWAMI SATYA PRAKASH UDASEEN

PUBLISHERS:
THE MEHER VIHAR TRUST
HYDERABAD-29. - A.P. INDIA.

Number 2, 3 & 4
Volume 9

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DIVYA VANI

The Meher Vihar Trust,
3-6-417: Post Office Street
Himayatnagar - Hyderabad-29
(A.P., INDIA)

A monthly Magazine devoted to Avatar Meher Baba and
His Work.

Annual Subscription rates:

India:	Rs. 12-00	Sea Mail	Air Mail
U. S. A., & Australia:		\$ 6-00	\$ 12-00
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N.B.: All Subscriptions are payable in advance in January
every year.

For all standard English Publications On and By
AVATAR MEHER BABA and for their prices address to:
Sri Adi K. Irani, Meher Publications, Kings Road,
Ahmednagar (Maharashtra), India.

Special Notification and an Appeal

We made a notification and expressed our regret in the previous issue of 'Divva Vani' (a combined issue of December 1972 and January issue of 1973) for the delay caused due to political agitation in our Andhra Area. We expected that normalcy would be reached soon and that we would be able to regularly issue "Divya Vani" every month. But unfortunately, it happened that though political agitation has subsided and normalcy appeared to have been restored, the troublesome circumstances continued and shortage of electric supply and other inconveniences caused dislocation of Press-work. We regret to inform that we have had again to issue a combined issue for the months of February, March and April '73 because of the unavoidable troubles prevailing, which have caused dislocation of normal work in the Press. We hope that we will be able to keep up regularity from next issue or at least from the month of June '73. We request and appeal to our readers and subscribers to bear the inconvenience caused for this short period.

To avoid future delay and inconvenience all steps are being taken and if found necessary, location of the printing press and issue office will also be shifted to a suitable place and a press on our own will be reinstalled. By Beloved Baba's Grace, we hope to be in a position to assure our readers and subscribers regular issue of 'Divya Vani' within another couple of months. We are trying our best to do the needful in the matter as early as possible.

Camp: VIJAYAWADA,
D/ 18-4-'73.

SWAMI SATYA PRAKASH UDASEEN,
Editor: DIVYA VANI.

Monthly:

Feb., Mar., & April 1973

D I V Y A V A N I

(Divine Voice)

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Publishers :

The Meher Vihar Trust

Himayatnagar - HYDERABAD-29

(A. P., INDIA)

Sole Distributors :

AVATAR MEHER BABA MISSION

3-6-417 – Post Office Street – Himayatnagar

HYDERABAD-29, A. P., India

Volume 9]
Number 2, 3 & 4]

Price :
Re. 1/-

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Editorial :

RELIGIONS

Humanity is heir to a variety of religions which are named after their founders. Every one has a name, a church, a symbol and a creed. Every one professes a faith in God, the giver of everlasting life and everlasting happiness. In the world around us, everything is transient—everything is fleeting. There is no fixedness anywhere and about anything. We are born, we live and grow and we die. That is the theme of all life. If that were the sole reality of life, it becomes meaningless. But religions postulate an existence which is the immutable basis of life and which is everlasting and infinite in scope and manifestation. That something which is indescribable in earthly terms, and which is beyond the experiences of commonsense every day life is called God by commonest usage, and religions embody practices, customs, legends and ceremonials for invocation of God for help for sustaining one's life against the uncertainties and sufferings which can and do beset it.

God is one according to all religions and Godly life or life lived in constant remembrance of God in thoughts, words and deeds is accepted by all religions as life supremely and nobly lived. Such life embodies all that one can have of truth, beauty and love.

But common humanity craves for a sense of belonging and religion is no exception; emphasis is given to differences in practice rather than to unities of belief and faith at the core. And Baba laying hold on these unities at the core has proclaimed that He came not to establish any new religion but to revitalize the existing ones by bringing them together as beads on a common string by laying emphasis on their core content namely Love of God. The awakening which he gave to Our Souls is to untie the knot which kept the Love of Our hearts captive to the narrow being of Our body and mind and release it to engulf us all in the Oneness of existence. Sectarianism of every kind is bred and brought up in the fractioned Outlook of Our illusorily fractioned being. The biggest difficulty we have to contend

with in Our search for the real source of Our being is the illusion or Maya which makes Our seeming separateness real to Our eyes.

The founding fathers of these various religions voiced the cry of the eternal Oneness of the being in all, although adapting it to the condemnation of the evils of selfishness and separateness which clogged and preyed upon human nature in the human societies of their time.

In the following words which thrill Our hearts like any other truths which came out of him, Baba conveyed the substance of His mission to the west.

I am not come to establish any cult, society or Organisation—nor to establish a new religion. The religion I shall give teaches the knowledge of the one behind the many.

The book which I shall make people read is the book of the heart which holds the key to the mystery of life. As for ritual, I shall teach humanity to discriminate, express and live rather than observe it. I shall bring about a blending of the Head and the Heart. Societies and Organisations have never succeeded in bringing truth nearer. Realization of Truth is solely the concern of the individual.

Every being is a point from which a start could be made towards the limitless ocean of Love, Bliss, Knowledge and goodness already within him. No spiritual Master brings religion to the world in the form which it eventually assumes. His very presence is a blessing and radiates spirituality. He imparts it to others by personal contact. Religions are an effort to commemorate the association with a great spiritual Master and to preserve his atmosphere and his influence. It is like an archaeologist trying to preserve things which only resuscitate the past. The Living spirit being absent, religions and organisations gradually lose their force.

The West looks at things from the standpoint of reason and is sceptical about what baffles it. This form of understanding is developed by reading, hearing, experiment and logic. These create an illusion of real knowledge.

In the highest state, one feels in harmony with every one and everything and realizes divinity in every phase of life and is

able to impart happiness to others. Here one attends to all duties and material affairs and yet feels mentally detached from the world. This is true renunciation and understanding.

I intend to bring about a great spiritual revival in the near future, utilizing the tremendous amount of energy possessed by the west for the purpose. Such a spiritual outpouring as I visualize usually takes place at the beginning or end of a cycle and only a perfect one who has reached the Christ State of consciousness can make a universal appeal. My work will embrace everything, it will permeate every phase of life."

The following is the gist of an interview with Baba by a Western Correspondent. It is reproduced here because of its relevance to the present theme. The questions are those of the interviewer and the answers are from Baba.

"Are you divine?"

"I am one with God. I live in Him like Buddha, like Christ, like Krishna. They know Him as I know Him. All men can know Him."

"What is your secret?"

"The elimination of the ego."

"Have you a scripture, a Bible, a Koran, an inspired Book?"

"No, I teach. I am teacher."

"Do you believe in Buddha and the Eight fold path?"

"Yes, all religion is ascent by stages to perfect Union with God."

"What God do you believe in?"

"There is only one God for all men?"

"What religion is nearest to yours?"

"All religions are revelations of God".

"Who has sent you to save mankind?"

"I know. It is my whole life. My ecstasy is continuous. It is unbroken."

Here is another message of Baba which He gave when He was on the point of entering the complicated free life bearing on the same theme.

I have no connection with politics. All religions are equal to me. And all castes and creeds are dear to me. But though I appreciate all 'isms', religions and political parties for the many good things they seek to achieve, I do not and cannot belong to any of these 'isms' religious or political parties, for the absolute truth while equally including them, transcends all of them and leaves no room for separative divisions which are equally false. The Unity of all life is integral and indivisible. It remains unassailable and inviolable in spite of all conceivable ideological differences.

I am equally approachable to one and all big and small
to saints who rise and sinners who fall
through all the various paths upon which is heard
the divine call

I am approachable alike to the saint whom I adore
and to the sinner whom I am for
And equally through Sufism, Vedantism, Christianity
Zoroastrianism and Buddhism and other 'isms'
of every kind and also directly through no 'ism' at all.

BABA CENTRES

Avatar Meher Baba centres have been established at many places big and small by Baba Lovers to propagate His message of Love and Truth, and to foster a way of life in Love and Truth.

Baba exercised such a strong fascination because His being was an infinite expanse of Love and Truth in their native hues of unconditioned and absolute freedom. His contact was the contact of life in its unlimited truth. He has ceased to live to our physical eyes, so to live in our being to enliven it with the absoluteness of intrinsic truth and love.

These Baba centres and the Baba Lovers therein have to be alive and pulsating with that Love and truth and make their thrust in thought, word and deed to be taken notice of by others. When Baba affirmed at the famous meeting at Rajahmundry, that the hearts of Baba Lovers were His real centres, He must have meant just that.

We have a habit of reducing Our Gods to idols and making a pretense of worship which is centred in the thoughts of worldly advancement. Our worship does not involve us in any expansiveness of either Our being or our consciousness to transcend the limitations which beset them in their unregenerate condition. If that habit should assail our relation with Baba, then we are lost and Baba is lost.

The condition of our love for Baba must be our active love for all of mankind and for all of creation. Baba himself had provided the tests to test our love of God which is the same thing as our love of Baba. They are well known, to Baba lovers; yet they are so important that they can bear being reiterated here.

To love God in the most practical way is to love our fellow beings. If we feel for others in the same way as we feel for our dear ones, we love God.

If instead of seeing faults in others, we look within ourselves, we are loving God.

If instead of robbing others to help ourselves, we rob ourselves to help others, we are loving God.

If we suffer in the suffering of others and we feel happy in the happiness of others, we are loving God.

If instead of worrying over our own misfortunes, we think of ourselves as more fortunate than many others, we are loving God.

If we endure our lot with patience and contentment accepting it as His will, we are loving God.

If we understand and feel that the greatest act of devotion and worship to God is not to hurt or harm any of His beings, we are loving God.

To love God as He ought to be loved, we must live for God and die for God, knowing that the goal of life is to love God and find Him as our own self.

If then we can attain to a detachment from ourselves and examine our attitudes and dispositions, our thoughts, our impulses and our actions in the light of the foregoing tests, we

can know whether our being is restructuring itself in the image of our genuine Love for God or for Baba.

SANKIRTHAN and SATSANG which figure at the gatherings held at the centres are helpful if we can tune our being to the thought of God and His remembrance. If on the other, we go on with our usual thoughts and pretend to participate in the gatherings for thinking that we get engaged in some pious activity which we have no feeling for, except for our presence, we find ourselves dead to the essential purpose of such gatherings and to the Baba centre. Consciousness is the essential attribute of our being. It is ordinarily involved in illusions which our worldly life expresses. If our love for Baba gets charged into our consciousness, and we feel drawn to reinforce that consciousness by participation in the activities of Baba centres, by contacts with similar consciousness of fellow Baba Lovers, then and only then would we find these centres to be rewarding to our march to God consciousness. If on the other we get bound to these activities mechanically and out of fear that we fail in our Loyalty to Baba unless we keep up a pretense of activity at the Baba centres, we become instruments for their ultimate decay. As Baba declared, organisations do not bring us nearer the truth. The Baba Lovers in their self-giving love must find entry into consciousness which in the constant remembrance of Baba must find its deliverance from the corrupting evils of worldly desires and make the centres genuine centres of Light, Love and Bliss.

JAI BABA!

(E. L. R.)

More About The Perfect Master *

— By C. B. Purdom

During the past few days, the newspapers have been publishing sensational accounts of an Indian "Messiah" who has lately come to this country. The subject of those accounts is the Perfect Master about whom I wrote in these pages a little more than six months ago. I promised then to write more about him, and many readers have reminded me of that promise. If in fulfilling it, I tell a rather different story from that which has appeared in the newspapers, the reader can be sure that I have verified facts.

It will be as well if I start by giving a brief outline of his history. Shri Sadguru Meher Baba is a Persian, born in Poona, South India, on February 25, 1894. His father, Irani Sheriar, was a spiritually-minded man, who from boyhood until he was a grown man, spent his life wandering in the jungle in search of spiritual experience. At the age of thirty-five, he was told that he should resume a normal existence. This he did; he married and had six children. Meher Baba was the second son.

His father is a Zoroastrian, and Meher Baba was brought up in that religion. He went to school and college in Poona. When he was seventeen, he was met by Hazrat Babajan, an ancient woman, as a result of which Meher Baba entered a super-consciousness state, in which he remained for nine months entirely oblivious of earthly life. It took seven years before he regained normal human consciousness. During the whole of that time, he had to be taken care of. His return to normal consciousness was brought about by meeting Shri Sadguru Upasani Maharaj in 1921.

He spent the first two years after that experience in writing an account of what happened to him. This book has not been seen by anyone. He was never married; nor did he ever engage in any trade or occupation, for he was still at college when the experience I have mentioned came to him.

* "Literature and Life," *Everyman*, London, April 21, 1932.

His time has been spent during the past eleven years in travelling throughout India, alternating with periods of complete retirement. He visited the West for the first time last September, when he spent about three weeks in England, and afterwards went to America for a few weeks. He returned to England from India a fortnight ago, and at the beginning of next month, intends to go back to America for an extended period. His reason for visiting America is, he says, that America being most deeply engrossed in material things, and suffering most in consequence, is the soil in which a new spiritual re-birth will first take place. He declares that America requires only the guiding hand of a Perfect Master to redirect its material powers to the heights of spirituality.

On his first visit to this country, he saw a few people who came to him in London. He also saw Mr. Gandhi. On the present occasion, however, the news of his coming was spread from India, and he was met on arrival with the full blast of British newspaper publicity.

It would be easy to write a sensational story upon this remarkable being, though he is himself the least sensational of men. It would not be difficult to make the most exaggerated claims for him. I should like the reader to get a picture of him as he is,—a quiet simple, happy man. He does not shrink from contact with others, though he seeks to withdraw himself as much as he can. In appearance, he is under middle height, delicately built, with a light brown skin, gentle brown eyes, long brown hair, strong features, and a serene expression. Perception silently emanates from his presence. He wears Eastern dress in the house, but in the street usually wears ordinary European clothes. He is not an ascetic, and does not advocate asceticism. He lives, of course, in utter simplicity. He has not spoken for more than seven years, and communicates with others by signs, and by pointing to Roman letters painted on a small board. This silence is not the result of a vow, but is undertaken for spiritual reasons. He says that he will break it soon in America.

He understands English perfectly, and long conversations can be held with him, either with the aid of one of his attendants reading from the board or by following oneself his spelling of words on the board. The latter is not as difficult as it may seem.

What Meher Baba is people must discover for themselves. His authority must convince without argument. He must be recognized by the heart. His mere appearance convinces seekers of his spiritual integrity. One recognizes in him a spiritual Master—or one does not. I see in him the Teacher about whom I wrote in *EVERYMAN* on February 11. He differs from other teachers I have met because he has power. This power is not magnetism or personality, much less is it any sort of hypnotism. It is a feeling of confidence that he has achieved complete self-mastery and can help the rest of us to do the same. He teaches what he is. "The wise man is a Divine mercy to created beings," said a mediaeval Persian poet. This is what I find in Meher Baba.

He has no doctrine; he is a living truth. Therefore, it is not what he says that matters. That is why the fact that he does not speak seems of such small consequence. Always it is the power of the realized truth that convinces, not the mere utterance of the truth. I have never before met a man of whom I could say that with such certainty. In his presence I feel that I know the answers to the questions that have hitherto perplexed me. Indeed, since I first met him six months ago, I have realized that the difficulty is not to get questions answered, but to act upon what one knows.

A Perfect Master does not merely answer questions but he gives the ability to do what is required, because he has arrived where we want to go. He is a guide who can point out the way and help to bring us there. This is important, for it is not mere advice that we want. There are plenty of people who can tell us what to do; we need something more than that. We need something more, too, than momentary inspiration. We look for permanent realization of the ultimate reality. We have those who write poetry; we want one who lives it.

If it is dangerous to ascend a difficult mountain without a guide, it is even more dangerous to attempt to disintegrate and reintegrate our personality without the help of a skilled teacher. The many failures of psycho-analysis have made this abundantly clear. A Perfect Master helps to break down our personality, because he helps us to get rid of the ego; but he also enables us to build it up again. I find Meher Baba to be above all practical.

He is concerned with everyday life. He does not invite people to leave the world, but to make use of it, to raise it to spiritual values. We should live in the world, he says, and yet be not of it, attend to all worldly duties and yet be completely detached from their results.

He does not seek to convert men to anything; certainly he does not attempt to change their religion. All religions are revelations of God. What he does say is that whatever religion one has should become experience. It should transform life. Until it does that it is a dead religion. If a man has no religion believing that all religions are outworn, he does not argue with him, but tells him to act on his own highest ideals. What matters is character. Opinions do not matter. It is what you are that counts.

Meher Baba dictated the following statement when he arrived in England, in view of the many questions that had been asked of him, which I print here for the first time:

"My coming to the West is not with the object of establishing a new creed or spiritual society or organization, but is intended to make people understand religion in its true sense. True religion consists of developing that attitude of mind which ultimately results in seeing one Infinite Existence prevailing throughout the Universe, thus finding the same Divinity in Art and Science and experiencing the Highest Consciousness and Indivisible Bliss in everyday life.

The West is inclined towards the material side of things, which has from untold ages brought in its wake wars, pestilences and financial crises. It should not be understood that I discard and hate materialism. I mean that materialism should not be considered an end in itself but a means to the end.

Organized efforts such as the League of Nations are being made to solve world problems and to bring about the Millennium. In some parts of the West, particularly in America, intellectual understanding of Truth and Reality is attempted but without the true Spirit of Religion. This is like groping in the dark.

I intend to bring together all religions and cults like beads on one string and revitalize them for individual and collective needs. This is my mission to the West."

He does not bring Eastern ideas for us to act upon, but intends to help us to act upon what we already know. He revivifies unused knowledge. He does more than that, of course, for he shows us the necessity for a change of heart and enables us to gain real knowledge through experience. Above all, he unites the mind and heart, so that we need no longer be divided personalities, but can live as entire men.

PEACE ON EARTH

—Maud Kennedy

Peace on earth—good will toward man—
 Cannot be obtained without Love to understand ...
 Love is for many just another word—
 Spoken to attract attention—wishing to be heard ...
 When we begin to understand there is love ... and
 When love is understood there can be eternal peace ... a
 Feeling of good fellowship universal love is being released—
 GOD IS LOVE ... and Love is given by His Grace...
 Regardless of religious beliefs, color, creed or race.
 If accepting all as our sisters, and brothers in every land—
 Through love only—another's need can we understand—
 For, love cannot be bought, borrowed or sold—
 But, a state of consciousness—a spiritual soul ...
 In a loving soul—Beloved Baba's Light shines through
 Day, and night, that those in darkness may see Him too ...
 Charity comes from the heart—doing kindly deeds—
 If understanding love, you know when and where there is a
 need.

Love for God-brotherhood to understand ... united
 There can be peace on earth good will toward man.

JAI BABA!

"I Have Come Not to Teach But to Awaken"

Newsletter No. 13 issued for January/February 1973

Well folk, it seems to us that it was only a few weeks ago that we were wishing you all a Happy 1972. And here we are, preparing to wish you a Happy 1973. We naturally want it to be a happy year for your sakes as well as for our own, so let us not cloud the horizon with gloomy prognostications. Equally, let us not follow the ostrich policy—head in the sand and bottoms up—for those negative forces of destruction which were steadily mounting in 1972 are, we understand going to mount even higher in 1973. After all one part of the world cannot drop hundreds of thousands of tons of metal on another part of the world without humanity as a whole and the earth it inhabits being seriously affected. So if we cannot avoid the kick-backs, at least let us be standing firmly on our own two feet when they hit us. May we take it/them uncomplainingly, having remembered, dear Baba, your various injunctions—"Destruction must precede construction..." "Don't worry. Be happy". Thus resolving to face bravely, calmly what promises to be a schizophrenic year for the whole world.

Another resolve we can make at this critical moment in man's history is to put all we've got into obeying another injunction of Baba's. It is to "Give love, receive love, gather love. Let your own life of love for Me be the message of My Love for one and all for everything else is eventually dissolved in the truth of Divine Love".

A MESSAGE FROM INDIA

The Avatar Meher Baba Trust writes:- "Dear Friends, The Fourth Amartithi of Avatar Meher Baba falls on Wednesday, January 31st, 1973. On that day, pilgrims from India and abroad will visit the Tomb of the Eternal Beloved at Meherabad Hill in Ahmednagar (Maharashtra State). Because of the total failure of the monsoon, however, resulting in acute water shortage and widespread famine conditions, **OVERNIGHT STAY ARRANGEMENTS for pilgrims will NOT BE POSSIBLE** as in the past. Pilgrims visiting Meherabad for this Fourth Anniversary are

therefore requested to arrive at Meherabad on the morning of January 31st after 8-00 a.m., and to leave the same day at 8 p.m., after participating in the function of the day."

Please Note:- An announcement, giving the full details of Beloved's Fourth Amartithi is on display at the Centre. Should anyone unable to visit the Centre require further details, kindly write to our Acting Secretary—Mrs. Georgina San Roque.

And to you dearest Mani, Chairman of the Avatar Meher Baba Trust, to the Mandali and all our Meherabad brothers and sisters our heartfelt sympathy for the distresses you are experiencing. Beloved's Fourth Amartithi will be reverently observed here at the British Centre, as it will be at all the Baba Centres all over the world. Furthermore, because of the conditions prevailing throughout the world at the present time we earnestly request every Baba lover able to do so to keep a candle burning throughout the whole of January 30th and 31st. And where this is not possible at least to have one burning throughout the whole of January 31st, if it can be managed at all. A request is being sent to every Baba Centre throughout the world asking them and their members to participate in this devotional act.

NOVEMBER 1972 ACTIVITIES

The highlight of November was of course the visit of Dr. Allen Cohen from America. During his brief stay from November 8th to November 22nd this seemingly tireless dedicated young Baba lover and worker in additions to the Talks he gave at the Centre, also spoke at places as far ranging as Cardiff, Cambridge, Eton, Brighton etc. A natural communicator—the late Count Hermann Keyserling, philosopher and teacher would have called him "a spiritual fecundator"—he confined himself on this occasion to three main subjects—"Drugs" "Mysticism" "Avatar Meher Baba". His Talk on Baba at the Centre on Saturday, November 11th, was a "House Full" (not even standing room) event, How we wish we had stretchable walls at our Centre.

The art of oratory being a profound act of 'essence communication' Allen has all the qualifications for establishing

immediate rapport with his audience. An attractive appearance, open nature, delicious sense of fun and humour, supported by a basic foundation of deep experience and knowledge. All this inspires in his audience a relaxed but attentive awareness, which even though they may not be agreeing with everything stated, makes each one feel enriched, enlightened. We understand that the book he has been working on will be appearing shortly. Our grateful thanks Allen and our loving wishes to you for ever-increasing success in the Baba meaningfulness of that dynamic word.

"FLOWING EAST FLOWING WEST"

From this title you may recall the series of Talks being given under it from St. Anne's House, Dean Street, Soho, and that the evening of November 14th had been assigned to us as "Our Meher Baba Brothers". As anticipated, Craig represented us and here is a short report of the occasion kindly sent us by Maud (Kennedy) who as a Baba lover and though living in Oxford, not London made a special effort to be present.

Maud writes:- "Though a small gathering we felt the importance of this occasion as it was in the heart of London. Craig spoke simply and being careful to avoid the use of Indian terms as much as possible gave a brief outline of Baba's Life and the circumstances which led to His being made aware of His God-realised state and Avataric Task, Craig made a number of references to Jesus, mentioning also the other great Avatars, Mohammed, Buddha, Krishna, Rama etc. He also read out some moving extracts from Baba's Discourses about the wonderful relationship of Love and Obedience which can be experienced between the Master and the disciple..... Doris (Mrs, Leveson) being the only Baba-lover present who had actually met Baba, gave us a convincing and beautiful account of her acceptance of Baba by slow cautious steps, showing Baba's great understanding and compassion in drawing her to Him.

When the discussion opened we were questioned as why we should believe in Meher Baba as a Perfect Master. All seven Baba-lovers present spoke simply and convincingly. The particular value of the Meeting seemed to be that it drew us all

closer together, a feeling which was especially strong when we united in a circle of silence and prayer

Maud adds this interesting and curiosity-arousing comment:- "It is possible that one young person present *was* convinced of Baba's Divine Presence on earth. Jai Baba"

Maud dear, a warm thank you for all the initiative and effort you have put into this. We know that your account will be especially enjoyed by the Meherabad Mandali because, in addition to the moving significance of this occasion and its taking place in the heart of London, its date—November 14th, is, we learn the celebration of the late Dr. William Donkin's birthday. Let us hope that on this particular occasion dear William was listening—in sitting on Baba's right hand.

Craig, a Baba Blessing to you to last you throughout what we hope will be an especially happy Baba New Year for you and your loved ones. Another to you dear Doris for the Baba love which gives you the strength and energy to attend so many of our meetings. Finally, a heart-felt God Bless to the sponsors/organisers of this meaningful series of Talks and to all who participated, whether as speakers or audience. May peace and peace and peace be everywhere. It could be, if only we would let it.

DECEMBER 1972 ACTIVITIES

Our Christmas Social held on the 16th December was, as always very well attended. Carols were sung. Excerpts from Baba books read out. Extra 'goodies' enjoyed for tea. Molly's decorations admired.

Delia was especially happy because she had received the unexpected surprise of a Christmas card from Mehera herself. A beautifully simple card but clearly an inspired one. The Virgin Mother with halo handing the Christ Child with halo to kneeling man. The printed words are:- "God shares in our humanity that we may share in His Divinity. May the Christ Child grant you a blessed peaceful Christmas and an abundance of happiness throughout the year". Mehera has written with this:- "Dear Delia and all Baba's dear ones in Beloved Baba's Precious Love from your Meherazad family. Ever lovingly Mehera"

Delia dear, thank you so much for sharing this happy experience with us. And to you, Mehera who will be seeing this Newsletter in due course, our ever loving greetings to you and to our Meherazad Mandali from all the British Baba lovers. May the distressing conditions prevailing in Meherabad not be for long.

OUR DYNAMIC SOUTHEND GROUP

Avril (Parker), in response to a request for news about our Southend Group, writes:- "I shall be most happy to tell you of what is happening here—at least of what is apparently happening, for Beloved Baba has been doing some surreptitious ego-bashing and all manner of amazing things ... New faces have come, glowed a little more, gone and frequently returned. However, a "hard core" of about a dozen of us come each fortnight to our gatherings. Often twenty or more are present.

Throughout the autumn we have been spending a lot of time and energy on discussing sanskaras and been rewarded with an increasingly deeper understanding of these knotty problems. Last week brought a change in the form of Allan Cohen's talk to Wimbledon Arts Students on "Mysticism". It was so entertaining and threw light on many unanswered questions in our minds, simultaneously renewing answered ones to be pondered over afresh. We are gradually growing more and more at one and merging into a deeper entity.

Over the past few months Baba has been bringing us together with a Subud Group. We are learning to appreciate each other through our closeness together. We can learn so much from the fact that we believe almost exactly the same things, love almost the same ideals and the same Master, whether He be nameless or named".

Avril dear, a warm 'thank you' for your delightful and interesting report. In view of what you have written here is a letter from one of your Subud-fellow-travellers which will gladden your heart as it has ours and as it will gladden our readers. Mr. Laurence Brazier the writer of the letter attended the Baba Centre for the first time on the occasion of Dr. Allen Cohen's recent Talk on Baba on Saturday, November 11th.

Laurence writes:- "I have been a Subud Member for some ten months now and have been blessed with some experience of God ... The world of Spirit is one of wonder and delight, of hardship and pain, of rise and fall... The meeting at your centre was a delight and a definite step in the positive path of God's Will. It fitted perfectly... In the week preceding the visit I had asked to receive guidance on the matter of LOVE. And there it was. I found myself at a Baba meeting, being instructed by the practice of SO MUCH LOVE... I am spending much time in the company of the Southend Group—Alan and Avril and Ronnie and all of the other Baba lovers of that Group. It is truly amazing the lessons that can be learned in the peace and love of an evening of joy with friends. Peace and loving natures are conducive to the INWARD JOURNEY. All the answers (and all the questions) are inside. In Subud we say "All must out"

Very briefly Muhammad Subud the founder of the Subud Movement, is of Indonesian extraction. He is married, has a family. Makes no claims to being a Teacher / Guru / Master, having no apparent organised system of ideas which he wishes to impart. Seeks no publicity; and though he travels extensively, Subud Groups having sprung up and flourished all over the world, he does not speed to or from them in a silver Rolls Royce. Perhaps these few words of Subud's founder will give some insight into what Subud is concerned with:- "Man will never be able to find God with his own mind, his own heart and his own desires. Only by surrendering himself completely to God, not making use of his mind, his heart, his desire, is it possible for man to come into contact with the power of God".

Tom/Dorothy (Hopkinson) are very happy to report that their Christmas spent at their home in Wales, was enriched by a brief visit from Laurence and a friend, who, finding themselves not too far away attending a Subud Christmas retreat/get-together, had the happy inspiration of paying the Hopkinsons a visit. A warm thank you to you, Laurence, for being prepared to receive love, to give love, to gather love and to express love in the company of our Southend Baba lovers. We hope the few brief details about Subud's founder are correct.

GENERAL NEWS AND SOME 'THANK YOUS'

A warm thank you to Pete/Karen for giving a party at their Twickenham home both for Allen Cohen's arrival and departure. We were only able to attend the arrival party, but oh! how we would like to spread ourselves in giving a report of it. We still have so much to get into this letter, but here are a few highlights. The enchanting plaster mouldings of the ceilings. We learned from Pete that these had been executed by the workmen who had been engaged on Ham House at the turn of the 17th/18th century. Exquisite workmanship, and what a joy to have in one's own home. Karen giving herself a few minutes rest in a corner, looking reflective and specially beautiful. What a painting she would have made! Molly holding little Mani Morice in her arms. Attractive, dynamic little Emily Cook fighting-fatigued, stretched out ten minutes later in blissful faraway sleep. Craig, seeing Dorothy coping rather clumsily with a plate of food whilst standing up, cutting it up for her. Finally the film of Baba brought over by Allen, one of the last ones taken of Baba, and its effect upon us all, but especially dear Mike (McInnerney) who sat on the stairs with his head in his hands overcome with deeply sensitive awareness of Beloved's complete human fatigue. Here the words of Mehera's Christmas card fit beautifully "God shares in our humanity that we may share in His Divinity".

Greetings and a warm thank you to Mr. and Mrs. Snow and their two daughters—Catherine and Clare. Yes. You are racking your memories toying to place them. You won't. They have never been to the Centre. They live in Cardiff. They would not call themselves Baba lovers and yet and yet... Well, you owe the two monthly arrival of the Newsletter at your home to the part they play in it. Mrs. Snow does the duplicating, amalgamating and pinning together of the sheets, and the family help with the folding, getting them into their envelopes and off to the post office. You will all agree that there is a special Baba Blessing for the Snow Family, especially when we tell you that the task is performed with real joy and a sense of service to others.

Greetings and a warm thank you to Jehangir (Daver) for your delightful letter from New Delhi with its wonderfully

descriptive picture of the life around you. We are keeping in touch with you through the Newsletter.

Greetings and congratulations to Mike/Caroline (Da Costa). A sister for young Noah. And what a wonderful name for her—Poppy. Poppy Da Costa. To Barbara (Amos) who has retired from being the Association's Hon. Secretary. Greetings and a warm thank you for your year's work. Another warm thank you to Georgina for being willing to act as temporary Secretary for the time being.

MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions for 1973 are now due to "The Awakener", "Glow" and "Divya Vani". Please note that the price of "Glow" has been increased. You will find all information in the front of your copy.

AN ANNOUNCEMENT

We have kept to the last an announcement of very great importance to each one of us. You will all be most sorry to hear that Don (Stevens), the Chairman of our Meher Baba Association and a Director of our Meher Baba Spiritual League, has been transferred by his Company from London to Madrid and will be leaving us mid-January.

Don's energy and vision have led to a real period of growth for the British Group. He leaves us in a far more confident, progressive state than when he first joined us and he will be sorely missed. He carries with him our good wishes for the spreading of Baba's message of love in Europe and we look forward to welcoming him back many times in the future. A devoted and dedicated Baba worker. We know that wherever he goes, Baba's Blessing will be with him. Our loving wishes go with him too for a most happy and fruitful 1973.

FUTURE EVENTS

This means, of course, a reorganisation both in our Association and administration. Delia, our Vice-President and Tom as Acting Chairman have therefore decided to make SATUR-

Glimpses of the God-Man

MEHER BABA

Correspondence With Meher Baba

1948 — Part VII

—by Bal Natu

Opening of the Baba – House

From the third week of August, 1948 for about two months there was no plan of Meher Baba to go out on a *mast-tour*. So, Baba invited the two visitors from the West, Delia and Jean, who were residing at Meherabad, for a stay with Him in a bungalow at Ahmednagar. Mehera, Mani, Norina, Elizabeth and a few more were already staying here. About this time, Baba was informed that the construction of the Baba-House at Meherazad (Pimpalgaon-Malvi) was complete. Someone suggested to have the House-warming function by Baba Himself. He condescended. So on 27th August, 1948, especially the women disciples and devotees from Meherabad, Ahmednagar and a few from Bombay and Poona were called for this occasion. It was a very happy get-together in Baba's love. By morning all assembled in the premises of the Rest-House in Meherazad; Baba-House was built at its rear side. The winter morning warmth was quite pleasing and the wind wafted the fragrance of the flowers in bloom, from a little garden supervised by Kaka Baria. Later the gardening work was directed by Mehera. Baba used to call it, "The Garden Of Allah". As He, walking with ease and grace through the garden reached the Baba-House, a silver key was handed over to Him. He looked pleased and opened the lock and the door. He was led to a beautiful couch inside the House. Gulmai, mother of Adi Sr., garlanded Baba and a chorus *arti* in Gujarati was sung. Incidentally, according to the Hindu calendar it was a Gokul Ashtami Day—the birthday of Lord Krishna. Was it a symbolic coincidence to indicate that the Baba-House was to be the Brindavan of this Age?

As wished by Baba, Kaka Baria had prepared a short speech befitting the occasion. But no one from the men *mandali* was allowed to be present inside the Houses or the garden. In those days the men disciples of Meher Baba were not allowed even to look at the women *mandali*, permanently residing with Him, particularly Mehera and Mani. So, Kaka's speech was "relayed from the men's quarters". Kaka wished that all should love and obey Baba wholeheartedly in all matters, big and small. By 11 a.m., the women who had assembled there squatted on the lawn for lunch. It was served on big banana leaves. The Westerners also ate in Indian fashion. A lovely sight! Baba's regal and upright figure, clad in white *sadra*, moved through the rows. To someone He would ask if she liked the lunch, to the other He would gesture to do full justice to the special dish. It was a simple way of conveying His intimate relationship. By afternoon all returned to Ahmednagar. A memorable day indeed for those who participated in this function. In 1949, as wished by Meher Baba the entire property of Meherazad was transferred in the name of Nariman Dadachanji, one of the intimate *mandali*. And so, Baba presented him and to his dear wife Arnawaz, the silver lock and key of the Baba-House. The blessed couple regard these things as the souvenir of love of this hallowed House.

Hafiz, Meher Baba's Favourite Poet

By the beginning of September, 1948 Baba with a small group of *mandali*, left Ahmednagar for a stay at Meherazad. He expressed His intention to make this place, His permanent residence for all the years to come. Formerly, during His short stay at Meherazad, for the night-rest and work, He either went to Ratan Gyara's house in a nearby field or occupied one of the rooms near the quarters of the men *mandali*. But now on every night He commenced going upstairs of the Baba-House. There are two big rooms there and a spacious gallery facing north. Baba mostly occupied the room at the west-end. In the adjacent room as per Baba's instructions one of the men *mandali* invariably kept awake and attended to Him whenever He clapped.

Even after the second auto-accident in December, 1956, He preferred to be carried upstairs of the Baba-House, in a sedan chair. Then onwards, the night watch, however, was allowed to be in His room. After a decade or so, from 1959, Baba agreed to the repeated request made by His personal physicians, Dr. Donkin and Dr. Goher and consented to stay in the room on the ground-floor, now known as Baba's bedroom or rest-room. It is this room where He finally dropped the Form, He had donned for this Age. The upper two rooms memorable of the Baba-House have some memorable memories and interesting incidents which will be related in the course of narration. In September Mehera, Mani, Meheru and Goher resided in the Baba-House while in the Rest-House stayed Norina, Elizabeth, Jean and Delia. In the evening Baba generally called them all in the sitting room. Sometimes He wished to hear from them humorous stories or jokes. Some selected books, generally not of the serious type, were read out to Him. Once He, however, asked Delia to read "The Hound Of Heaven". In the lighter vein of humour, Baba later remarked, "If I can stand Delia's reading, I can stand anything!"

On some occasions whether with the men or women *mandali*, Baba would ask someone to read the odes of Hafiz, translated into English. Sometimes Dr. Ghani read out to Him the original lines in Persian. Hafiz was Baba's most favourite poet. In His boyhood Baba heard His father repeating in his melodious voice, the couplets of Hafiz. He heard these lines so attentively that He could reproduce some of them word by word. From the very beginning Baba felt greatly drawn to Hafiz for his skill in using the choice words and the meaning conveyed through them. Hafiz, his first name was Shamsuddin, hailed from Shiraz (Iran). As he had learnt the Holy Koran by heart he was known as Hafiz Shirazi. Baba told us that he was not only a perfect poet but also a Perfect Master. The book in which his couplets are compiled is known as the Divan-e-Hafiz. Some regard him as the greatest lyrical poet but in his *ghazals* he has symbolically and allegorically described the experiences pertaining to the different planes of consciousness. Hafiz (1320-1388) was the son of

a coal merchant. * His favourite occupation was to hear and read the life-stories of the saints and Masters; but in his twenties he fell in love with a beautiful girl of a wealthy person. Hafiz had an ugly countenance and there was less possibility of winning her love. So, he practised a certain penance for 40 days, to evoke the blessings of God. At the end of the stipulated period, it is said that the Archangel Gabriel appeared before him. He told Hafiz to ask for any boon. Hafiz, overpowered with the beauty and elegance of the Archangel forgot to ask for the hand of the girl in marriage. Instead he thought, "If Gabriel is so beautiful how much more beautiful and graceful must God be!" So, unawares, he asked for the bestowal of God-realization. No Angel can grant this favour. Hence Gabriel directed him to the perfect Master named Attar. Hafiz whole-heartedly served him for 40 years and at last by the grace of the Master he became God-realized.

Baba always rejoiced heartily while hearing the couplets of Hafiz; and, though rarely, He would explain a line or two to divulge the depth of meaning contained in the couplet. He loved Hafiz dearly. A day prior to the dropping of the body, Baba expressed His wish that the drawing paper on which three couplets of Hafiz were written in Persian, along with English translation, be brought to His room in the Baba-House, from the sitting room of the men mandali. Today, we find this paper framed and displayed on one of the walls in Baba's bedroom at Meherazad. Baba often expressed through gestures, "Hafiz as a poet is unique, matchless." And with a slight change we may say, "Meher Baba's fondness for Hafiz is matchless!"

"40 Messages From Meher Baba"

September, 1948 brings to my mind a Baba-book of its kind. It was about this time that Norina Matchabelli compiled the manuscript of a book named 40 Messages From Meher Baba. These messages were received by her in the vibratory thought

* Meher Baba during His stay in Guru Prasad, Poona in summer 1963 conveyed the following information about Hafiz to His devotees. (Divya Vani October, 1963).

order of Light-wave projection. Norina Matchabelli in her other book of the same year has made it clear, how the system of the Light-wave projection is different from the stage of telepathic receptivity or from the projected thoughts as in spirit-phenomena. She wrote, * "The God-Man can often use the mind of His disciples to impart his Teaching to the outer world. When the disciple is quietly receptive, he can become the vehicle for the Master's thought. When the disciple is so much detached from his ego-mind that he can stop its *sanskritic* thinking, he lends it to the Master for divine working. It is at this stage in the Spiritual Path that the Master considers the disciple as fit for his thought-transmission. The Master now thinks through the mind of the disciple; and the disciple is drawn closer to the Master as Truth. The disciple can distinguish between the thought of the Master and his own thought, as clearly as ordinary man can distinguish between a cat and a dog."

Prior to the writing of these 40 Messages, Baba had asked Norina to spend several hours in strict seclusion. A few excerpts from this book are given below:

1. Do not evade the quest for Life Eternal.

Do not bury yourself in words that are empty sounds.
Do not stupefy yourself with the repetitions of rituals
and ceremonies. Arise and become fully awake in your
own Immortal and Divine Self.

2. God is Eternal Bliss.

He is also eternally in agonies to bring His world unto
Himself.

3. God is the one reality,

Within and without, He is at His game.

His Yonder Being has no shore.

His life is never-ending give and take.

This book was published in 1949 after Norina's return
to the United States from India.

* Fragments From A Spiritual Diary (Copyright 1949).

Inception And The Termination Of The Sufi Circle.

In the latter part of 1948 the men *mandali* who mostly resided at Meherazad were Kaka Baria, Gustadji, Baidul, Dr. Nilu, Vishnu, Jal (Baba's brother) and Dr. Ghani. Those staying at Ahmednagar and Meherabad would visit Baba on work. This was the time when Baba had already commenced dictating "God Speaks" from the alphabet board to Dr. Ghani who was one of His close disciples, well-versed in Sufi literature. During this period one of the main events was the inception of the Sufi Circle in India. It was founded on 8th September, 1948 under the patronage of Meher Baba. Adi K. Irani was nominated as the Secretary General. Dr. Ghani and a few Baba devotees from Poona were permitted to establish the Head Office of the Sufi Circle for India, at Poona. A young post-graduate teacher was the Vice-President. Within a short time reports reached Baba that the members of the Sufi Circle at Poona were not enough zealous to propagate the Sufi-work. Baba always expected whole-hearted dedication in any work connected with Him and not the haphazard loyalty. The *mandali* members also felt that the work under Baba's patronage should not be carried out with half-hearted allegiance. Baba seemed displeased with this matter.

Of the God-Man it is said, * "He is interested in everything but not concerned about anything. The slightest mishap may command his sympathy, the greatest tragedy will not upset him." But in the case of the Sufi Circle, a few ordinary incidents, if I may say so, apparently annoyed Baba, the God-Man. I intend to narrate only one such event. Baba had asked one of the office-bearers at Poona who was a teacher, to dedicate all his spare time, other than at school, for the work of the Sufi Circle. This was His instruction to him. The person was privately coaching some pupils at home in some school subjects and he had a good income. In obeying Baba literally, he had to forego this extra earning. For some days, he was a bit hesitant over this point. Generally Baba would not ask anyone to work for Him. But if someone expressed his readiness to offer the services in

* Discourses by Meher Baba

Baba's cause, He would not tolerate fragmentary obedience. The person concerned failed to understand that to follow Baba, the Compassionate One, entailed a bit of daring but never any loss. Sometimes, it had even proved profitable, materially. In favour of this I wish to mention a small contemporary incident.

Baba had entrusted some work of translation, to one of my friends, who also was a teacher. He too was asked to discontinue the private tuition which he immediately did. After some months, unexpectedly he was selected by the Managing Committee of the school as the Head Master. May be a chance but it's a fact. And thus the material loss was amply compensated. Any way the response from the Baba-devotee at Poona to Baba's instruction was not total. Besides, it was brought to Baba's notice that there were some "creaks and cracks" in the Constitution of the Sufi Circle. Baba being engaged in some important work had no time to spare over these matters. So, with Baba's permission, the founder members of the Sufi Circle in India called a meeting on 19th October, 1948. After a free discussion, four resolutions were passed. The first was, "Resolved unanimously that the Sufi Circle be and is hereby dissolved". Thus, it functioned just for about 40 days. It's really difficult to fathom the meaning contained in the activities of the Master!

One sees so many stars in the sky and unwittingly how easily one miscalculates the distance and the quality of the radiation of light! So, in a sense, having seen the stars one has not seen them! Is not the same folly committed while witnessing and judging the doings of the God-Man! To us He is infinitely close and also infinitely remote. Hence, sometimes we may be right and at times utterly wrong. Anyway I have tried to present the superficial parts of an incident connected with the Sufi Circle. It may not necessarily have any cause-effect relationship. In the said meeting it was also made clear that anyone who felt deeply interested in Sufism was permitted by Baba to work as a free lance Sufi. Adi Sr. and Dr. Ghani wrote the necessary letters to the persons concerned, in the West.

Later in 1952 Meher Baba during His visit to the United States reoriented the Sufi-way in the West and now Sufism Reoriented Incorporated extends the hand of help to those who

are interested in it. All ways are His ways. The *sanskritic* inclinations and the capabilities direct and determine the path one has to tread. The God-Man, whenever He comes amongst us revitalises all the paths according to the needs of the time. He belongs to all and is also above all. He is not only with us but *one* with each one of us. No path is superior or inferior. If ever He likes any 'way', it is 'to condemn no way'. In February, 1964 Meher Baba sent the following short message to Sufism Reoriented which is very meaningful:

"All Paths are Mine.
And all lead eventually to Me.
But the shortest Way to Me,
Is the No-Path of self-annihilating Love."

"Consider The World As A Toy"

In the months of September and October Meher Baba did not undertake any *mast*-tour. Almost every day, He spared time to attend to the correspondence. During this period as was His method, after hearing the letters or the contents of the letters, He generally conveyed a sentence or two from the alphabet board or through the familiar gesture, by way of directing the replies. The *mandali* member—Vishnu, Ramjoo, Dr. Ghani and Adi Sr, would then answer accordingly. Some important replies were read out to Baba before they were posted. Few words from the Master conveyed through the letters have lighted the lamps of understanding in the hearts of the despaired souls. His short and simple messages have poured in upon His followers love that had brought to them, a new vision of life. Baba seemed to enjoy hearing the letters received from His dear ones and liked replying them, though occasionally He seemed to grow weary of it. In this correspondence, particularly Indian, Adi Sr. had the lion's share. Hence, I intend to present some replies sent through him. They will represent different types of communication with Baba.

Some months ago Baba had given His consent to a youth, who wanted to visit Iran to settle in some business, He was the son of one of Baba's disciples. The climate of Iran, however,

did not suit him. He fell sick and the rosy prospects in business did not materialize. He informed Baba about the state of affairs and He replied, "Don't lose heart; take good medical treatment. Be well and return to India". At the end of the letter Baba added the following lines of cheer:

"Now listen my boy;
It's good to be full of joy.
Consider the world as a toy;
Stick to Baba as a gloy (glue)"

Soon this patient from Iran returned to India as a hale and hearty person, joined the Indian Military Services where he later retired as a Commissioned Officer.

Longing For Baba's *Sahavas* And Guidance

During Baba's earlier visits to Nagpur, a school-going boy, who was blessed by His glance, developed a great love for Him. Often he would be seen thinking about Baba whether in the school or at home and the tears of love trickled down his cheeks which seemed uncontrollable. In the beginning the boy was permitted to stay near Baba for a few days. He wished to live permanently with the *mandali*. Baba, however, asked him to complete his education. Later on, he accepted a service in one of the Government offices. The boy, now a grown-up man, all the time longed to leave the job, to be in the company of Baba. The life of a house-holder held no charm for him. In August, 1948, he wrote to Baba, "Will you kindly grant me the privilege of staying with you for a few days? If I fail to hear from you within a reasonable time, I shall be a victim of constant restlessness that may disturb the tranquil state of my mind".

After two days, he wrote again, "Unless and until I hear from you the definite time when I shall have your *sahavas* it is difficult for me to check myself, and so the state of restlessness which I experience may result in 'madness'. I know not what I will do then. Perhaps, I may leave the family and go wherever I like, Adi K. Irani in that case will be nominated to claim the provident fund." After Baba's return from the *mast*-tour He

heard the contents of the above letters, rather the notices served to Him! But being very busy, Baba had no time to grant the request of this devotee. So Adi Sr. replied, "Baba appreciates your feelings and sends you His love and blessings." These few words of consolation pacified the tormenting heart of the lover and he continued to serve in the office with almost a balanced mind. In his intense longing he had composed some songs on Baba's Divinity in Hindi and Marathi. These are now sung at the Baba-meetings.

To another Baba-lover whose family problems were critical, Adi Sr. wrote, "Baba says, however much the circumstances be oppressive or depressive you should learn to take them easy. I am with you." Baba's remembrance and blessings offered him timely help and after a successful career in the Police Department, he retired as a Deputy Superintendent. To one of the devotees who felt confused over a problem, Baba dictated just a sentence, "Act as you think best." And before the letter reached the person, Baba's inner help was on way to guide the conscience of His devotee!

Yearning For Real *Darshan*

A Baba-devotee named Vaidyanath stayed at Bombay. Daily, he used to read the Bhagwadgita (The Lord's Song). One day after the regular reading he commenced the usual meditation. After some time he saw in a mass of splendour various grades of beings. They had put on strange shining ornaments and held queer weapons. "The long-armed, vast-bosomed and tremendous-toothed" figures frightened him. Some forms were very handsome and graceful too. In his letter to Baba the devotee likened this experience, though very remotely, to the visions of the Universal Body as explained in the eleventh chapter of the Gita. Vaidyanath had not personally seen Baba but he felt that the above vision was vouchsafed to him through His grace. So, he wrote a letter of gratitude, also expressing his earnest desire to have Baba's *darshan*, Baba looked pleased as He heard the contents. The devotee, however, was asked to wait for an opportune moment to meet Baba in person. Some met Baba and craved for visions and here was one who had a profound Baba-vision and was longing for His *darshan*!

Joseph, a Christian youth also stayed in Bombay. He was a regular reader of the Holy Bible. Over a year ago when he had met Baba, he was blessed to have an interview with Him. Baba explained to him the way he should live and lead his life. It seems that from the very first meeting, Joseph accepted Baba as the Father. In one of his letters to Him in 1948 he wrote, "I am very happy because I look at the world in the way I have been taught by my Father. I read the Holy Bible every day. Now, I am learning anew, the meaning contained in it. I wish to have your *darshan* but if you command that it won't be possible soon, I have nothing to say about it." Baba appreciated Joseph's suppliant understanding and conveyed to him His fond love. After Meher Baba's dropping the body, the same kind of "Baba-willing" understanding is seen in some of the visitors from the West—young boys and girls, who with great love visit India to pay their homage at Baba's Tomb. And to me, Joseph seems to be the fore-runner of this band!

A Baba-devotee named Chavan resided at Karad in the district of Satara, He was deeply impressed when he met Baba. At the time of *darshan* Baba casually conveyed that seeing Baba in person was not His Real *Darshan*; it was something quite different! Chavan after returning to the home-town thought seriously over Baba's statement. Feeling very restless, he wrote to Baba that he wished to fast unto death for Baba's Real *Darshan*, Baba sent him a telegram, "I know your love and longing but don't fast without my permission." Finding him rather very sensitive and earnest over the subject Baba called him to Ahmednagar for an interview. He asked Chavan to follow certain instructions. He was also told to visit the important holy places in North India and to pay homage to the saints and sages whom he would incidentally meet. The pilgrimage and the contacts with the holy persons helped him to understand the profundity of Baba's Real *Darshan*. It was not a question of having a deep yearning or fasting unto death, he learnt. Such an experience, as any other deep experience, is an act of grace of God or of the Perfect Master. Baba had such winsome ways of bringing home the lesson, He wanted one to learn.

The World, A Wondrous Prison

One day a letter was received from a prisoner who was sentenced for life imprisonment. As this young man was not

permitted to leave the prison premises even on parole, he begged Baba to visit the prison. He was feeling very nervous and very excited over trifling matters. To get over this mental weakness and agony, the only remedy he thought was to have Baba's *darshan*. To Baba, a visit to a prison or a palace made no difference. He once conveyed that the whole world is a wondrous prison and that all those who live in it are spell-bound prisoners. In this sense are not all of us the captives of *Maya*? We free ourselves from certain environments which we call 'bad' to get bound in fresh enclosures which we term as 'good'. We do know the art of total living. Meher Baba stated, * "Instead of facing life and all that it brings without expectation, entanglement and shirking, the mind creates a standard whereby it divides life into opposites, one of which is regarded as acceptable and the other as not acceptable." The breaking of life in compartments is an impediment for the honest inquiry about Life, the one indivisible whole.

In these days (1948) Meher Baba was engaged in a special spiritual work and was not in a mood to grant *darshan* or pay visits for *darshan* programmes. So, He sent a short but suggestive message to this sorrowing soul. He dictated the following lines from the alphabet board:

"I love saints as much as I love sinners;
I love you.
It is never too late or too early to love God.
Think as much as you can about me (Baba);
And as little as possible about yourself."

The message provided a great solace and help to that young man. After some years Baba spared time to visit that prison. The Government authorities gave a warm welcome to Baba. The main gate and the visiting room were well-decorated with buntings. It seemed a festive occasion for the prisoners. Perhaps, this visit was an excuse with which Baba contacted "the despised ones." Thus the prisoners had a rare chance to be in the company of the Real Freeman who recurrently gets himself bound to free Man from this incredible prison, the World! At present the above-mentioned Baba-lover is a free citizen and a

* Discourses by Meher Baba.

changed man with one pointed devotion for Baba, the Compassionate Father.

Responsibilities Must Be Adequately Shouldered

Baba-lovers from different places in India used to write to Baba for His guidance and blessings. Time permitting, the necessary replies were sent, based on Baba's personal instructions. One of His devotees named Bhargav, found it hard to conduct a joint-family life. He had in mind to lead a secluded life in some far-off place. He approached Baba through a letter to know the way out. Adi Sr. wrote, "Baba tells you that in the world of miseries and sorrows whatever the duties you may be doing, you should stick to them and stand by those who are near and dear to you and depend on you. You should follow your avocations but should not worry over the results. You must perform the worldly duties but dedicate the results—good or bad, to the Divine Will. You should not be swayed by happiness or sorrow contemplating constantly on the transitoriness of things. In the continuous remembrance of God you should try to develop a detached outlook on life. Repeat any one name of God that you love, throughout the waking state." Some were given the choice to repeat the names of God they loved while to some Baba specifically asked to repeat His name. To Him, however, this made no difference. Literally the advice from the Master may not differ much from that of a scholar, but the former being alive with love and wisdom carries a special power and perfume to the receiver who feels strengthened and refreshed.

Another case. Baba had allowed one of His devotees from the south, to stay for a short period in the Ashram at Meherabad. After his return he joined his duties. But it was learnt from the letter of his wife that he was not discharging the family duties well. He had seen Baba's work with the poor, but had caught the wrong notion. After receiving his pay, he began to distribute it to the poor at the cost of his family members. He forgot Baba's words, "Don't imitate me. Obey me." His wife complained to Baba about the attitude of her husband. Adi Sr. wrote to him the following: "Your frequent roamings with the beggars (and *Sadhus*) disregarding your duties to your wife and family and spending money after them whom you call Baba, thereby causing

hardships at home is the last thing I could expect of you who call yourself a Baba-devotee. Do you mean to say that whomsoever you call Baba, you really have the experience of "seeing" him as Baba? Or do you really mean that you intelligently try to look upon anyone as Baba and strive to have the experience of Baba living in every heart? If the latter is your attempt, you should know that Baba exists in the hearts of all and not particularly in a certain beggar whom you choose to give at the cost of your wife and children. Can you not see that Baba is also in the hearts of your family members? Besides, you are bound to them by the ties of matrimony, the responsibilities of which you have to bear.

With wishes of Baba's blessings to you and yours."

In addition to these words of advice, Baba made an arrangement to send His devotee, every month some monetary help as His *prasad* in the name of his wife. Being the Compassionate Father, Baba guides, helps and waits till one behaves oneself.

The Three Types

During those days a few Baba-people printed pamphlets containing Meher Baba's words of wisdom and distributed them among the people. One of such pamphlets contained Meher Baba's laconic explanation about the three types of disciples, seekers, yogis and resigners. It is given below.*

I. Three Types of Disciples:

- 1) Those who give and never ask.
- 2) Those who give and also ask.
- 3) Those who do not give but ask.

II. Three Types of Seekers:

- 1) The inspired ones.
- 2) The inspired intellectual ones.
- 3) The intellectual ones.

III. Three Types of *Yogis* :

- 1) Those who long for the Goal and shun powers.
- 2) Those who long for the Goal and also for powers.
- 3) Those who do all *yogic* exercises merely for powers.

IV. Three Types of Resigners:

- 1) Those who are so completely resigned to the Will of the Master that even the one question of how, why, when never enters their mind.
- 2) Those who do what the Master asks at all cost, sacrificing everything, not asking for reward, but doing it under compulsion of surrender to the Master's Will.
- 3) Those who do what the Master asks at all costs but expect reward.

One of the Baba-people named Babadas distributed the copies of this pamphlet in Nagpur. All those who sincerely read it, naturally tried to find out the category to which they belonged. One of the elites of the city who was fortunate enough to welcome Baba at his house in November, 1944 incidentally received this pamphlet. The message set him thinking rather seriously and he wrote to Baba, "May I know what category I belong to and to improve myself what step should I take or adopt? I want your guidance in this matter." He also wanted to know if the pamphlet was given to him specially at Baba's instruction, which it was not. It was meant for general circulation. Baba did send him His love-blessings and under Baba's general instructions Adi Sr. wrote to him, "To be conscious of what we lack is good. To become conscious of what we can become is better. To dwell constantly upon the spiritual Goal is best. But to have whole-hearted devotion and love for the Master is *par excellence* (Then) all the knots of commission and omission are undone and the gush of His blessings at the appointed time floods the being with the never-losing love of God." Thus this pamphlet helped some to have a new understanding and was instrumental in sending Baba's indelible blessings to one of His devotees in Nagpur.

* Meher Baba made some alterations and additions to this formal discourse and later it was included in the book "The Everything And The Nothing" published by Meher House Publications, Australia (1963).

"How Many Such Daughters Do You Want?"

Here is another incident connected with the Baba-pamphlet though the printed matter was not a message from Baba but was a poem on Baba by one of His lovers from Nagpur. Sulay, the poet, had Baba's first *darshan* in 1944 in the branch of the Theosophical Society in the same city. During Baba's visit, his special message, "The Dynamics of Love," was read out to the gathering. Sulay as he heard it felt that in the Form of Meher Baba, he was beholding Love personified. He looked at Baba and there stretched an eternity between them. At this meeting, everything he had planned to say to Baba vanished from his mind except one personal sorrow. Sulay had a daughter about six years old who was extremely dear to him. But accidentally she had passed away. In his first interview he related to Baba about the sad and untimely death of his daughter. Baba sympathised with him but by the way put him a question, "How many such daughters do you want?" Sulay felt confused over the question and kept quiet. Baba switched on to another subject and the interview was over.

Some months later he got a service in the school for little ones (Kindergarten) run by a foreign Mission. Sulay's duty was to teach the children fundamental lessons in Hindi. The children were mostly from the well-to-do families. In the company of these kids, he practically forgot the sorrow caused by the demise of his dear daughter. One day, while he was teaching the lesson he noticed that the faces of the girls in the class verily resembled the countenance of his darling daughter, only the dresses marked the difference. This experience continued for some days at the time of his teaching. Eventually he realised that this was in fulfilment of the question that Baba had put him. This little incident sowed deep the seed of conviction in him about Baba's Divinity and he wished to lead a life dedicated to Baba and His cause.

Later on he had an urge to visit Pandharpur, one of the famous places of pilgrimage in Maharashtra. He commenced this long journey of over a 1,000 kilometres, barefooted. During the course of the travel he had a certain dream repeated several

times. In that he saw a well by a road and one small hill on the other side. The route was via Ahmednagar. As he reached this city he decided to visit Meherabad for he had not seen it before. When he approached the Ashram he at once recognised that the well and the Hill were identical with those he saw in the dream. It was thus symbolically revealed to him that the real place of pilgrimage was no other than Meherabad. Besides, he was overjoyed to learn that Baba was in Meherabad. He was to go in seclusion the next day. Sulay was permitted to meet Him. In that informal audience Baba conveyed to him, "As you have come to Meherabad there is no need for you to go to Pandharpur or any other place of pilgrimage." After Baba's dropping the body, the Tomb on the Meherabad Hill has become the sanctuary of all the places of pilgrimage in the world for the holiest of the holy Form of this Age is laid to rest here.

Meher Baba, The Absolute God.

Sulay very gladly accepted Baba's instruction and decided not to proceed to Pandharpur. Some experiences that he had during the journey including that of the dream, were instrumental in flowering the seed of conviction in the heart of Sulay that Meher Baba is the only one to be worshipped and prayed. On way back to Nagpur for some days he stayed at Nasik. During his stay there, he had occasions to meet Ramjoo, one of Baba's closest *mandali*. He heard from him some Babanecdotes, a few full of fun, a few fiery; a few very interesting and a few quite trying. This contact helped him all the more to love Baba more and more. He also developed high regard for Ramjoo and treated him as one of his close friends. Being a poet, he composed some fine poems, in Marathi on Meher Baba, the God-Man.

In the year 1948, he tried to offer his prayers to Baba through the following stanzas in English. The title of the poem was "Prayer To The Absolute God, Meher Baba".

Thou who art Absolute, supreme, sublime,
 Master of destiny beyond space and time,
 Light of the Universe, life's central Sun,
 Incomprehensible, all things in One.

Light Thou my pathway and teach me to know,
 That Thou art the source from which all things flow,
 That whatever exists whether good or ill,
 Proceeds from the law of Thy infinite Will.

And sooner or later must return to Thee,
 Death-purged in the waves of Eternity's sea.
 Endow me with love, in faith make me strong,
 And instead of a dirge, let my life be a song.

Till Thy Spirit divine in the innermost soul,
 Flames like the torch and illumines the whole,
 Thenceforth from earth-life to be free in its flight,
 To the effulgent radiance of supernal Light.

He sent a typed copy of these verses to Ramjoo who suggested a slight change not in the poem but in its title, as follows: "Prayer To The Absolute God *In Meher Baba*". Sulay thought that Baba as the God-Man is the Absolute God Himself. So, he did not feel like agreeing with the suggestion made by Ramjoo. By way of a reply he wrote back to him, "When I was at Nagpur, do you remember that I had put you a question, "Where is Meher Baba?". You replied, "*jahan ke wahan*" meaning He is where He ever was. You also quoted a couplet which conveyed that He (Baba) was, is and will be the same One. Do not these references made by you then mean that Meher Baba is the Absolute God? Will you please excuse me for my inability to change the title? Thanking you...." I do not know much about poetry but I was acquainted with both—Ramjoo and Sulay who were strong nerves, very frank and loving but would rarely compromise, over the views they held. I have quoted this communication to show that in spite of the difference of opinion, in expressing the feelings about Baba—Who in fact is beyond any expression—cooperation and friendship in His Cause should remain unaffected as was between Ramjoo and Sulay.

In September, 1948 the above poem along with its versification in Marathi was sent to Baba. Baba asked one of His

educated Marathi-knowing devotee to read both the poems. After hearing it Baba didn't say anything about the title but He granted Sulay's request to print these stanzas for general distribution in the public, including the Baba-people. Meher Baba generally allowed His lovers to express their devotion for Him in their own ways, provided they were sincere and honest enough about what they said and did. Perhaps, this is the best way to make one learn anew what he ought to. Is not honesty in expression, the key-note in spiritual life? Honesty in its finer quality affirms without any sense of achievement and leads one to God the Absolute.

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(To be Contd.)

Avatar Meher Baba 'Premotsav'

J A B A L P U R

5th and 6th May, 1973

Dear Brother/Sister,

It gives us great joy to extend to you this very loving invitation, to participate in the Gathering of Baba Lovers to be held at Jabalpur on 5th and 6th May 1973. This special occasion which is called 'PREMOTSAV' is to see the Universal Baba-family getting together during the two exciting days, promising discourses on Baba, drama, musical programmes and devotional singing by various groups besides actually meeting the lovers and sharing the treasured memories of Beloved Master and their day to day spiritual adventures with Baba.

It is a privilege of Baba lovers here to hold this function at Jabalpur, where Avatar Meher Baba had stayed for brief periods in January and March, 1939 in connection with His work with spiritually advanced souls called 'Masts'.

Every care is being taken to make your stay here comfortable. You are requested to bring with you a handy torch, sun

glasses, headgear and beddings. Jabalpur is quite hot (temperature about 106 F. in the month of May). You are also requested to bring with you mosquito-repellents (Odomos tubes available in Jabalpur market).

Baba lovers are requested to acknowledge this very special invitation and send the registration fee of Rs. Ten only for adults, Rs. Five for children above Three years of age positively before 20th of April, 1973 to

SHRI R. P. PANKHRAJ
'Matru Chhaya' (rear block)
WRIGHT TOWN, P.O. JABALPUR, M. P.

Jabalpur is centrally situated and is connected by rail and by bus with all important towns of India.

NOTE: Baba lovers will be received at the railway station and the bus-stand and will be accorded necessary assistance to reach the place of gathering. Boarding and Lodging will be on behalf of the Hosts.

*In case you miss the volunteers, you are requested to come direct to Hitkarini Mahavidyalaya Hostel (Chhatravas) Opp. Shri Krishna Talkies.

You are expected to be here on the 4th or latest by 5th morning.
JAI BABA!

Yours fraternally,

A.R. ABDULLA,
Co-ordinator,

GIRIJANANDAN DUBEY
Convener: Premotsav.

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D.R. Pandey
Ram Milan Tripathi
Jawaharlal Jain
Gaurishanker Babele
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Lady-Secretaries:

Mrs. Najmunnisa Abdulla – Mrs. Tarabai Pankhraj

Late Sri N. S. Kutumba Sastri

It is with profound sorrow we record the demise of Sri T. S. Kutumba Sastri, one of the first Lovers of Avatar Meher Baba in Andhra. His death has created a void in the ranks of Baba Lovers which cannot be easily filled.

Before he fell into contact with Baba and that was way back in the year 1952, and easily became one of his ardent lovers, the cause of man's inhumanity to brother man in social life and the oppressive wrongs of inequality and the resultant exploitations in the social order, engaged his passionate interest and he battled with an indefatigable zeal against social evils of untouchability, caste gradations etc., which got encrusted by centuries of tradition. The renaissance which broke on the European humanity was late in coming to the traditional society in India notwithstanding the fact of its being ruled by a European power which experienced the full blast of that renaissance in its native land. The Indian mind was essentially religious and was prone to consider issues of external life as relatively less important than those which belong to the internal life. This excessive preoccupation with inner life has turned into an obsession and spelt a decadence and loss of the living spirit which demanded not just a reconciliation but a dynamic and creative integration of the inner with the outer. The choice spirits of Indian History such as Raja Rama Mohan Roy, Vivekananda and Gandhi alive to the call of the spirit of humanity threw their powerful advocacy on the side of reform and progress to redress the imbalances of the traditional society and to restore to the human personality the dignity and freedom and equality which alone will unfold its innate powers and fulfilments.

Sri Kutumba Sastri's sensitive spirit readily found its responses in the work and in activities turned to the amelioration of the misery and suffering and deprivations of Harijan humanity mercilessly repressed by the callousness of an insensitive and tradition-ridden society. In the strivings and sacrifices

for the uplift and educational regeneration of these sections in Andhra, Sri Sastri's name will always echo from the hearts of those many men who found liberation into positions of power and responsibility through his unselfish efforts. Many other causes which meant freedom from the thrall of traditional social tyranny such as caste system and its gradations, women's freedom at home and outside, Hindu marriage reform and the many shades of reformist movement engaged his earnest zeal and whatever the odds, he never played for self-interest or self aggrandisement and always stood out for social change towards freedom and equality.

His zeal for social reform was an inheritance not of a secular outlook but of a mind trying to identify its moorings in a non-sectarian and universal, life of the spirit in man. His affiliation with the Theosophical society was the image of his inner personality finding refuge in the truths of the spirit and when he found Meher Baba, it was a natural transition for him to identify the focus of his interest and aspiration in the life of the Avatar, the God Man. His single minded and tireless activities for spreading His message of Love and truth must have given him an endless and unfailing fulfilment for his sacrifices were immense and unending and concern for worldly advantages was reduced to the lowest ebb. It was a fitting tribute that the Avatar bestowed on his purity and integrity of life that when the time came, He nominated him to the exalted office of the Chairmanship of the Avatar Meher Baba Trust.

He had his share of persons who bitterly denounced him. His attitudes may have been far too critical where others were concerned; but none will or can demur to concede the sovereign sincerity of his being and his courage to stand by himself in defence of the truth he saw even in the face of overwhelming odds.

May His soul rest in peace in the haven of all peace.
Beloved Avatar Meher Baba!

(E. L. R.)

Statement about ownership and other particulars about

DIVYA VANI

Form I

1. Place of publication : Governorpet, Vijayawada,
Krishna Dt.
2. Periodicity of its publication : Monthly
3. Printer's Name : Vijaya Press, Vijayawada,
Krishna Dt.
- (Whether citizen of India) : Indian
(If foreigner, state the country of origin) : No
- Address : Vijaya Press, Vijayawada,
Krishna Dt.
4. Publisher's Name : Swami Satya Prakash Udaseen
(Whether citizen of India) : Indian
(If foreigner, state the country of origin) : No
- Address : 3-6-417 Post Office Street,
Himayatnagar, Hyderabad-29
(A. P. India)
5. Editor's Name : Swami Satya Prakash Udaseen
(Whether citizen of India) : Indian
(If foreigner, state the country of origin) : Does not arise
- Address : 3-6-417 Post Office Street,
Himayatnagar, Hyderabad-29
(A. P. India)
6. Owner(s); Name(s)
- a) Please state particulars of Individuals of the Firm, Joint Stock Company, Trust, Cooperative Society or Association, which owns the news paper— : Swami Satyaprakash Udaseen on behalf of Meher Vihar Trust, 3-6-417 Post Office Street, Himayatnagar, Hyderabad-29 (A. P. India)
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Dated: 10-5-1973

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