

Reminiscences of an Abhyasi about Babuji Maharaj

by Jagannath Deshpande of Gulbarga

Param Pujya Shri Raghavendra Rao asked me a question. A Rishi of Upanishad-age declared Man is Greater than Great, Sun's colour is greater than [*Thamas*] darkness. Was it an egoistic proclamation?

I said that is a nascent utterance out of joy of having known the greatest of the great. He, out of the compassion for the people of world, who may also try to know HIM has further said that to know HIM, thinking (Meditating) on HIM is the only way. There is no other way.

Shri Raghavendra Rao said, "Hence, there is absolutely no egoism in telling about his experience to the world. He thought it as his duty to tell about HIM to all the people and show the path to know HIM. Likewise, it becomes our duty too to share our experiences so that the greatness of the great ones' is established and HIS love and compassion for the mankind be made known. Out of compassion for humanity, the Ultimate descended on Earth in the form of "Babuji Maharaj".

Bound by such order, I, a novice in the field of spirituality, too felt to write about my association with Param Pujya Shri Babuji Maharaj.

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In the year 1963-64, I was a student of Engineering, studying in Gulbarga Engineering College. Shri S. A. Sarnad was one of my close relative for whom all of my family members had great respect. He was a highly qualified, simple and ideal person. I was highly impressed by him and accepted him as a guiding factor in all of my day-to-day life. I was keeping close contact with him and used to spend time with him every day.

I too had a religious bent up of mind. I had read books about Shri Rama Krishna Param Hamsa and Swami Vivekananda. I also knew that Sarnadji

was following a Guru who was a resident of Shahajahanpur in Uttar Pradesh. He was practising meditation as per the system laid by his Guru.

Once during that period, Babuji Maharaj visited Kalburgi (Gulbarga). I went to see HIM along with Sarnadji. It was in the house of Shri Dattaraj that I saw two aged persons had come. There were very few people and Sarnadji introduced to Babuji Maharaj – “Babuji, this boy is Jagannath. He is studying in engineering college.” Babuji asked me weather I was doing meditation. I replied, “Not yet”. I only prostrated before HIM and came out of HIS room. Sarnadji told me that HE, Babuji, is a “Dristara” as one who has gone the depth of truth and witnessed the fact’. Other person with Babuji Maharaj was Ishwar Sahai, an equally aged man. He was accompanying Babuji Maharaj and was looking after HIM. I was very much attracted by the Hookah which I had not seen earlier. Shri Ishwar Sahaiji was preparing the Hookah. He used to put tobacco mixed jaggery pellet in a mud pot, on which some burning coal was placed. He used to keep it on a stand carrying a pipe immersed in water pot. From the other end of the pot another pipe above the water level would emerge. With that pipe Babuji Maharaj used to smoke and say, Hookah has been prepared very well. Seeing Ishwar Sahaiji serving Babuji Maharaj always, I asked Ishwar Sahaiji “For how many years you are in Babuji Maharaj’s service?” He looked straight at me and said, “Since twenty years”. I again asked him, is he a grihasta (family man) having wife and children? With a broad smile on his face he replied, “I am a grihasta with wife and children. Why are you asking like this? “Since I was a young college student, I was carefree and dared to ask him – “You are in service of Babuji Maharaj for twenty years, then who is looking after your family?” Ishwar Sahaiji started to laugh loudly and took me to Babuji and said, “Look, what this boy is asking?” He narrated it to Babuji Maharaj who too started laughing. Then Ishwar Sahaiji called me out of the room and said “Every thing will be looked after by Babuji”

A friend of mine, Shri P. V. Joshi, also used to accompany me to see Babuji Maharaj and Ishwar Sahaiji. We were very much attracted by their conversation in U.P. style Hindi. After returning, we used to imitate them. I acted Babuji and my friend as Ishwar Sahaiji. The accent of the language and the imitations of their actions were the means of recreation for us.

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One day after dinner, Babuji Maharaj, came back to the room where he was staying. It was a small room. There was only one cot on which Babuji slept. Ishwar Sahaiji used to sleep on carpet on the floor. By the time Babuji stepped in, HE saw that the room was completely full with satsangis sitting on the carpet. HE reached his cot and sitting on it HE told, “Gandhiji had a habit of walking few steps after meals. One day, on entering his room, he saw that the room was full of visitors and there was absolutely no space left for him to walk. Then he started going around his cot. All of us started to laugh and came out of the room to facilitate Babuji Maharaj to walk.

On another occasion, while talking to us, Babuji told, “Gandhiji was a clever person. To become members of Congress he kept Four anna (25 paise). With this, membership number increased and more people came into the fold of Congress.

Next day, an old man who was afflicted by paralysis was brought to meet Babuji. On hearing it Babuji who was staying on the first floor came down. People around the old man told Babuji that the old man had come to meet HIM and he was a very pious man. He had visited all the yatra places like Varanasi, Haridwar, and Badri etc. Babuji, after hearing this said, “After making this much noise what is there with me?” He further said “you are elderly person, I have to serve you.”

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One night, all of us including Babuji Maharaj and Ishwar Sahaiji were about to sleep, Babuji got up and told me, “bring one scissor I shall cut Master Sahib’s (Ishwar Sahaiji was called as Master Sahib by Babuji since He was teacher) pocket. Lot of money is there”. We started to laugh loudly. On hearing this, Ishwar Sahaiji also got up and started to laugh. His way of cutting jokes with actions are still fresh in my memory (In those days, Ishwar Sahaiji used to keep the account sheets and money in different pockets of his baniyan that had many pockets.

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As stated earlier, I had studied complete works of Swami Vivekananda. I was caught up with the inspiring talks of Swami Vivekananda. The prime spirit behind his words was about the concern for the poor. Many a times whenever I saw poor people – beggars struggling to get some food, I was

deeply touched by their plight and was seriously thinking about overcoming this poverty. Our prime necessity of life is food and then we can think of other things like spirituality etc. So, I wrote a letter to Babuji Maharaj asking HIM the following questions:

Is there GOD? And if HE is there, why there are so many difficulties in this world?

When our people are suffering without having a morsel of food for their stomach, how can your spirituality help them?

I was thinking that Babuji may not reply to a letter from nobody. To my astonishment a quick reply in HIS own hand writing was received.

“The reply to your first question is, GOD is there. To make you understand, I have to use an analogy. Electricity will be flowing in the wire but nobody can see it. It is like this that GOD exists in this world.

For your second question I have to diagnose the nature and show it to you, which I cannot do through this letter. Here also I will use the same analogy of electricity flowing in the wire. People who use it for good purpose like – to get light, heat, fan etc, it serves them for the good. But if they try to utilise it for bad purpose like – for committing suicide etc, it serves for that also. Hence there is no mistake of the electricity that flows in the wire. It is for the people to use it for better purposes. People suffer out of their own ignorance”.

I was happy since I received convincing answers to my queries.

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Thereafter, during a subsequent year (may be 1967 or 1968) Babuji Maharaj had come to Sedam. Many abhyasis had arrived at that place. Shri Ayal Reddy, Preceptor-in-Charge of Sedam Centre, was a large-hearted man. People, either satsangi or otherwise used to assemble there on such occasions. Boarding and lodging was provided at his house. Ayal Reddy's house was quite big and had a very huge open yard. A school in the name of the Mission was being run there. Babuji Maharaj and Ishwar Sahaiji were staying in a room on the upstairs. Very few people would be there in that room. We had free accessibility to Babuji Maharaj. By then I was already practising Sahaj Marg abhyas. During those days, Sarnadji was translating the book 'Efficacy of Raja yoga' into

Kannada language. He used to associate me to see the work done and to prepare the drawings of points, figures, etc.

One day Babuji Maharaj, after taking bath, came to HIS room to put on shirt etc. Some of us already sitting in front of HIS cot. He came and sat by my side on the carpet. While talking to us HE just looked at me and said your 'B' point is showing something differently. Do you meditate on point 'B'? I was taken aback and told HIM "yes Babuji I do meditate. Immediately, He asked Ishwar Sahaiji "Look Master Sahib at his 'B' point, what has happened". Ishwar Sahaiji came and sat by my other side, "yes yes what is this"? He asked me whether I am doing meditation on 'B' point. I said "yes sir". Ishwar Sahaiji in a raised voice, asked me as to how I have been doing meditation on 'B' point? I told him the method I was practising. He said, who told you, "you are doing in a wrong way". I said I have read it in the book 'Efficacy of Rajayoga'- and continued practicing it. Babuji immediately said, "this is wrong method, without instructions, this should not be done". Babuji then started to explain about the points and chakras. He told that there are particular types of energies with particular types of vibrations in each chakra. HE also told HE is able to sing particular *raaga* from a particular chakra and that HE had demonstrated singing of 'Deepak' and 'Megh Mallhar' raagas. HE said, once a lighted lamp was placed with a flame just about to be extinguished and then HE started to sing 'Deepak' *raaga*. The flame of the lamp started to rise to a considerable height. When HE started sing 'Megh Malhar", the flame started to diminish slowly to minimum height. We were enjoying His way of expression with his attractive movement of hands and alluring facial expressive actions. He then told me, "I have demonstrated in front of Master Sahib. If you want you can ask him". Like a child HE put a challenge to verify it from an elder, Ishwar Sahaiji, who was at the back side of us on his cot. Ishwar Sahaiji got up and told us, "yes I have witnessed".

At Shahajahanpur, I had an opportunity of hearing explanation about the same subject 'singing from the point of chakras'. Babuji Maharaj told that only HE could do it and HE had taught some of such raagas to Kesar bahenji (sister of saint Kasturi bahenji). Then jokingly HE told us that HE has not taught one raaga which on singing will start loosening the screws of the Universe. HE has kept the key with HIM only for the safety. HIS child like innocence in telling as if HE is not going to give it to anybody made us laugh loudly, HE too joined us with HIS mischievous laugh at the end.

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One morning at Sedam, while sitting with Babuji Maharaj, I asked HIM : “Babuji can I realise realisation?” Babuji looking straight into my eyes, said : “Where is the doubt ? It is possible within a second. Only small preparation is required.”

In the afternoon, He was talking to some of us and told, “In Samadhi there is no balance in word itself.”

In the evening some of us, mostly youngsters, had assembled in HIS room. Babuji Mahahraj was discussing subjects related to religious practices. Shri Ishwar Sahaji also participated in these discussions. Both of them forgetting their age, would spiritedly discuss with us as if they were of our age. Babuji Maharaj used to make us laugh to our hearts content.

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I asked HIM a question, ‘Babuji, GOD is said to be ZERO but then how could HE create this world?’ Ishwar Sahaji said, we will explain. He told me you are a science student. I will explain it in scientific way. Take a bar magnet. How many poles does a bar magnet has? I said, “There are two equal and opposite magnetic poles- North and South”. He further asked, “What is the point in between?” I said, “It is called Null point and there is no force in it”. No force means is it ZERO you mean? I said, “Yes sir”. He asked me, “Cut it and show it to me” It is wonder each half will emerge as an individual bar magnet with two poles and a Null point in each. I had no answer. He said, “GOD created the world like this!” I remembered Upanishad saying :

“Poornemad:Poornemidam:Poorneth: oornamidachathe!

Poornasse poornemaadaaya poornemevavashishathe!”

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During the night we too were allowed to sleep on the carpet by the side of Babuji Maharaj's cot. While getting ready to sleep HE asked us Where is south side? HE used to sleep keeping HIS head towards South. When we asked why to put our head towards South, HE said that cold waves and magnetic waves are flowing from North towards South and make our brain to receive grossness. If we place our head towards South, the waves will take away the grossness from our brain.

One night, two or three of us were sleeping in the same room as Babuji Maharaj and Ishwar Sahaiji. When we all slept, after some time, Babuji got up and addressing me told that, human brain has got so much power, so much that we can even shatter any world in existence within a second. I got up and listened to it and slept when Babuji went back to sleep. After fifteen minutes or so, HE again got up and sitting on the bed told me, “Because you are feeling limitations, I too feel limitations”. Then again, HE went back to sleep.

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In the year 1969, when I was in my 3rd year of Engineering, an excursion trip was arranged for us from the college. During the trip, at Agra, I left my group and went to Shajahanpur. It was in the month of November. It was my first visit to Shajahanpur. Sarnadji had given the address of Babuji Maharaj’s house. He had also informed Babuji of my possible visit. On reaching Shajahanpur railway station I took a rickshaw to Babuji’s house. But the rikshaw fellow could not locate Babuji’s house. He took me to a farther place and asked me to enquire at a bookstall named ‘Ramachander Book House’. The book house owner knew the address and he gave directions to rickshawala. When I finally reached Babuji’s house, there was only one satsangi from Delhi. Babuji talking to him. Seeing me, immediately Babuji said, “took long time to come”. I prostrated and informed HIM about the confusion regarding the address. After taking bath, HE took me to the meditation room and gave me a sitting. After the meditation, HE started to tell something. During the talk, HE told me about Apollo 11 mission of Americans, the first manned mission comprising of Neil Armstrong, Edwin ‘Buzz’ Aldrin and Michael Collins, who successfully landed on Moon in the same year 1969. He told that, while circling around the moon, the Astronauts had lost contact with Earth. They had drifted to some other place from where no contact could be established with NASA. Babuji said that HE had to help the scientists to get connected with Astronauts in order to keep the interest of the scientists going. Otherwise, the scientists might lose the confidence. He started to tell about the details of terrain on the surface of the Moon I was quite wonderstruck to hear all these details because I had already read about it in the American magazines. I was quite awestruck and caught up in wonder how Babuji knows all these things! Seeing my plight Babuji said, “how come you so wonder struck, this you too can see!” asked Babuji Maharaj as to how HE knows about all these things. Just like an elder, HE told me, “I have become old and maturity has come in spirituality. With this

any thing around the world if I direct my attention, that will open up in front of me. I made Kasthuri stroll on moon's surface. If you want you can ask her." As a child throwing a challenge, HE told this. After that I asked Babuji whether there are any people like us any where in the Universe. HE said, "No. People like us, means biological beings, are not there. But some souls are kept, in different planets. They do not have body like us but have a different type". After few days, I met Kasturi behenji and asked her whether she had gone to moon with the help of Babuji, she told "yes yes I have seen".

Next day morning, after puja and breakfast, Babuji was talking to us (there were only two of us, one from Delhi and myself). During the talks HE told me, "You may be knowing solar system sun and nine planets revolving around it. Once I thought of making the model, then I realised that all this I only did and then why model making, so I stopped". I remember the way HE was telling me about this. HE has revealed Himself, what HE is, to every abhyasi who has come in contact with HIM. I could see the attributes of God as '*Shristikartha*' creator of the universe, '*Sarvgna*' who knows everything, '*Sarvashaktha*' all powerful, '*Sarvapha*' Universal brotherhood *etc.* are available to be seen in Babuji Maharaj. Anybody in my place could have come to the conclusion that HE, Babuji Maharaj, is God Himself.

In the evening on the same day, I was thinking that Babuji will give me a sitting. Immediately He told, "There is no necessity of puja now because if I once transmit to any of the abhyasi, it will take months for the abhyasi to digest it". Babuji Maharaj was answering the questions even before the same being formed in our mind. HE would start clarifying that. This, I have witnessed many a times.

Next day morning, I was to leave Shajahanpur to join my college trip. Babuji arranged for some pooris packed in green leaves and paper. While handing that over to me HE said," When you go to see monuments in Delhi and other places, do not go near the grave (burial place), because the spirits around them may snatch away the spiritual power in you. And one more thing, beware of priestly class (Pandaas) at Allahabad and Kashi". He wrote an address of a preceptor, Dr Murali Mohan, in my diary and signed it so that when I show it to the preceptor, he can recognise me. Prostrating before HIM, I left Shajahanpur.

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In the year 1964 or 1965, Babuji Maharaj visited Kalburgi (Gulbarga). Satsang was arranged at a place called 'Panchayat Raj Training Centre' in Jewargi colony. Many of the abhyasis had arrived from far and distant places. There was only a big hall and in that, a cot with a mosquito net was placed for Babuji to rest. Some of the local satsangis like us had to work as volunteers under the guidance of Sarnadji. For two days we were on the job of looking after the comforts of the visiting abhyasis. We had no chance to attend meditation sessions conducted by Babuji Maharaj. On the second day, after every one had slept (it was around 1:00 AM during night), one of the abhyasi brother Shri Gopalachari, who was a government servant, told me that since we were busy working these two days, we could not get time to participate in any of the meditation sessions. So, now that we are free, let us go and sit in front of Babuji's cot. We both went to the hall. There was only one bulb glowing in the hall. Under the ceiling fan, inside the mosquito net, Babuji had slept without covering HIS face. Other satsangis including some of the preceptors like Sarnadji, Shri Narayanrao, Shri Gunderao, Shri Gopalrao Mujumdar and Shri Ayal reddy were also sleeping in the hall. There was sufficient space in front of Babuji's cot. Myself and Gopalachari went inside the hall and sat at a distance from Babuji's cot. We saw Babuji sleeping on HIS back facing the roof. There was such a deep silence that even a small sound could have disturbed the depth of silence prevailing. We both sat with our legs crossed to start meditation. When we closed our eyes and started to utter the prayer 'O Master, Thou...'. Immediately there came Babuji's voice, "Narayanrao, Narayanrao, who are they, who?" Opened my eyes and saw that Babuji was sleeping silently as before and there was absolutely no movement. I asked Gopalachari as to what was happening? Gopalachari told me to keep quite and sit for meditation. He might have said that because old age, Babuji might have uttered in HIS sleep. Again, when we started to meditate, we could hear a loud voice of Babuji Mahahraj "Who are they? Now what? Now nothing is there get up and go". We again opened our eyes and saw Babuji Maharaj sleeping. In the same position as earlier as if HE did not do anything. I suggested Gopalachari to leave the place. But he again insisted me to sit and do the meditation. Again, when we continued to meditate, in a very loud voice Babuji said "Get up – up!" My heart started to shiver with fear. I just got up and ran out of the hall. Gopalachari also followed me behind. He asked me with surprise, "What has happened?" Even when Babuji Maharaj shouted in a loud voice, none of the people in the hall seemed to

hear HIM and everybody were sleeping as before, as if nothing had happened. That voice is still fresh in my memory.

Next day morning I was accompanying Babuji Maharaj to Sri Dattaraj's house for taking bath, which was at some distance from Panchayat Raj building. There were no houses in between. I had a camera hung around my neck. Babuji on the way, stopped and told me, "with your camera take my photo". I said okay and asked HIM to face to camera and took a photograph of HIM. HIS way of asking me to take a photograph was, as if there were no photographs of HIM. Then I told HIM about the previous night's experience in the hall and asked HIM why did HE make us run away? HE said "Brother I don't remember anything".

After taking bath, HE came to my room. I was staying in one of the rooms at Dattaraj's house. HE came inside. Except for a cot and a couple of wearing cloths, there was nothing in the room. HE always had HIS way of praising anybody wherever HE goes. So, HE sat on the blank matted cot and said, "This cot is very good!" Afterword, I took a photograph of Babuji Maharaj sitting on the chair in front of my room with Sarnadji and Shri Narayanrao standing on either side of HIM. (I do not have those photographs with me now. Only one of the photograph taken by me when Babuji Maharaj walking along with sister Shanthabai is available at Dattaraj's house).

It was my first time of attending Basant (Utsav) festival. After the puja, breakfast and shanti path, there was an announcement that whoever wanted to take individual sitting, had to give their names and a preceptor would be asked to conduct the same. Smt. Shanthabai (who did not come that year for Basant) a preceptor from Kalburgi(Gulbarga) had told me about Kasturi Behenji. She had asked me to take a sitting from her as it is most effective and beneficial. So, I went to Babuji Maharaj and told HIM about a sitting from Kasturi Behenji. HE said HE will ask one of the preceptors for the same. However, I insisted for having a sitting from Kasturi Behenji only. Babuji Maharaj asked me "Why? What sweetness is in it?" I had no answer. Then HE said, "I will arrange for a sitting from Shri M.L. Chaturvedi, honourable High Court judge from Allahabad." Judge Sahib gave me a sitting. He remembered me when I went to meet him at Allahabad sometime later.

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Once, while going to Shahjahanpur for Basant, Sarnadji had given me Jawar corn atta to be handed over to Babuji Maharaj at Shahjahanpur. I did so. Babuji asked, “what is this?” I told HIM about it and said, “Sarnadji has sent this for you. It is good diet for acidity”. Babuji asked me how to use it? I told HIM the method of mixing it with milk and sugar. He took it and told that I will be called to prepare it on the next day. Next day morning, after HIS bath, HE took me to the kitchen. HE placed atta, sugar box and a glass of milk in front of me and asked me to prepare it. I took half of the milk in the glass and put two spoons of sugar. Immediately Babuji took the sugar box, took out hand full of sugar and put it in the glass, telling me that HE needs this much. Mixing atta into it, I gave it to HIM to eat. After eating it, He said it is really good. HE said that HE will keep it in a safe place in HIS room and use it as and when required.

In the evening, when we over stayed after Basant, I asked Babuji Maharaj, “Babuji shall I ask one question?” Babuji from leaning position, sat straight and said “ask thousand questions”! I asked HIM, “Babuji, are the happenings in our life accidental or calculated?” HE said, “They are all calculated to an extent of 99.99%. Only some may be accidental. Suppose after eating a banana, you throw the peeled skin on the way and you happen to fall while walking over it. Such things may happen accidentally. Do not call such queries as questions. The word ‘inquisition’ is more suitable, I think”.

I asked, “Babuji, one who is practicing Dhyana or Yoga, should eat less food?” HE said, “You are young. Eat plenty, what happens we will take care.”

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An abhyasi from a village near Kanpur, on the other side of Ganga, came to meet Babuji. Babuji asked the abhyasi whether he attends the weekly satsang at Shri Narayan Sahai’s place in Kanpur regularly. The abhyasi said” Yes Yes Babuji, I go regularly!” Babuji asked, “During rainy season and if it is flooded what will you do?” “Babuji I swim and go” immediately Babuji said” No No you should not do like this. Water current will be too strong!” Then the abhyasi replied, “Babuji Maharaj when you are there, what will happen?!” Immediately Babuji Maharaj said “yes yes when we are there what will happen?!”

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Some of the foreign abhyasis brothers and sisters were sitting around Babuji Maharaj in the veranda of HIS house. Some with their video camera, tapes and photographic instruments and were asking questions about Sahaj Marg sadhana, their personal problems etc. It was difficult for me to understand their English language with different accent, since they were from Spain, France and Germany etc. But Babuji use to correctly understand their questions and was answering them.

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A colourful kite from somewhere came floating in to the open yard. Its main string was cut and hence the blowing wind brought it to the open yard. Babuji, who was seriously discussing philosophical problems, noticed the kite and jumped out of HIS chair, keeping HIS hookah away, ran towards the kite. Like a child HE was shouting joyously, "I got kite, kite!" Two three of us also started to run along with HIM to get hold of the kite. Ultimately Babuji caught hold of the kite and brought it to the veranda and telling everybody, 'look I got kite'. HIS entire actions were just like a boy. After few minutes children from the street arrived through gate and asked Babuji to give them their kite. Babuji, like any other child, said that "This I got it, hence it is mine". After many repeated requests from the boys HE gave it out to them and came back to HIS chair. HE then continued with HIS explanation from the point where HE had left it!

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It was the period of general elections in U.P. Some of us were at Shahjahanpur. One of the professor J R K Raizada, who was a close associate of Babuji and also Secretary of the Mission, had contested from Shahjahanpur constituency. He gave the voters list of Babuji Maharaj's house and requested for voting in his favour. Babuji responded in a happy mood and promised him of HIS vote and also instructed all others to vote for him. There was a maid servant named Malin. Babuji called her and showed her the election pamphlet. HE said, "Here is the copy of the voting paper. Here, at Jaggan's place, you have to put the stamp- look here you stamp it you will put stamp anywhere and one vote will be spoiled. You are (*bekaar*) useless lady". Malin was equally aggressive. She retorted, "What you will teach me, I know everything, I will vote jaggan only".

On the day of election Babuji got ready putting on HIS Dhoti, Shirt, a coat which was like sherwani and white cap on HIS head. We were to go by walk. Babuji told us, "People say, heart's voice will tell correctly. Our heart is telling votes are not being casted on Jaggan's name." HE told us in a low voice as if it is confidential. While saying this, HE put up a brief smile on HIS face. HE took us too to the voting place where Raizada's pandal was put up. After Babuji sat on a chair, we too were provided some chairs to sit.

Some of the followers of the other party came and surprised to see Babuji Maharaj sitting in jaggan's pandal. One of them openly expressed," Ramchadra, If YOU sat here, then it will be difficult for us to win".

After voting was over we returned to the house. It was informed to me by somebody later that Raizada was defeated in the election.

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Once, HE was talking about Love. "Love can create miraculous transformations! I have seen a snake catcher. No snake could bite him because he had so much love for the snakes. People were telling that he has 'Garuda Rekha' in his hand. But I have found that he had much love for the snakes'.

Shri Sheshadri, an IAS officer, from South India was to come to Shahajahanpur. Babuji was repeatedly telling about his visit. HE said "He is Great person, I myself will go to Railway station to receive him. I have arranged a car also."

Next day morning, Babuji was ready by 9 o' clock. HE was wearing HIS Dhoti, shirt, a sherwani like coat and a Gandhi cap on HIS head. HE took care to see that the cap on HIS head was straight. Since the car had come He would go Himself. He turned to us asking whether HIS dress is neat, asked whether all the buttons of the sherwani were fixed properly. Somebody pointed out that one button is missing, he went and fixed it. Babuji confirmed that all the buttons of HIS coat, from top to bottom, were properly fixed. Since somebody had to help HIM put the button, HE said, "Nowadays I am becoming Nawab Wajid Ali Khan".

Since we did not grasp the joke to enjoy, HE told us in short, the story about the joke. There was a Nawab at Luknow, namely Wajid Ali Khan. All the enemies with their armies encircled the city fort. The ministers went to the Nawab and said, "The enemies are about to come inside the city. Nawab

sahab you are not yet ready for the war?” Then Nawab said “We are ready but nobody came to wear my shoes on you know!” Then we started to laugh hilariously!

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Once during Basant, we, a group from Gulbarga, reached Shahjahanpur one day earlier. There was queue to prostrate before HIM. I too went, did Namaskaara to HIS holy feet and stayed in house only. On the first day of Basant, Babuji conducted the meditation session. HE called all the people from South to come in front of Babuji. The meditation for an hour was over. Likewise, in the evening also, we sat in front of HIM. On the main day of Basant after puja, breakfast and shanti path, some of us went and sat before HIM near the veranda of Judge Sahab’s room. HE was talking to some people on HIS side and we were busy within ourselves. Immediately, my friend Pradeep Puranik told me, “You see, Babuji is looking straight towards you only!” I turned to Babuji and saw that HE was looking at me. HE, leaning forward from HIS chair, asked, “when did you come?” I told HIM that I have come two days back. “Is it, I was not at all aware”. Afterwards, Shri Raghavendra Rao told me, “Immediately on coming here you have to tell your name and place before prostrating. I too do the same. I tell HIM, I am Raghavendra Rao from Raichur before prostrating. This is the usual practise in our system.

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One day during Basant in February, it was very cold. In the morning I went to take bath near the bore well in the open yard of the house. With the help of hand pump, I drew water in a bucket. Just I had put a couple of mugs of water on my body, Babuji came there from kitchen. Seeing me HE said, “Inside *Bisi Neer* is there, why are you taking bath with cold water?” I looked at HIM and said it is O.K. for me. He asked me,” in Kannada hot water is known as *Bisi Neer*?” I said ‘yes’. But HIS gesture was just like a child who claims to say, “I too know Kannada!”

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A young sannyasi from Shahjahanpur used to come to meet Babuji Maharaj regularly. It was told that he was well read in Sanskrit. He used to discuss with Babuji whenever he came. He used to express his appreciation and

happiness about the discussion with Babuji Maharaj. He requested Babuji Maharaj to use royal looking silk covered wind pipe to smoke hookah. The sanyasi used to come quite often. After he left, Babuji told us, “This sanyasi will be present only at the time of food. He will absent during puja time. Babuji used to cut jokes about him”.

* * *

Once after Basant, we stayed for few more days. There were very few people in the house. A tall well- built man, aged more than 60 years was also there. He was dumb, could not speak anything. Babuji told about him. He was a retired Superintendent of police and worked at Shahajahanpur. During Hindu Muslim riots, he was S.P. at Shahajahanpur and witnessed many massacres. After his retirement he lost his peace of mind. So, he went to some spiritual guide who asked him to observe silence. For three years he did not speak to anybody. Afterwards, whenever he wanted to break his silence, he found that he is not able to talk. So, he has become dumb. Babuji said “now he has come to me. It is a difficult case for me to correct. I have asked him to do some tongue exercise. We have to wait and see what happens!” Then Babuji said, “God has given us the instruments for the body to function. If any of these instruments is not used, it becomes useless like any mechanical tool, which if not used gets rusted and becomes useless”.

* * *

One night, during Basant Utsav, we went inside Master’s cottage. Babuji Maharaj was sitting on a cot covering himself with blankets, since it was cold. Our group consisted of Dr. S. B. Shamrao, his wife Smt. Nalinidevi, Dr Vijaykumar and some other abhyasis from Kalburgi (Gulbarga). Looking at so many people, Babuji asked us to sit. HE told us to ask HIM questions so that HE can say something. There was Shri Rayzada also in the room. He asked, “Babuji what is your opinion on Pakistan?” Babuji said, it is extinguishing fire fly (*Jugnu*), everything will be finished. Political map will change. Rayzada asked, what about China sir?” Babuji said, “Yes china will be divided into six parts. I am seeing dark lines on its map and telling about it”. He further said, “I will tell you which I have told somebody. “Now if China wants to fight a war with India, sitting on this cot only, I can fight back with it”. He started laughing and we too joined HIM. “We will tell you one more thing, Gold is abundantly available along the way from Assam to China”.

* * *

During one of the Basant Utsav, in the month of February, I accompanied Shri Gunderao and reached Shahajahanpur a day earlier to Basant. There were around two hundred abhyasis. The utsav was being conducted at Babuji Maharaj's house. Since some of us were college students, we were assigned to work as volunteers. In the morning, after puja, we were sitting in the open yard basking in the sunlight. Babuji also came and sat on a chair near to us telling that it is too cold and HE too joined us in the sunlight. Then HE said, "This Sun what you are seeing, it is not that big, it is ball of flames. In its centre small point is there all flame comes out from there! To this point I give energy". He further said, Scientists are telling that Sun's temperature is coming down. But not now.

After some time as HE was sitting next to me, "You see one abhyasi at Australia is doing meditation, in wrong way. How I should correct it? He repeated two or three times. Hearing this I was wondering how HE knows all these things?!

He is Omnipresent. I was getting a thought that Babuji comes to know everything we think and do! Many a times, being young, we indulge in thoughts of enjoyment etc. So, what if Babuji comes to know our thoughts? With all our shortcomings we have come to HIM, taking up Sahaj Marg abhyas. Thinking in myself, I managed to ask Babuji Maharaj, "Babuji you come to know everything?", "No brother we don't know anything"! I was happy that HE does not come to know of our trend of thoughts. Then again, HE said, "when I want to know anything Lalaji Maharaj will show that much."

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One day morning, during Basant Utsav the same year or some other year, after puja and breakfast Babuji was sitting on a chair in the open yard basking under the sunlight. I was moving around busy with some work or the other, HE called me, "ye, you come here" I went near HIM. Bringing HIS face close to mine, HE asked, "How do you do Meditation?" I was thinking as to how to tell HIM about it. Because, since last few days, as told by a preceptor Smt. Shanthabai, I too started to meditate on the form of Babuji Maharaj. So hesitatingly, finding no other way, I told HIM, "I meditate on your form". Immediately, HE flared up and asked. "Who told you this?" seeing HIS angry mood, I thought it inappropriate to bring in Smt. Shanthabai's name, else HE

may scold her. To save the situation I told HIM that I have read it in one of the books. HE raised HIS voice further and said “we have not written this in any book?” Finding no other way to justify, I stood there with folded hands just like an offender, who have committed grave mistake. With a warning HE said” You see without telling these things one should not do?”

I, later, got engrossed in some other work. But all the while, I was worrying about the event and I was thinking that I had committed a grave mistake. After an hour or so, Babuji Maharaj was still sitting on the same chair in the open yard. I again happened to pass by HIM. Babuji again called me again, “ye, you come here”! With fear, wondering what is there in store for me, I went near HIM, again moving HIS face close to mine HE said, “What you are doing, it is right, and do it” I could see full face, eyes filled with love. Prostrating before HIM, with happiness filled in my heart, I moved from that place. I still remember that moment as fresh as it was then.

After the morning Satsang, on the 3rd day of Basant, people were taking leave. I could witness that people could hardly control their emotions and were silently weeping.

We were to stay for few more days with Shri Gunderao and others. After everyone left, Shri Ramachandra Reddy was standing in front of the veranda where Babuji Maharaj was standing. Babuji called Shri Ramachandra Reddy and told him that HE has taken him to ‘Parabrahmanda Mandal’ and asked, has he felt that condition. Immediately with folded hands, Shri Ramachandra Reddy said,” what I have to do with Mandal and Gindal Babuji, if you are there that is enough”! Immediately Babuji said, “Then I will send you to Central Region”!

After that, Babuji went to count the china dish plates. The plates had been washed and kept along the wall in the adjacent room. We too joined HIM to count the numbers. Babuji wanted to know the number of damaged plates. He told that HE has to pay for the damaged ones. While I was sitting on the ground with HIM counting plates, Babuji told me to go inside the kitchen and ask Kasturi Behenji ; “whether everything is full?”! I went inside and told her what Babuji wanted to know. She said, “Yes, Yea, tell that everything is full.”! Returned and told Babuji the same. HE said, The Grace was raining for three days. Like a shawl has been spread and from it Grace was showering. When it is full, I have to cut that. How it is done you know, from the corner and

pull it, like this it happens.” Within a minute or two, I too felt a jerk in the heart. It may be because HE had explained it to me!

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It was during Basant Utsav in 1971, I was working with our abhyasi brother Shri L. T. Chavan, an architect, who was preparing the plan and elevation for the Ashram building at Shajahanpur. He had prepared some drawings and we both went to Babuji Maharaj to show them for HIS approval. Shri Chavan had proposed a roof of RCC folded plates for big size meditation hall. Babuji saw the drawing and asked Shri Chavan, “What is this roof structure?” Chavan Sahab told HIM that this is new type of RCC roof used these days to cover big span. And this triangle type folded plates roof can provide without using heavy beams. That was a new technique in use those days. Then Babuji asked him “who will do the design?” Chavan Sahab said, “You don’t worry about this. We will bring engineers from Bombay.” (In those days Saith Vallabhdas Tank, a preceptor from Bombay was also constructing his house for which Chavan sahib was working.) Babuji Maharaj looking at me, said “Our engineer who sitting here with us, can do the design?” Chavan sahib said” No, No just now he has come out of college. He does not have experience.” Then Babuji looked at me and asked “can you do it?” I said “Babuji, Chavan Sahab is right. In college we studied this as one chapter, and more over I lack experience in design.” Immediately Babuji told me, “I will teach you, not with book,s help, but I will raise your intelligence so that you know this enough.” We both were wonderstruck and just staring HIM. I then understood that the knowledge about which we are so proud of is far below the level of real knowledge and is just a drop-in ocean and HE is real source of knowledge! In the evening Babuji was talking to Chavan sahib. He told us, do you think I do not know Architecture? Whenever I try to draw I do get Architecture of Dwaraka* but not present one! (After few years, the temple drowned in the sea were fully investigated by the Archaeological Department. It was to our knowledge that the architecture of Dwaraka is unique!)

**Dvaraka is one of the Sapta Puri (seven sacred cities) of Hinduism.*

One day, either during Basant Utsav or after a day or two, Babuji Maharaj came holding a pot filled with mustered oil. Sitting on a chair, HE wanted to apply the oil before taking bath. I was standing there with one of our abhyasi brother Shri Gopalrao, a teacher, and relative of mine. We offered our

selves to apply the oil. Babuji was sitting with only a dhoti above HIS knees. HE said, “No, no, I can do it myself”. We continued to stand there and after two minutes, HE gave the oil pot in our hands and said” Yes, take this and apply small quantity and massage” We both were quite happy and applied the oil to HIS body massaging HIS arms, legs and the back a little bit. HE then asked us to stop, “Stop, now we will take bath!” I still remember lustre of HIS skin!

One day, when Babuji went to take bath (the bath room was situated by the side of Judge Sahib cottage) and I was standing near the front pillar of the cottage. After taking bath, Babuji, wearing only a dhoti and a towel on HIS shoulder came out of the bathroom. Holding my hand by the left arm HE said, “Common we will do puja!” HE took me to the meditation hall and asked me to sit. HE sat in front of me and keenly looked at me. Then HE said “You are not Doreswamy? We were supposed to give him a sitting!” Getting up from seat, I said, “I am not Doreswamy, I will go and send him.” Then Babuji said, “no, no you keep sitting. We will call Doreswami.” HE asked somebody to bring in Doreswamy. Doreswamy came in and Babuji asked both of us to sit for meditation. It was about half an hour or so and HE asked us to stop.

We were quite happy. After prostrating before HIM, we came out of the meditation hall. Outside, in veranda, I saw Shri Ramachandra Reddy standing and looking at me with much admiration and love. He said,” What Jagannath! Babuji took you inside holding your hand and gave a sitting!” I told Shri Ramachandra Reddy, “By mistake Babuji gave me a sitting” Immediately Shri Ramachandra Reddy looked unhappy and asked me in chiding voice, “do you think Master can make any mistake?” I grasped the situation and repented for my poor understanding.

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An event which was told to us by Shri M. D. Jahagirdar : Once Babuji Maharaj was sitting on HIS easy chair in the veranda, enjoying puffs from HIS hookah. In front of HIM, about a dozen of abhyasis were sitting on the chairs. One or two started to do meditation by closing their eyes. Babuji looked around and said” Now with whom I shall talk?” with this HE went inside HIS room. Shri M. D. Jahagirdar, having been witness to this, told the people, “Hard headed fellows, you come here to see HIM. Instead of seeing, you sit with your eyes closed”. It is a pity that when HE himself is sitting in front of us, we choose to close our eyes instead of seeing HIM!” This incident reminds me

of a sentence written by Babuji in one of HIS letters to Shri Raghavendra Rao, “People come to see me but go back without seeing me”. HE, during HIS physical presence, made known to everyone who HE is. But, we unfortunately, few like me did not realise the same.

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