

DIVYA VANI
Volume 4 Number 2
August 1968

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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Monthly:

25th August 1968

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(DIVINE VOICE)

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"The Meher Vihar Trust"

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(Continued on 3rd cover page)

Monthly:

25th AUGUST 1968

D I V Y A V A N I

(DIVINE VOICE)

AN ENGLISH MONTHLY

Devoted to Avatar Meher Baba & His Work

E d i t o r :

S W A M I S A T Y A P R A K A S H U D A S E E N

Hon. Assistant Editor :

L. Venkayya, B.Sc., LL.B., D.P.A.

Phone: 36233

Grams: "MEHERVIHAR"

THE MEHER VIHAR TRUST
3-6-441, 5th Street,
Himayatnagar, Hyderabad-29
(A. P., India)

Volume 4]

Number 2]

Annual Subscription: Rs. 12-00

Single Copy: Re. 1-00

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" I Am The Ancient One "

—Meher Baba

ADDRESS

By

ADI. K IRANI

given on the occasion of the Fifth Anniversary of
Meher Vihar on 24th August, 1968 at
Hyderabad, Andhra.

Today is the Fifth Anniversary of Meher Vihar. Swami Satya Prakash Udaseen thought of Meher Vihar, founded it and nurtured it with its various activities all these years with the help of his co-workers. It has not been a smooth sailing for him. He has been devoting all his time and energy for the successful functioning of Meher Vihar. Meher Vihar is wholly devoted to the Cause of Avatar Meher Baba.

Meher Baba's work is vast. In the vastness of this work, anything can appear and disappear. There may be a rise and fall of circumstances and dispositions, attitudes and attributes, financial aid and starvation, fault-finding and praise, gossip and silence. Amidst the changing climate of the assemblage of men, material and money there have to be some pillars of stability, of faith and goodwill to help and co-operate to keep Meher Vihar running. Without this help Meher Vihar cannot stand. Without such help Meher Pukars, Meher Publications and The Awakeners could not have stood. I as a lone representative, at a time of Baba's dire "exclusion" cannot stand.

Inspired by the Love of Meher Baba and augmented by self-determination, let us all join together as instruments of receiving His bountiful Blessings today and give it

at all times to others through acts of love and service by moulding and adjusting ourselves to face different men and situations.

When one thinks and feels he does not necessarily act; but when one acts, he necessarily thinks and feels simultaneously. That is why an act is much more important and effective than only thinking and feeling because it carries with it the triple movement of body, mind and feeling with the resultant impressions that are strong and potent for further action and finally to defacing and neutralizing all impressions in a bid to be united with God.

Some acts are helpful towards liberating man from impressions and some are binding to deeper impressions. This is a mathematics we hardly see or feel except to a small degree indirectly. The magnitude of their numbers, shades and interaction is too complicated for a clear understanding. Only Perfect Masters and the Avatar are fully conversant with them because they are all-knowing.

Avatar Meher Baba has made it all very simple for us. He has reduced the entire problem to be solved through Love. Love can permeate impressions, dissolve them and finally exceed them. To the ailment of man's suffering from binding impressions, He has given a positive remedy. It is not to be sought for anywhere outside but within us. Love functions within us as the very purpose of everything we do. From a sinner to a saint, this purpose, or power motivate all our actions. No matter what the target we aim at—money, woman, power, fame or God—the propelling force is that of love. It is for the love of someone (including self) or for the love of something that we exert, we suffer, we enjoy, we live and we die.

Meher Baba wants us to lead a normal, natural, honest and hardworking life and in its very functioning

perform such acts of love that will loosen the binding effect of multifarious other acts of good and bad we did and we do.

An act of true love is that which is performed by a lover for his or her Beloved, who is personification of God. The Beloved is too high or too big for us to truly reach Him or contain Him or be contained by Him. But there is a way of life given to us by Meher Baba which can take us to where He really is. It is to love Him and to serve Him.

Let us come together and perform acts of love for our Beloved. They may be prayers, "goshti", sahavas, holding of gatherings, melas, distributing of literature, giving of monetary assistance, feeding the poor and many other things we can think out and plan and through our talent, ability, industry, art, wit and generosity, express our love. But we should be discreet in our choice to decide where in our immediate vicinity is the great need of help for a cause wholly devoted to Baba. It is Meher Vihar.

Let us give what we have, we can and have no string of name, respect or position attached to our free offering or service. If any and all these come in a natural way, accept them in a detached manner. The moment we ask for something we give, we give nothing but for asking. The moment we give for something we ask, we give nothing but for asking. This is a bargain which the purity of love and the sanctity of service do not tolerate. Equally intolerable is the thought that the love of the Beloved allowed to flow freely into the hearts of His lovers through unreserved channels of unselfish service is blocked. When we reserve for ourselves the right of transit how can the Beloved enter our heart?

The Beloved is Supreme and His heart is Infinite and His work is universal. To be worthy of His service we

should enlarge our hearts and also the field of Baba work, at least to proportions that could at the most be viewed to bear a semblance of universality. We should work together amongst the multitude of men that the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad afford; but this has to be done with the unity of workers' strength and the beneficence of the monetary donors. Baba mission is not a few men's handiwork or the work of a Meher Vihar without the bountiful help of men, material and money!

Each one of the Meher Baba Centres all over the world is a standing manifestation of Avatar Meher Baba's infinitesimal part of His Will beginning to show its light and force on the horizon of human suffering. The time is not far when the gigantic cloud of darkness will burst with a multi-atomic thunder, outpouring Avatar Meher Baba's Love into a deluge of His Blessings. Till this moment of moments arrives, the work, the preparing of human receptivity should be our prime-concern. An eventuality like this, coming once in about a thousand years or more will be lost if we are caught napping. For after Meher Baba's Manifestation as the accepted Avatar of the Age by millions of people we will have no room to work. There will be no need to work. Baba's Message of Love and Truth will have stormed the world with a new bursting of light and a new awakening of rising God.

We call ourselves Baba lovers, devotees and disciples. Then we must come forward and give with a stout heart and a sturdy hand what we have we can give—not floundering, not flinching but banging and bursting with anything we can afford, our time, talent, labour or wealth.

May I say?

Given unasked is given the best;
 Given when asked is given the least.
 Best and least matters the least
 Given with love; the lover gives.

Love is for the Beloved and to do His work and help His work is the highest expression of love.

Must we fight shy of expressing our love?
Must we fear expressing our love?
Must we hesitate expressing our love?
Must we love without expressing our love?

Not by high throated "pukar" of "Jai Baba ki Jai" or by high sounding words of Vedant, "Aham Brahmasmi", "you and I are one Baba!" but by silent acts of service and generosity, give what we have, we can, NOW. Time will have run out and the moment gone, when no need to ask and no time to take. Our help would miss the mark of an opportuned destiny and the hour of need gone.

Make hay when God-Meher shines !

Jai Baba!

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PRAYER

By Maud Kennedy, U. K.

Thy Will be done
Thy Name be honoured
Thy Words be heard
Thy Love be shared
Thy Truth be lived
Thy Joy be known
Thy Glory be seen
Thy Peace be kept
Everywhere.

THE WORD

By Maud Kennedy, U. K.

An arrow pierces my heart,
A voice speaks.
From whence?
Above, below, around
or within ?

It speaks,
Like the wind in pine trees
and distant thunder coming,
like the sea murmuring
or a dove in heavenly woods.
It grows, .
It reaches ecstasy,
It tells me all I ever wished to know, ' '
It thrills, it transforms.
It is the Beloved who speaks.
as if a sword ran through me.
O Life! O Love, AWAKE!
It is Baba who speaks
THE WORD.

TEACHINGS OF MEHER BABA and SANATANA DHARMA

by Dr. Chakradhar D. Deshmukh,
M.A., Ph.D., (London) Nagpur

In India as well as outside India there are quite a large number of persons who take their inspiration from the word 'Sanatana' or 'Eternal'. The Teaching of Avatar Meher Baba has special importance for those, who would earnestly try to apprehend the concept, that has sustained this interest in the word. The word 'Dharma' also has great sacredness about it and the concept, at its highest, has to be examined. Here also, Meher Baba throws a flood of light, laying bare the fundamentals and essentials of all historical religions and in fact, any conceivable religion, and freeing them from binding and temporary superficialities. As a system of dogmas or doctrines or rituals, no religion can be eternal. Most people use the phrase 'Sanatana Dharma' as standing for traditions rather than for understanding, and such usage has its hold only on the outer form, which need not be and cannot be 'Sanatana' in a changing world, and misses the deeper Truth, which alone can be and is 'Sanatana'. However, since religion often gets identified with ceremonials and rituals and outer forms, it meets a challenge from the seekers of the Truth. But since, ultimately religion strives to reveal or uphold the Truth, it gets recognition from them also. The double destructive = constructive process has its repercussions in all fields. Here also Meher Baba's Teachings are supremely helpful to those who would sift the true from the false and arrive at the Eternal Truth at any cost.

Let me first start with some of His striking declarations that arrestingly invite our attention to the deeper meaning of 'Sanatana' as well as 'Dharma'. He has declared, 'I belong to no religion. My religion is to be the Ancient One. I am the Ancient One. My religion is Love.' He gives us not the Truth of creeds or sets of doctrines and precepts, but the truth of experience. It is one thing merely to have a picture of a cow, but it is another to have a real cow and drink its milk. The inner spiritual Path and realisation of the Truth is far more important than religious creeds, which do play an important role but only in the preliminary phases.

MEHER BABA gives us not mere words or precepts or doctrines but realisation of the Eternal Truth, awakening us to the unaging and indivisible reality of God, as an all-inclusive, self-complete and self-renewing existence, triumphantly affirming itself in past, present and future. To realise God as our very Self is to realise Him in the Eternal Now. This alone can be 'Sanatana Dharma'. 'Sanatana' cannot mean merely very old or merely permanent in the sense of just endurance through time. If God as Truth is Ancient, as He undoubtedly is, He is also modern and even of the future. And, in fact, He not only includes but transcends the entire time process and is ETERNAL. This is the true meaning of Sanatana or Eternal as revealed by Meher Baba. This Truth is given by Him to-day not only through His Messages and Teachings but also through His 43 years of unfathomable and divine Silence, which is more eloquent and profound than all the possible metaphysical essays of the human intellect. He does not merely teach this Highest Truth through words, but is its full descent (Avatar) or revelation, awakening it in the hearts of all by imparting and unlocking divine love that alone enables the aspirant to be united with God—the Beloved.

According to Meher Baba, God as Eternal Truth, has three aspects—Dnyana or Knowledge, Shakti or Power

and Ananda or Bliss (which is accessible fully only to those who traverse the Path of Love). The story of creation may be told by comparing the Infinite God in His original state with the Ocean.

'When the ocean is completely still, it cannot know itself as might, since it is bereft of all movements. In order to realise itself as a mighty ocean with all the immensity of its stored up energy, there must come into existence some movement in it. Now, the wind that creates a stir in the ocean of God is the impulse, which God, in His Original state has for realising the fullness and immensity of His own Infinite Being. This wind creates in the ocean bubbles of different dimensions. They correspond to the innumerable evolving forms of life—from atom to man.' * This leads to evolution of life through advancing species, transmigration and after achievement of the full consciousness in the human form, to reincarnation through innumerable lives, until the original impulse of conscious self-realisation as an eternal and unending divinity is fulfilled.

Meher Baba explains why this fulfilment of conscious self-realisation of infinity gets postponed, though God is not at all very far from the seeker. 'A tiny and trivial thing like an umbrella can deprive you of the sight of such a stupendous fact as the Sun. Impressions are like this umbrella.' ** The umbrella or the curtain of these impressions or *sanskaras* (i.e., dispositional imprints left on the ego-psyche by each act and experience in the process of evolution and search) has to be removed if the seeker is to see the Sun of God, who is ever there as his inmost Self. The undoing of impressionary dispositions is achieved by directing the outlook of the consciousness of the seeker by stages, from the gross to the subtle, from the subtle to the mental and from the mental

* Page 4 'Sparks of the Truth From Dissertations of Meher Baba': Version by Dr. C. D. Deshmukh (Jabalpur AMBC)

** Ibid Page 34.

to the Divine Sphere of existence. The *sanskaras* or impressions become correspondingly finer and fainter until their obstructivity to Truth is completely undone by their disappearance as a veil.

The *Sanskritic* impressional distorting or conditioning of the ego-mind-heart functions like a veil to the Truth or the true meaning of Life. These past engravings or imprints create inertia and resistances in the free functioning of the consciousness, with the result that it inevitably partly misses the import of the revelation of the Truth in the Eternal Present, Annulment of Sanskaric or impressional dispositions is not a mechanical process, but is concomitant with the assimilation of true values and the infusion of the true meaning of Life. For thus delimiting and deconditioning the mind-heart (and inheriting the limitless Truth in the Eternal Now) Grace and help of a Perfect Master are invaluable and, at final stages, indispensable.

The impressions commit consciousness to the delusive identification of the soul with the body (gross, subtle or mental). It is these *sanskaras* or impressions, which create the false and separative feeling of 'I', 'me', 'mine' or limited ego and the entire illusory world of *duality*, (with all the selfishness—individual or collective—and rivalries with their hatred, jealousies and conflicts). 'Seeking God through the ego-mind', says Meher Baba, 'is like trying to go ahead of your own shadow. It cannot be done, not because God is, in any way far off, but because you can never get the real through the false. God is nearer to you than your own shadow. In fact, He is not only within you, but is your very self'.*

But getting merged in God and being united with Him needs Divine Love. Meher Baba declares: 'Love for God removes all fear and prepares the aspirant to be lost in

* Ibid Page 50

Him. The intensity of the love of the aspirants unites them with God. They thus eventually get the supreme 'I-Am-God-State'. * The fundamental unity of the soul with the ultimate Reality of God as Truth has been announced in Upanishads in 'Aham-Brahm-Asmi', by Sufis in 'Anal-Haque', and by all mystics and prophets in 'I and my Father are one'. Meher Baba invites us all to inherit this Divine Truth and imparts Divine Love to enable us to do it.

Self-less service of humanity, (without the vitiating and false separative distinctions of sex, caste, creed, nationality, race, ideology, etc.) is the Path of Action. But all Paths of Knowledge, Action or Love get fused into each other when you get the good fortune to have the Grace of the Perfect Master (who becomes the fastest approach to the Truth, because He is Himself one with it).

The wise ones see the reign of Truth in all happenings, great or small, individual or collective. It is irresistible. 'Reign of Truth may be described in different ways as the Law of God or the Law of Justice or the Law of Karma. It is the Law of Cause and Effect or the Law of Divine Love, according to the angle of vision or the limiting perspective, given by the particular standpoint of the intellect.' ** It operates both impersonally and through the conscious working of the Divine Hierarchy of Masters and their Agents.

Before final merging in the illimitable Divine Eternal Truth, seven inner planes of consciousness are to be crossed. They are directly connected with the advancing states of ascending consciousness but have an indirect connection with the subtle and mental worlds. Different planes bring different spiritual powers. but the performance of miracles is not necessarily a sign of spiritual

* Ibid. Page 28,

** Ibid Page 58.

perfection. The only miracle in which the God-Man is really interested is the miracle of making man realise that he actually is the Truth.

In merging into God as Eternal Truth, consciousness steps out of the limiting and evolving ego-individuality, which creates the illusion of duality. Thus in the merging (known as annihilation, *fana* or *nirvana*) there is no individuality. But if there is reaffirmation (*Baqua* or taking a stand) again of this Truth-illuminated consciousness, in this assertion, it gets endowed with divine and unlimited Truth-Individuality. Through its universal unconditioned mind, it can function in the world of duality with unabated and irresistible awareness of the indivisible unity of God as the only Truth. In Truth-realisation, the Self 'knows that it itself has been and is all, individually and collectively, simultaneously and indivisibly'. For final fulfilment, ego-centred outlook has to be completely replaced by Truth-centred outlook. The Truth-Individual sees himself in all forms and beyond all forms. The fictitious and false nature of the separative evolving individuality is realised simultaneously with the immutable reality of God as the Self of all. God, ever was, is and will be infinite in existence, knowledge, bliss and power.

Thus if we deeply understand the Truth imparted by MEHER BABA, we shall know that **God alone is truly Sanatana and to creatively release that divinity in everyday life can alone be true Dharma** for any enlightened person. He emphatically declares, 'I have come to give a new understanding of spiritual value and Truth to every one. This Truth is unlimited and cannot be encaged in ritualistic dogmas or creeds or religions or sets of beliefs. Inherit this vast Truth which is ever-renewing, while I am in your midst'. To-day, when humanity is facing the nuclear catastrophe and self-annihilation through separateness and mistrust, Meher Baba's Gospel of LOVE AND TRUTH is our only hope.

Joys and Despairs of a Baba - lover

Meherazad

1st August 1968

*(This is a copy of a letter from Mr. Francis Brabazon
to a Baba-lover given here for the information of all His
lovers.*

— Editor)

Dear R.,

Your letter of 25th July has been received.

A lover of the beloved God-Man should not allow himself to become desperate because he Has seen that which convinces him that God-Man *is* God-Man.

When a voyager who has been storm-tossed and becalmed, at last reaches harbour he is not desperate but full of thankfulness and rejoicing—desperation belonged to the times when he was being driven by winds or waiting under the burning sun for a fresh breeze to carry him forward.

The only value of any inner experience is that it convinces one that beloved Baba is Who He is, and when one has that conviction one has reached the harbour one has been voyaging to, for ages and life-times.

Having reached this harbour the voyager sets about getting a job and taking his place in the community in which he finds himself.

The job that the lover takes is the work of thinking more and more about the Beloved and trying to love Him as He should be loved; and his usefulness to the commu-

nity—the people among whom he works and lives—is his telling others that Meher Baba, the beloved God-Man *is* the Reality which they are seeking. In short, arrival at the harbour of conviction is the end of the long journey in quest of the Beloved; but it is only the beginning of a life of service to the Beloved.

In this life of service the lover has many joys and despairs until he becomes seasoned in service and no longer thinks about himself at all but only of the Beloved. And so it has always been considered wisdom for the young lover to associate and work with other lovers, rather than keep to himself and work on his own—for to be with others is to share, and in sharing there is much strength. It is also wisdom to keep oneself fit physically and mentally so that one is not always taking time off from service; but when one does get some ailment, as we all do, one should consult a good doctor and follow his prescription and not expect the Beloved to heal one: He has the job of healing the whole humanity.

With brotherly love,

Sd./ Francis

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THE SILENCE OF MEHER BABA

- AN INTRODUCTION

By Anthony W. Thorpe, New Zealand

"All expect him—men, wind, clouds, trees, all—but none sees him, all are blind to him, but he showers his love and compassion on all beings and things."

On July 10th 1925, at the age of 31, a supreme and spiritually perfect Man of God began to observe, and has throughout a life of utterly selfless love and exemplary service, continued to this day to maintain—COMPLETE SILENCE—a silence that is not of Man.

Though ceasing to speak, He began communicating with an alphabet board, upon which His fingers deftly spelt out words; this was replaced in 1954 by most expressive and eloquent hand gestures, by which He now 'speaks'. Thus has Meher Baba conveyed many spiritual discourses and messages drawn from His continuous experience of God as the Truth in all, and as the Supreme Spiritual Authority of this age—the Avatar or Christ, which He knows Himself to be.

To be in His presence is to know that He knows what there is to be known, that His universal love and compassion is beyond our comprehension.

He was Born on February, 25th 1894 to Persian parents, being delivered by a Roman Catholic sister at a hospital in Poona, India, where his parents had settled. Educated at St. Vincents Roman Catholic high school and later at the well reputed Deccan College, his was a happy

normal boyhood. Kind, fun-loving, dutiful, a natural leader, he shone both in class and sports. Possessed of a remarkable memory, and becoming fluent in a number of languages, his main interests were in literature, especially the great poets of the East and West, but in May 1913 the studies were interrupted and his life's course changed in an instant.

Bicycling home from College he felt drawn to an ancient and revered Mohammedan Woman, known to sit under the shade of a particular tree in Poona. When their eyes met, Babajan, a Perfect Master then 110 years old, beckoned to Meher and arising, kissed him on the forehead—no word being spoken.

This silent embrace was, Meher Baba says, the rending of the veil of illusion—as was John's baptism of Jesus—and gave him simultaneous God-Realization or Union with God. From that moment he lost consciousness of the material world for 9 months and oblivious to his surroundings experienced indescribable bliss.

During the next 7 years Meher contacted the 4 other living Perfect Masters whose office at each critical cycle of time is always to 'bring down' the God-Man and reveal and establish the magnitude of His Divine purpose on Earth and the attributes of His state—the Trinity of Power, Knowledge and Bliss. Henceforth He was called Meher Baba—meaning Compassionate Father.

In 1962, Baba declared:

"I have come to remind all people that they should live on Earth as the children of the One Father until My Grace awakens them to the realization that they are all one without a second, and that all divisions and conflict and hatred are but a shadow-play of their own ignorance. It is time that they became aware of the presence of their Father in their midst and of their responsibility towards Him and to themselves."

"I shall break My Silence and with My Word of words arouse My children to realize in their lives the indivisible existence which is God."

Again He has said:

"Of My own, I shall not break My Silence; Universal crisis will make Me do so. When the crisis will reach its absolute culmination it will make Me utter the Word at that moment."

Thus the Silence breaking and universal manifestation is forecast in a currently potential and critical setting and with it the truth, love and compassion of this no-ordinary man be revealed in its magnitude to speak direct to the heart of man, regardless of belief, nationality, religion, colour, status or any of the numerous barriers which divide him. What will happen when 'The Word' is manifest remains to be experienced. Meher Baba has said: "That which has never happened will happen when I break My Silence."

For the moment the immanence of His presence, though little realized in general, is yet intuitively felt by many, and the time for the release of those great flood waters of grace and compassion when the dam of His Silence is broken, is, as Meher Baba currently indicates, "so near that nothing counts now but LOVE".

MEHER PANCHAKAM

(Hymn to Meher)

(English Version by Dr. C. D. Deshmukh.

from Dr. S. B. Varnekar's sanskrit)

With radiant splendour, delightful to behold, cool and unwaning,

Pervading the Universe, adored by the World, Meher is Sun amazing!

Constantly gazing at your brightest moon-like face,

Oh! the eyes like Chakor-kids, got supreme satisfaction.

Ears, however, like Chataka-kids, not having your speech-drops,

Owing to your Great Silence, remain ever thirsty.

Frolicking for long on the tongue tips of the wicked, like those of saints,

Vaikhari (uttered Speech) regards itself as having committed sin:

And is afraid to touch you—of sublime experience,

In tongue, ever-sanctified by Highest Truth. So to us, you appear Silent!

For propounding Truth, these many intellectuals, experts in ratiocination,

Elaborately sprout forth in speeches, vibrating saintly quotations in throat.

The Innermost Essence inspiring all speech, but ever unattainable to it,

Is revealed through Silence alone by the amazing Orator
MEHER victorious!

Resorting to delicately decorated speech, splendidly sweet,
All these poets constantly express noble thoughts through
sound.

To-day's wonder of the world! Renouncing for long that
very speech,

Glorious Poet MEHER bestows them highly to the hearts
of all!

A Humble Request

May we request you, to contribute to our "Building Fund and Printing Works Special Donation" Scheme, and associate yourself with the task of establishment of a permanent abode of humble and dedicated workers of Meher Baba, the Avatar of the Age, in the historical city of Hyderabad, sanctified by Beloved Baba by His many visits and stay during His Mast-Work and also during the Mano-Nash period. In order to enable one and all, whether rich or poor, the system of issue of tickets of various denominations, viz., Rs. 1, 5, 10, 25, 50, 100, 500 and 1000 has been adopted. Those who desire to send their love-contributions may kindly do so by *Postal Money Orders or Bank Cheques on Andhra Bank Ltd., or State Bank of India, (Hyderabad-A. P., India)* to the undersigned and oblige.

With loving regards,

Yours fraternally,

SWAMI SATYA PRAKASH UDASEEN
Managing Trustee, The Meher Vihar Trust
3-6-441, Himayatnagar, Hyderabad-29.,
A. P., India.

Letter To Beloved Baba

From Rick Chapman, U.S.A.

28 June 1968

Beloved Baba,

Only yesterday I left Piedmont on THE BUSINESS TRIP I outlined to You in my cable—Your Love Blessing sent in Eruch's cable puts me on the road with a high heart full of joy.

In the busy days of the past few weeks I have not yet told You about the Baba-program in Santa Barbara on Saturday, May 25th. This was the first time anyone had spoken or shown films of You in that Ocean-side Community, yet as I mentioned in my last letter, it appears that the Ocean had already flooded Santa Barbara with His Love, invisibly, producing much Baba-interest without anyone (except the lovers!) knowing where it came from.

After attending a marijuana discussion panel in Los Angeles—a meeting of the State of California's Parole and Probation Officers—and renewing contact with many lovers and interested persons there, I drove from Los Angeles to Meher Mount, where I met Your "watchdog" Agnes Baron for the first time, and then drove on to Santa Barbara for the program. Bob Dreyfuss was with me on this part of the trip, since it was at this time that he decided to return from New Mexico to Berkeley, and flew to Los Angeles to ride up with me from there.

The lovers in Santa Barbara, some attending the University of California there and others not, had done

a superb job of preparing the program, with many loving efforts at publicity and making the necessary arrangements.

About 200-250 persons attended, a wide spectrum of people, young and old, some new to seeking and some wearied with it. It was a gentle, responsive group, who simply bathed in the movies and the taped music of Madhusudan and stories of You with much joy. When the program was over, many stayed to ask many questions. alert and seeking questions from the heart.

After the program, I heard of an amusing incident from some of the lovers. Two people interested in You had picked up a hitchhiker on their way to the program. The hitchhiker was headed across the country *to Philadelphia*—he had just left home in Los Angeles to set off on his own. At the suggestion of the people who had given him a ride, he went with them to the program where he heard about You for the first time. After the talk it was this young man who asked several questions. When it was time to leave, the couple who had picked him up asked if he wanted to be left off on the main highway so he could continue his odyssey to Philadelphia. "No," said the young man, "I am going back to Los Angeles now—I have got a lot to think about."

For your Moochewala, Beloved, it is all Your Divine Play, and he will go with great joy wherever he is sent by the Lord of the Universe, who is Master of all plays, great and small, and by Whose commanding word alone will the all-important spiritual battle be won and peace be brought to earth. For Your Moochewala, the battle with lower self to see You as You really are—and by really seeing You, to help others to see You—this will continue wherever You take me, and it will continue in the joy of knowing that wherever You take me, there You are.

Love,
Sd./ **Rick**

Letter to Bro. Eruch

From Rick Chapman, U.S.A.

Dear Brother Eruch,

It has been since I received your very informative letter telling that Beloved Baba had stepped out of Seclusion into "exclusion", and I should not forget to acknowledge that letter as I also thank you for the cable you sent conveying Baba's Love-Blessing and the news that you all are going with Him to Meherazad on the 1st of July.

I am presently in the midst of the trip which I referred to in my cable and following letter to Baba. Beginning tomorrow I will be making business calls all through the week, arriving in Denver probably by Saturday. Although this trip was planned simply as a business trip and I had not scheduled any Baba-programs along the way (mainly because of lack of contacts in this area), look how the all-pervading Beloved takes advantage of every circumstance to waken the world to His Love! Just this afternoon after only a phone call, a local television station filmed several minutes of an interview which will be shown on the news program of tonight. The interview opens with a shot of the Beloved—the 'sadra' photo on the "You and I are not we, but ONE" poster!

Enclosed are a few items to fill you all at Meherazad in on some of the things happening here:

Another enclosure is the long sheet which shows a copy both of a letter from some girl in Italy addressed to

Baba c/o Box 1101 Berkeley Information Center and the reply—these are enclosed simply for your amusement.

Finally, a copy of a letter from Philip Lutgendorf, a Baba-lover who goes to college in Chicago, addressed to James Taylor, my fellow-resident at 270 Scenic Ave. in Piedmont. This letter gives a good picture of the Baba-explosions which are taking place at various points across the country resulting in groups of "Baba-people", where there were none only weeks before.

Baba's world is indeed a most exciting one. How much more wonderful must it be to see Him as He really is! Hail to the Most Merciful Avatar!

Jai Baba!

Yours in His Love,
Sd./ Rick

4th June, 1968

Dear James,

Sorry I haven't written for so long, but I just had my last final exam this morning. I'll be returning to New York for the summer this Friday, the 7th, and from then on my address will be:

Philip Lutgendorf
143-16 Poplar Ave.
Flushing, New York, 11355

I will be working (probably in a supermarket near my home) and doing paintings of Baba. Later, in August, I hope to go down to the Center. Also I'll be going to the New York meetings and keeping in touch with Chicago people. It's not possible to fit into a few lines what Baba has done here, but suffice it to say that just about everybody on campus has heard Baba's name and at least

a little bit about Him by now. Several times I have come across groups of people discussing Him, and the other day (as I just wrote to Kitty) someone came up to me and asked "Who is this Baba that everybody's talking about?". A number of others have heard similar comments. And you know Baba: often even though somebody "doesn't like" Him, they still won't be able to stop talking about Him! Of course there's still much to be done, as more and more desire more complete information and there will be two or three people still in Chicago this summer to provide it. Much attention was aroused here by our posters which were seen by literally thousands of people. A professor from the Indian Civilization department took one of the posters after the films were over and it became a permanent fixture on the Indian Civ. bulletin board, which is seen (and pretty carefully examined) by everyone in the course, and several hundred others whose classes meet in the same room. All in all it's just been terrific here and I'm looking forward to more work in New York (even though that's less "virgin" Baba territory) and much more work here next year. Two of my dearest friends will be living in the Vedanta Temple here during the summer (you'll be hearing from them soon: Dot & Ginny) and they will want much material no doubt as they are telling everybody they know about Baba. Showing the films in the temple was wonderful also.

Best of luck to you in getting films: they are just too incredible for words. We had the 1962 East-West Gathering (16 mm, 4 reels, taken by Hassan) and I had the good fortune to see it three times. Just fantastic!

"Meher Daaman" is just great. Are you sharing a place with Rick? When I heard the name it kept going through my head, so some of us here made up a little song. It can be sung as a round (like "row row row your boat", starting the line over again between the measures) and it's really a nice Baba chant. Also you can

add as many verses as you want, and sing or play it on all sorts of instruments:

Meher Daaman

- (1) Hold on, Hold on, to my daaman
- (2) Keep your faces turned towards the sun,
- (3) Hold on, Hold on, to my daaman,
- (4) You and I are not we but one.

Hope this all makes sense to you. We like to sing it here, especially as a round. Count each line as one measure. Also you can substitute "Hold on, hold on, to Baba's Daaman" or "I am the Ancient One". Sometimes I keep singing it in my head all day. The enclosed addresses are for Alan and Rick and are of people who will be in Chicago all summer. If I can be of any help from N.Y. please get in touch with me. Give my summer address to Alan & Rick also. That's all for now. I'll send more news soon. Love to all in BABA.

Sd. Philip

Dear Highest of the High,

Do you suppose you could send me a couple of pictures? They crack me up.

Marian Clark
Via G.B. Gelli 32
Frenze 50135
ITALIA

30 May 68

Dear Mariam,

Delighted to hear that you were cracked up over the incomparable smile of the Avatar of the Age, and hope that you haven't yet recuperated.

Keep cracking, and be happy in the knowledge that you have a head-start on the world which is soon to crack up when He delivers the punch-line of His mighty Joke.

Yours in Baba's
Love-Ocean,

Meher Baba Information
Box 1101
Berkeley, Cal.

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—*Editor & Publisher*

MEHER BABA – HIS WORK AS THE AVATAR OF THE AGE

By N. Dharma Rao

Advent of the Avatar

I am sure that it will not take long for a real thinker to come to the conclusion that the world is at present in the midst of a period such as always precedes an AVATARIC manifestation in which "man seems more than ever enslaved by desire, more than ever driven by greed, held by fear, swept by anger. The strong dominate the weak; the rich oppress the poor; large masses of people are exploited for the benefit of the few, who are in power... Immorality increases, crime flourishes, religion is ridiculed. Corruption spreads throughout the social order. Class and national hatreds are roused and fostered. Wars break out. Humanity grows desperate. There seems to be no possibility of stemming the tide of destruction." And therefore, in fact, at this present moment the AVATAR has already appeared in the divine personality of Meher Baba.

Function of the Avatar

It is said that the Avatar awakens the contemporary humanity to a realisation of its true spiritual nature, gives liberation to those who are ready and quickens the life of the spirit. The life Meher Baba lived during the last forty seven years since January 1922, as God-Man, is an outstanding example for posterity to

(Shri N. Dharma Rao is a Retired Engineer from Rajahmundry and an ardent lover of Baba since March 1952. He is a founder-member of The Meher Vihar Trust Board, Hyderabad, A. P., India.)

stimulate and adopt it for realising the divine heritage. He has demonstrated the possibility of a divine life for all humanity, of a heavenly life on earth. He has shown infinite compassion to all the creatures in the entire creation. His entire life is a history of selfless service and the divine love which He has been radiating, is a great gravitational force and no one who has come into His fold could resist it. There are many outstanding examples of persons in whom he awakened a love that consumed all selfish desires in the flame of the one desire to serve Him. He has been intensively suffering physically with the sole object of redeeming the suffering humanity at large. Being the pivot of this Universe, He has to bear all the upheavals of this world.

Upasani Maharaj's Declaration

In 1913, Hazrat Babajan kissed Meherwan and imparted a divine thrill to him. From that moment he completely lost his gross consciousness and remained in a super-conscious state for about 9 months.

After seven years contact with Upasani Maharaj, it was by the end of December 1921, that Meher was restored to full normal consciousness of this mundane world, retaining his full God-Consciousness. Then Upasani Maharaj sent for Gustadji Hansotia, one of his leading disciples and said, "I have made Meherwanji Perfect. Now you have to leave me and stick to him." Soon after one night Maharaj folded his hands and said, "Meherwanji, you are ADI SHAKTI: you are AVATAR." Thus Meherwanji became Avatar at the age of twenty seven and started upon His Universal work.

Life in a Hut

From January 1922, Meherwanji lived in a hut of ten feet by six feet built for Him on the Ferguson college road in Poona. Here His first batch of disciples were drawn from His school day friends, relations and general public.

They used to gather at the hut every day in the morning and evening and chant before Him religious songs playing musical instruments. In a few months thereafter it was this first batch of disciples that began to address Meherwanji as Meher Baba, as He became their compassionate father. Even at this early stage Meher used to discourse on spiritual themes to His disciples, thus imperceptibly commencing His work as Avatar. Baba allowed the observance of Parsi, Hindu and Muslim festivals for His growing number of disciples who included from all castes and creeds.

Manzil-e-Meem

In May 1922, Baba made an important journey on foot with forty-five followers from Poona to Bombay. Of the followers, twelve were Muslims, eleven Zoroastrians, and the remainder Hindus. The members of the party visited Babajan at midnight—one after another before they started. On arrival in Bombay, He took a bungalow for one year on the Main road Dadar, which was named by Baba as Manzil-e-Meem (house of the Master). Baba's training camp for all His trusted disciples ended here by March 1923. As the perfection of His work as Avatar during these subsequent forty six years depended upon the hundred per cent obedience and surrender of this very first batch of His very close disciples, the training He gave them during those ten months was unique in itself and it has no parallel in the history of mankind, details of which can be perused in the "God-Man". The foundations for His Universal Brother-hood without the distinction of caste, community and religion and for selfless service were laid during this training period only. He evolved the unique motto 'Mastery in Servitude' (for details please read the Article by N. Dharmarao, published in "Divya Vani" issue of August 1965) with the religious symbols of all the prominent religions of the day, to serve as His emblem for posterity, which clearly showed that there is only one Father for the entire humanity of diverse religions. The symbol

depicts that all religions belong to Him like beads in one string—a clear indication that He has come to awaken the humanity to the fundamental truth and pave the way to wipe out disharmony in the name of Religion.

Meherabad Ashram

In His next phase of work in Meherabad Ashram. from its very inception during 1923 till its dissolution in 1926, Meher Baba has amply demonstrated through deeds His Philosophy and teachings implied in the motto "Mastery in Servitude". He did every kind of menial work, viz. cleaning the latrines, sweeping the floors, scrubbing and washing the dirty clothes of Mahars (untouchables), bathing the Mahar boys apart from grinding flour with handstone grinders along with His mandali. Thus He has shown to posterity how one has to render completely pure and selfless service to attain mastery over one's lower self and obtain liberation. Baba said: "God-Man (Avatar) is both Lord and servant of the universe. He is Lord or Master in His capacity of helping all souls forward on the pathway to Reality, He is servant in that He continuously bears the burden of humanity."

Baba's flag is a simple seven-rainbow coloured flag. The seven colours represent the seven weaknesses of a human being constantly reminding him to strive to conquer them by leading a spiritual life and thus merge all the seven colours into a pure white light of illumination.

Meher Ashram—Prem Ashram

During 1927-1928 Meher Ashram was run by Baba at Meherabad and for some time at Toka. It was an institution where little boys of different communities, namely Muslims, Persians and Hindus including Mahars were publicly educated and trained into the secret lore of mysticism, apart from general education. For about six weeks, in Nov.

and Dec. 1927, Baba devoted two hours every evening to teach the boys Himself. He instructed them to constantly think of Him only, thus implanting the spark of divine love in the hearts of some of the boys and in a few elder disciples. From this time onwards the said boys developed emotional tendencies (A detailed account is given in Sobs and Throbs by Ramjoo Abdulla) in their throbbing hearts which led to continuous spiritual sobs, which had become a great contagion in the Prem Ashram and no one could console them except Baba. Baba had clearly explained that through this spark of love, there is a chance of one actually realising God. Thus it is clearly evident that this particular phase of the Avatar's work has no parallel in the history of the previous Avatars as seen by the transformation of the Persian boy Ali, and Mohammadan boys Chota Baba and Ahamad.

Spiritual Significance of Baba's Symbolic activities:

- (a) **Social upliftment:**— It is a well-known fact that the condition of the depressed classes of India was truly deplorable prior to 1930. Baba said that this was one of the basic spiritual causes of India's inferior status in the community of nations prior to Independence. To emphasize the need for removing this blight, Baba persistently worked (by washing, feeding and clothing and dining with the untouchables) to dissolve the prejudices of the Brahmins who were responsible for this condition and to dispel the dispirited ignorance of the 'untouchables', which, over the centuries, has become inbred. This evil has since been mostly eradicated through legislation.
- (b) **Economic Upliftment:**— Since Manzil-e-Meem days and even to this day Baba bows down to beggars, poor and lepers and gives them some money. By doing like this Baba is effecting a change in the

economic structure of the world. As part of Birth-day celebrations on 24-2-1937 at Nasik, from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. (without break) 10,000 poor filed past BABA receiving bundles of grain and cloth from the disciples and 'Ladoo' and blessings from BABA's hands. The poor were bowing their heads to Baba's feet and Baba was touching their feet with His compassionate hand. At the end Baba gave the following explanation. "The whole evolutionary scheme passed through my spine today. This is the first time that I have touched the feet of those who came to pay me reverence. I saluted the divinity in them, as they saluted the divinity in me." This has resulted in getting lot of free aid from America by the under-developed countries.

- (c) **Upliftment of women:**— Six Eastern women have been secluded for many years (from about 1930). who are termed as Baba's women mandali. One of them is Mehera, from a cultured Parsee family. Because of the utter selflessness of her devotion to the Divine Beloved Baba once described her love as surpassing the love of any one in the world. She is worthy of the homage which is accorded to her. Mani, Baba's sister is also in this group. In 'Avatar', Jean Adriel writes: "To anyone familiar with Baba's way of working, it seems quite possible that through those chosen and safe-guarded women, He is resurrecting the soul of woman from her age-old bondage to the male side of life, so that in the impending new day, she may be free to take her destined place as the co-worker with man—no longer his subordinate, to be dominated by his intellect and enslaved by his desires."

All the secluded Indian women were with Baba, when He along with a few of His Western women devotees visited Paris for three days in September 1937 and drove with them in motor cars round the city and the neighbouring localities. One night a trip to the Eiffel Tower was made with them, during which Baba held one of His most important 'inner meetings' with Saints and Masters of the sixth and seventh planes of consciousness. This has resulted in making radical changes in the French attitude towards women because the new post-war government in France had outlawed prostitution and bawdiness and also granted to the French women for the first time in the history of France equal rights with men.

In the latter half of 1938, a hospital for female patients was opened on the Meherabad Hill "Meher Retreat". A woman doctor was placed in charge of the hospital, while under her served Countess Nadine Tolstoy, as Matron and other Eastern and Western women devotees ... Through the constant benediction of Baba's love, which quickened the afflicted and inspired those who served, this place became a haven of mercy and refuge for many. The first baby was born of a poor demented woman, cast off by her people, who was picked up by Baba men and admitted into the hospital. Baba was the first to hear the new born's cry and immediately went in to see and bless it. Those who served at the hospital learned the priceless lesson of real selfless service, which was a unique training at Baba's hands.

(d) Silence, Seclusion and Fasting:— Baba commenced His Silence from 10th July 1925 and He has been repeatedly declaring that He would break His

silence at the time of His Manifestation by uttering the Word of Words. Then the impact of His love will be Universal and all life in creation will know, feel and receive of it and the whole world will then recognise Him as God in human form.

Baba entered into seclusion several times. His seclusion is, for Him, necessary for His exclusive work in the non-physical realms to be carried out without any disturbance to Himself or any danger to others. During the periods of seclusion, Baba invariably intensified, what He calls, His internal work The only occasion when Baba did directly disclose both the nature and the object of the work in a seclusion, was at the time He had retired into a cave of St. Francis at Assisi, in Italy, in 1932, from 7-30 P.M. on the 6th August to 5-30 P.M. on the 7th. "A meeting was held" said Baba, "when all the Saints and Masters from the sixth and seventh planes of consciousness saw me and we mapped out the spiritual destiny of the world for the next two thousand years." Baba carries on His work with advanced souls, sadhus, the mad and the poor even in His strictest seclusion. Baba's seclusion from 22nd June to 31st July 1949 is termed the 'great seclusion*', as it happened to be a link between the 'old life of cherished hopes and multifarious activities' and the 'new life of complete renunciation and absolute hopelessness'. Baba's seclusions are invariably accompanied by His fasts of varying degrees and always one or more of His disciples are allowed to share with His silence, seclusions and fasts. But the speciality of the 'Great Seclusion' was that all who believed in Him had been categorically invited to observe silence and fasting throughout the month of July 1949. Thus it is seen that though

* a detailed account is given in the Booklet "Meher Baba in the great seclusion" by Ramjoo Abdulla and Dr. C. D. Deshmukh.

Baba was in strict seclusion all the time everyone of His devotees and lovers was inwardly in communion with Baba thinking mostly of Him. This is how Baba works in giving to His devotees a spiritual regeneration and spiritual refreshment, bringing to them a new out-look, tone and enthusiasm. Baba has been continuously in strict seclusion from 1st July 1960 and in Life Circular No. 48, He has clearly stated, "I shall not come out of my Seclusion until I break my Silence." Out of His Infinite Compassion for His lovers Baba just allowed His lovers to be in His presence at Guruprasad, Poona from 2 P.M. to 5 P.M. from 1st to 4th Nov. 1962 (East-West gathering), from 3 P.M. to 6 P.M. on Sundays in April-May-June 1963 and from 9 A.M. to 11 A.M. on 1st to 6th May 1965. Baba wants all His lovers to remain absorbed as much as possible in thinking of Him during His seclusion.

If an Avatar fasts it is tantamount to all the people of the world fasting, because He is in them all; and it effects spiritual benefits for the whole of mankind.

The period of the World Travel (1931-1939):—

All the previous Avatars had very limited sphere of activity on this earth plane, (as seen from their external movements); while the present Avatar had encircled the whole globe. The reason is evident. As this being the end of cycle of cycles, Avatar's manifestation will be the greatest and the entire world will be redeemed. Baba had stated when He first arrived in England, "My coming to the West is not with the object of establishing a new creed or spiritual society or organisation but is intended to make people understand religion in its true sense. The West is inclined towards the material side of things which has from untold ages brought in its wake wars, pestilences, and financial crises." Further Baba had gone to the West to get men and women to turn their minds from the outer world of material things to the inner world of the spirit where all problems of the material world are solved. All the people

who had Baba's darshan in the West could not but feel the impact of His Divine Love. During His first visit to America, Baba said, "America represents the synthesis of the white races and hence forms the best foundation for the spiritual upheaval I shall bring about in the near future. America has tremendous energy, but most of this energy is misdirected. I intend to divert it into spiritual and creative channels." During these extensive travels, many Western devotees and lovers, on seeing Baba felt a great upliftment of consciousness and had actually experienced the definite gift of grace and divine love. Most of the books on & by Baba were written and published in England, America and Australia by His ardent disciples. Baba further said, "The West at the zenith of its material and intellectual attainment and the East at the height of its spiritual manifestation in the shape of a Perfect Master will meet without shaming or looking down upon each other." This has already been achieved to a large extent from the manner the Westerners are now looking at the Eastern countries.

Work with the advanced souls (Masts) Sadhus, the mad and the poor (1936-48)*:—

This is an important aspect of Baba's work, which has no parallel so far in the life of any of the previous Avatars. There is great significance in the fact that it took place during those years of intense upheaval in the world, before, during and after the second world war. In the same period India achieved independence and passed through great trials.

"When a person has no interest in the ordinary pursuits of life, he begins to absorb himself more and more in thinking of God, Thus he gradually develops love for

* (Please read the 'Wayfarers' by William Donkin for a full account.)

GOD. When he gradually advances in this divine love, he becomes oblivious to his bodily needs. When this longing for union with God reaches higher levels he is called God-Intoxicate or God-Mad or Mast. Masts are completely oblivious of worldly considerations and values; but they are very sensitive to the spiritual needs of those who come in touch with them. Some Masts get stuck on the inner planes. They are overpowered by the onflow of grace and love and get into a state of divine stupor. The Perfect Master or Avatar is in a position to understand the condition of Masts in terms of their spiritual needs. He gives Masts effective guidance and a spiritual push and he facilitates their onward march on the path so that they become more and more fit as vehicles for the expression of the Divine Will. They become more efficient agents for the promotion of God's plan on earth". This is what Baba has said in the 'Way-farers' and this is the reason why Baba had worked for 13 years with Masts travelling 75000 miles incognito over the length and breadth of India undergoing greatest strain, which no mortal except a few trained and tested disciples of BABA could withstand. Baba contacted 1962 Masts, 8543 Sadhus and 11,163 poor in His travels. Baba says that the Masts are 'mostly to be found in India, a few in Arabia, Iran, Egypt, China and Tibet, none in any other part of the world. Hence as Baba says India is the most important country spiritually. During these contacts, invariably all the advanced souls could instantly recognise the spiritual supremacy of Baba and addressed, Him as God, Vishnu, Allah, Rama, Lord Krishna, the living Christ and Mohamed and so forth. Baba's external contact of Masts consists of His sacramental ritual of bathing, clothing, and feeding the Masts. Internally Baba would have given them a push forward in their search for God-realisation and at the same time commanding all their spiritual energy for His Universal task of redeeming the whole world.

The New life with His Companions (1949-52):—

The New Life was the voluntary suspension of the state of Perfect Master to become a common man and a Perfect Seeker. Baba lead this life from 16th Oct. 1949 till 15th Oct. 1951 with twenty companions at the out set including four secluded Eastern women. It is a fact that the New Life was very difficult, hard, exacting and in certain respects disastrous. In fact it was a life of hundred per cent hopelessness and helplessness, which even the Gods envy. Baba effectively impressed on the humanity the fundamental truth when He said, "All trouble was from hoping; where there was no hope there can follow no disappointment." During this period Baba took to sweeping, washing utensils, helping in the kitchen and carrying loads generally along with His companions. During this period Baba contacted 4,510 Mahatmas & sadhus in Hardwar & Rishikesh areas. Further Baba distributed about Rs. 23566 to poor individuals, families ranging from Rs. 5 to 500. On 16th Oct. 1950, at Mahabaleswar, about two hundred old and new life disciples were invited and a meeting was held by Baba from 7a.m. till 11a.m. Baba and His New Life companions had stepped into old life for four hours when "Baba Sermon" was read out by Dr. Donkin and released to the whole world.

Asked one day by His companions why Baba had taken to the New Life and was there any need for it, He replied, "There is no explanation." Asked why the word 'Satyanashi' was used instead of renunciation in connection with the New Life, Baba explained that renunciation has a spiritual meaning and that the New Life of theirs has nothing to do with spirituality. Renunciation can be practised, while 'Satyanashi' cannot be practised. It is not of anyone's seeking. It comes and cannot be resisted. Thus it is baffling to establish the purpose of New Life, except that it served as a prelude to Baba's Mano-nash phase of His Work from 16th Oct. 1941 to 16th

Feb. 52, from which He had emerged out, hundred per cent triumphantly.

Complicated Free Life (21-3-52 to 9-7-52), Full Free Life (10-7-52 to 14-11-52); and Fiery Free Life (15-11-52 to 7-9-53):—

During Complicated Free Life, on 24th May 1952 Baba was involved in an auto-accident while crossing the American continent. This personal disaster was foretold by Him. This had caused facial injuries, a broken leg and a broken arm and much mental and physical suffering. Though Elizabeth was badly hurt with fractures and Mehera & Meheru were also thrown out and hurt, it was only Baba who had shed blood on American soil, which He said, has got very great spiritual significance.

During Full Free Life, Baba invited about 400 of His devotees & lovers from all over India to be His guests from 7th to 9th Nov. 52 at Meherabad. On 8th Nov. 52, at 8 A.M. Baba came down to the level of an ordinary devotee, stood before Kaikobad with folded hands and made Dr. William Donkin repeat for the first time "Repentance Prayer for forgiveness", and thus released the same for the benefit of humanity for posterity. I made my very first homage to Baba only on this occasion and thereafter, I never missed even a single opportunity which Baba gave for having His darshan.

During Fiery Free Life, Baba gave extensive mass darshans all over India. Then for the first time Baba rested His foot in Andhra at Tadepalligudem on 17th Jan. 1953 and after giving His Darshan at Penugonda, Nidadavole, Kovvur, Rajahmundry and Eluru, He left Andhra on 28th Jan. 53. From 13th Aug. to 2nd Sept. 53 Baba was engaged in special work at Dehra Dun, during which the 'Master's Prayer' was recited each day in His presence and thereafter released to the whole world as it is a prayer applicable universally to persons of all religious faiths.

The Fiery Free Life reached its culmination on the 7th Sep. 53 (Zoroaster's birth day) when Baba made His most important declaration "The Highest of the High" wherein He made it perfectly clear to the whole world that He is the Avatar of the Age, and also mentioned the code of conduct one has to adopt for attaining God-realisation.

Mass Darshan Programmes:

Baba visited Andhra once again after the formation of the Andhra State on 1st Oct. 53 with headquarters at Kurnool. This time Baba gave His Darshan to about one and half lakhs of people at sixteen places in Guntur, Krishna, West&East Godavari Dts. from 20th Feb. till 4th March 1954. The entire tour of 13 days was covered in a motor cavalcade with about 100 disciples and lovers. I had the rare good fortune of taking Beloved Baba in my Ford de-Lux car driving myself throughout.

Two outstanding features of this tour are: (i) Baba's sixtieth Birthday was celebrated on the 25th Feb. 54 at Tadepalligudem, befitting the Highest of the High from 4 A.M. till 10 P.M. and (ii) At Rajahmundry, a special meeting (the first of its kind in this Avataric period) of all Baba-workers in Andhra State was held, starting at 9 P.M. on 1st March and ending at 3 A.M. the following morning, when Baba gave a message on "What Baba means by Real Work" for the benefit of the whole world. He said, "I want my lovers and workers to know that there is no greater 'Baba's Centre' than the heart of my lover. Let each Baba-lover, wherever he or she may be, be the 'Baba's Centre' personified, radiating the eternal message of Love Divine, living a life of love, sacrifice and honesty."

On 12th Sep. 54 the last mass darshan programme was held at Wadia Park in Ahmednagar. Over a lakh of people had Baba's darshan that day from 9 A.M. till 6 P.M. and about 50,000 received 'prasad' from Baba's hands, Then 'Meher Baba's Call' was released to the world for the first time. The key note of the message is: "Do not

waste your precious life-span in differentiating and judging your fellow-men, but learn to long for the love of God. Be pure and simple and love all because all are one. Live a sincere life, be natural, and be honest with yourself". Late in the afternoon, the secluded women mandali of Baba gave their appearance in public for the first time on the platform.

Final Declaration:

From 12th to 30th Sept. 1954, BABA gave HIS very intimate Sahavas to seventeen Western disciples from Europe, Australia and America lodging them at Meherabad Hill all the time. They were taken to Pimpalgaon, Sakori & Happy Valley, which are connected with Baba. A detailed account of the discourses given by Baba during those three incredible weeks are published in "The Awakener Special Issue 1955."

On the 29th and 30th of September 1954, about 1000 disciples and workers of Baba from India & Pakistan including the above Westerners assembled at Meherabad as per the admittance cards issued from Adi's office. On the first day (i.e. 29th Sept.) in the forenoon BABA allowed all His lovers & workers present there to have their last embrace with Him. For all the nine hundred and forty eight persons present, food was served on tables and on the first day at noon Baba personally served "PURIES" on every leaf. The recipients were very fortunate to have the said above two acts of Baba's infinite love bestowed on them, so that the seeds of divine love may sprout in every heart. On the second day forenoon Baba lead all to the top of the Meherabad Hill and showed them in batches the importance of His future tomb, which will become a world pilgrim centre in 70 years time. In the afternoon, at 3 P.M. in the presence of all the lovers seated on chairs in a very big nicely decorated pandal, BABA sitting on the dais, made His 'Final Declaration' read out in English

by Dr. William Donkin and also in three other Indian languages. In this declaration, Baba said: "My manifestation as the AVATAR of the time will be of short duration. This short period will in quick succession cover my humiliation, the breaking of my silence, my glorification, and my violent physical end. During this short period, my Word of words will touch the hearts of all mankind and spontaneously this divine touch will instill in man the feeling of the oneness of all fellow-beings." That evening after receiving Prasad from Baba, all the lovers returned to their homes directly.

On the 7th Oct. 1954, Baba gave up the use of the alphabet board. On the 6th November 1954, Baba visited Pandharpur along with Gadge Maharaj and gave His Darshan to several thousands of pilgrims who worshipped HIM as Panduranga Vittal. On 13th Nov. 1954 Baba issued clarification and confirmation of the Final Declaration. On 10th April 1955 He issued 'The Final Decision' from Satara. On the 24th April 1955, from 7-30 a.m. till 3-30 p.m. Baba held a meeting with the Mandali and thirty-six lovers from Poona, Ahmednagar, and Bombay and instructed that all His followers must be scrupulously honest, abstain from sexual actions, and must try to spread His Message of Love and Truth, as far and wide as possible, during the period of crisis (1st May to 31st July).

The Sahavas (1955 and 1958).

Baba gave His Sahavas to His devotees and lovers at Meherabad from 3rd November to 3rd December 1955, in four separate language groups, Gujarati, Telugu, Hindi and Marathi for a week for each group of two hundred men. Again Baba gave Sahavas to men and women devotees at Meherabad in February 1958 from 15th to 26th in two groups, Hindi and Marathi (first) and Telugu and Gujarati (second) for 5 days for each group of about 800 devotees. On both the occasions, Baba had explained at length the full significance of HIS Sahavas as follows:—

"Sahavas is the intimacy of give and take of love between the lovers and the Beloved. Take fullest advantage of this opportunity in the living presence of the Avatar. Forget everything else but my Sahavas and concentrate all your attention on me. I am the Ancient One. Hafiz said: 'To be with a Perfect Master for one moment is equal to a hundred years of sincere prayers with all one's heart and soul.'"

From 16th July to 16th August 1956 BABA made cyc-
lonic round the world tour, including Zurich, Paris, London,
New York, Myrtle Beach, Washington, Los Angeles, Meher
Mount, San Francisco, Sydney, and Melbourne by Air,
covering 30,000 miles in 10 days and in 20 days gave 25
Sahavas as to His Western devotees. Again, Baba gave His
Sahavas to Westerners from Europe and America at Myrtle
Beach, U.S.A. for about 225 men and women devotees from
17th May to 30th May 1958, and at Woombye in Queensland,
Australia from 2nd to 5th June 1958 to about 50 devotees
from Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland. At all the
Eastern and Western Sahavas programmes, BABA gave
detailed explanations and discourses on a large variety of
subjects, with the sole object of intensifying HIS devotees'
love for God.

On the 2nd December 1956, at 5-15 p.m. Baba and four of
His disciples were involved in a very severe motor accident on
way from Poona to Satara, when Dr. Nilkanth died on the spot.
Baba received very severe fracture of His right hip joint and
several injuries all over His body. Then He gave the following
message:

"Nobody suffers in vain; for true freedom is spiritual
freedom and suffering is a ladder towards it. Men un-
knowingly suffer for God and God knowingly suffers for
men."

Thus He had clearly shown to the whole world that the
motor accidents and the resulting intense self-imposed

suffering is begotten of compassion and love for mankind.

Baba's Sahavas of 1958 for His Eastern and Western lovers has a special significance and HE said as follows:—

"This Sahavas will be unique in the sense that you will witness and share my present universal suffering by being near me as my fortunate companions—being with the Ancient One, who will be completely on the human level with you - - - I live the worldly life that is lived by the people—in order to help them live the divine life that I live simultaneously."

Another very important and most merciful act of Baba in all phases of His Work with His lovers is to invoke God in His infinite mercy to forgive, up to that moment, all Baba lovers all over the world. This He did at Myrtle Beach, U.S.A. on the 28th May 1958.

The Universal Message:

About 200 devotees of Baba from all over India were specially invited as Baba's guests to Meherabad to be present on the 9th and 10th July 1958. On the 10th at 9 a.m. Baba first made the Prayer of Repentance said in English and thereafter the Universal Message was read out in English with the usual translations in four languages, and thus it was released for the benefit of the whole world. Along with it another important message "God Alone Is" was also released. At the world fairs at New York, Montreal, New Delhi and Bombay, millions of copies of Meher Baba's Universal Message were got neatly printed with Baba's picture and distributed freely to all the visitors.

Baba allowed His lovers to have His Darshan during April-May-June 1959, 1960, 1961 and 1963 at Guruprasad, Poona. From 1st to 4th November 1962, Baba gave HIS

darshan at Guruprasad, Poona for about 200 Western and over 5000 Eastern lovers, when He gave the two important messages—(i) My dear children and (ii) My dear workers. The last darshan He gave was from 1st to 6th May 1965 at Guruprasad, Poona for over 10000 Eastern lovers only.

Baba, apart from awakening a large number of HIS lovers unknowingly from His Infinite Silence, He also constantly keeps in touch with His lovers and workers through His Life Circulars, exhorting them to spread His Message of Love and Truth extensively, as His Manifestation is drawing very near, day by day.

Let, us all HIS chosen workers put together our heart and soul and carry forward BABA's torch of Love and Truth, through thick and thin, without any thought of gain till our last breath!

AVATAR MEHER BABA KI JAI !

Note: In this, several quotations have been taken by the author of the article, in accordance with the context, from authoritative books like Discourses, God-Man, Avatar, Meher Baba in the great Seclusion and the Wayfarers, etc., which we acknowledge with courtesy and express our thanks to those authors & publishers.

—Editor.

News in Brief

43rd Silence Anniversary of Avatar Meher Baba

CALCUTTA:

The 43rd Silence Anniversary of Avatar Meher Baba was celebrated by the West Bengal lovers of Baba at 34, Chakrabaria Lane, Calcutta, on Sunday the 14th July 1968 from 5-30 p.m. to 8-45 p.m. Dr. Hira Lall Chopra presided over the function. The proceedings began with the *Guru Archana* by Mrs. Rama Anil Sarkar and a Meher Song in Bengali by another girl. Advocate A. C. S. Chari read out the Mandali's telegraphic message for the occasion, which was translated into Bengali by Sri P. G. Nandi, who also recited the Parvardigar and Prayaschita Prayers in Bengali. Dr. Chopra while inaugurating the function remarked that it had a special significance this time as it coincided with the *Gurupuja*. Avatar Meher Baba is the Guru as well as God of all, and the observance of His Silence anniversary on this day makes it incumbent on all His lovers to 'surrender' themselves 100% to Him, so as to give a practical shape to His teachings. People yearn for deliverance, freedom, salvation and emancipation from political, economic, social and spiritual bondages. Buddhism prescribed *Nirvana*, Jainism *Keval Jnana*, Sankhya *mukti*, yoga *ashtanga yoga*, nyaya-vaisheshika *apavarga*, mimamsa *karma* with *Jnana* and *vairaga* and Vedanta *moksha*; but Avatar Meher Baba prescribes the antidote of 'surrender' to ward off the chakra of *sansar*, where there is no place for rift, difference, clash, controversy, isolation or segregation. '*Give unto Baba all your worries and be happy*' is the watchword of Baba. There is nothing besides 'LOVE' in the entire storehouse of Baba's teach-

ings and philosophy and there is no reason why His lovers should pride on anything else. Let all lovers converge on one point, i.e., Avatar Meher Baba, and sink their differences if any and take a vow on this sacred day when our Avatar completes His 43rd year of silent service to the entire universe (not only to a country, community or humanity) to cultivate love, harmony, goodwill, charity, peace and service towards all.

It was a doubly *auspicious day* when a Bengali book, the sixth in this language on the life and teachings of Avatar Meher Baba, was released for His lovers in Bengal. Copies autographed by Beloved Baba were given by the President to those who worked for the compilation of the book. Barrister A. K. Das and Prof. Jahnavi Chakravarty spoke about the Silence of Baba and how His Silence worked dynamically in propagating love. Mrs. Meera Bannerji sang a devotional song. Dr. G. S. N. Moorty narrated some of the interesting incidents of Baba's life. Bhagwat Ratna Sri Pushpit Ranjan Mookerjee, retired District Judge quoted copiously from Tagore and other Vaishnava scriptures to show that the Vaishnava religion of love was quite in accord with Avatar Meher Baba's concept of religion. Devotional 'Qawwali' followed this brilliant lecture.

The meeting terminated with Meher Baba's *arti* and distribution of 'Prasad' and a copy of the Bengali publication released on the occasion. The audience numbering about 300 consisted of doctors, professors, lawyers, engineers, Judges of the High Court and some Europeans also. The arrangements made by brother A. C. S. Chari for the meeting, to say the least, were excellent as it is Bro. Chari who is the moving force behind all Baba meetings in Calcutta and Dum Dum, which he undertakes voluntarily at a great personal inconvenience and expense but with pleasure for his beloved Avatar Meher Baba.

—Dr. Hira Lall Chopra

DELHI:

The 43rd Silence Anniversary of Beloved Baba was celebrated for 11 days commencing from 30th June '68, with lovers' gathering at the President's Estate in the morning. In the evening a meeting was held at Basti Nizam-ud-din, where the significance of the following message received from Bro. Eruch for the occasion was explained:

**THE MESSAGE FOR THE PRESENT AGE OF MESS
IS—REMAIN SILENT AND BE A WITNESS.**

On the following days, meetings were held at different places, where besides the usual bhajans, quawalis & Prayers, the role of the Avatar, His Silence and His Call to the suffering humanity were explained. On the 10th July, 24 hours silence was observed by all Baba lovers and many other associates. On 11th July, the final meeting was held at 101 Church Road, Delhi, which concluded with dinner. It is very significant that Beloved Baba's Love and Blessings were conveyed in a special Message from Guruprasad, before the commencement of the celebrations. for all who gather together in Delhi in His Name and in His Love.

— Sri. W. D. Kain

BOMBAY:

A special meeting was arranged on 9th July at Sunderbai Hall to celebrate His 43rd Silence Anniversary. Sri C. P. Godsay, Charity Commissioner, Govt. of Maharashtra, who presided over the function explained at length the need and the mission of the Avatar in the present day world. Referring to Beloved Baba's saying "I have come not to teach but to awaken", he said that no message could be better than this. He further added "Meher Baba's unique Silence for 43 years is the greatest event of today and the whole world is awaiting to hear

Him utter the One Word, which will bring happiness and peace on earth."

Dr. Ram G. Ginde inaugurated the function and Dr. H. P. Bharucha spoke on 'Meher Baba and His Avataric Mission', on this occasion. Sri Rangnath Jadhav and his party entertained the audience with gazals and quawalis. Beloved Baba's special message for this occasion conveying His Love and Blessings to the gathering was also read out.

RAIPUR:

Avatar Meher Baba Raipur Centre celebrated the 43rd Silence Anniversary in a most befitting way on 7th July 1968. A special meeting was arranged in the local Govt. College Hall under the presidentship of Dr. Chandra Prakash Varma, M.A., D.Litt., Principal of the College. The hall was full and there were many standing in the side verandahs and in the front court-yard. Many prominent Baba lovers from Bhilai, Jabalpur, Rewa & Bilaspur also attended the function.

Sardar Amar Singh Saigal inaugurated the function and made an appeal to the large gathering, more particularly to the ladies, who were in great number to follow Beloved Baba's message of love and set their homes in order to receive the benign blessings of Avatar Meher Baba. Prof. A. K. Hazra of Jabalpur gave a very impressive talk on Baba's message to the suffering humanity. This was followed by a talk on 'Baba's Divine Silence' by Sri Balkrishna Dave of the local Sai Baba Samaj Centre. In the end, Dr. C. P. Varma, the president summarised the talks beautifully and made a fervent appeal to the audience to get themselves ready to receive the Avatar's Love and Blessings. Smt. Saroj Parkhe, Dr. A. K. Sen, Sri Mohanlal Kalyanji Rathore, M.A., & Kumari Sarla Rani Dave rendered several bhajans and keertans in between the talks, which were very much appreciated by the audi-

ence. The meeting came to an end with the 'East-West Gathering' film show. The function was ably conducted by Sri D. S. Hanspal, Secretary of the Celebration Committee.

— Sri A. S. Naidu

BHILAI:

At a special function arranged at Bhilai township, Sardar Amar Singh Saigal, M.P., Sri B. P. Pande and Sri Jagatpati, I.A.S., General Manager spoke about Baba and His Divine Silence and also His Message of Love. The talks in lucid Hindi were very much appreciated by the large audience.

— Sri A. S. Naidu

SAMBALPUR:

A grand public meeting was held to celebrate the 43rd Silence Anniversary, at the New Auditorium of the Orissa Cement Ltd., at 8-00 p.m. on 13th July '68. About 700 persons attended the function, which lasted for two hours. Besides the Prayers, devotional songs about Beloved Baba was the main feature during the programme, arranged in the name of the Silent Avatar of the age.

— Sri V. P. Jha

DOWLAISHWARAM:

To celebrate Baba's 43rd Silence anniversary, Baba lovers' gathering was held at the Centre on 9th July '68. On 10th, all the lovers gathered at the local Theosophical Lodge and spent the whole day in silent meditation of Beloved Baba. The next day, they met at the residence of Sri A. Kondala Rao, where Sri M. Suryanarayana, spoke on the significance of Baba's Divine Silence.

—Sri M. Suryanarayana

CHALLAPALLI :

At Challapalli, Baba lovers gathered in the Centre Hall on the mid-night of 9th July '68, offered 'Arti' to Beloved Baba and commenced the 24-hours silence. After observing the silence in a solemn way, they again gathered on 10th midnight. 'Arti' was offered to Baba and silence was broken.

On 9th July '68, about 200 persons participated in the 'Poornima Sammelan' held at the residence of Sri K. Ramakrishna, M.A., Principal of the local Tutorial College. Earlier on 28th June, at a special meeting arranged at the residence of Sri N. Vasudeva Rao, Sri S. R. Y. na Prasad, B.A. (Hons.), B.L., addressed and made a fervent appeal to the large gathering to take the advantage of the presence of the Avatar in our midst.

Dr. T. Dhanapathi Rao, President, Avatar Meher Baba Andhra Centre and Smt. P. Jagadamba of Kakinada made a special visit to Challapalli on 12th July '68. In the evening a public meeting was arranged, which was attended by about 500 persons. After the bhajans, Prayers were recited by Sri T. Balramayya. Sri G. V. Subba Rao introduced the chief guests to the audience. Sri K. Ramakrishna, M. A., spoke on the distinction between 'Prakriti' and 'Paramatma'. This was followed by a fine speech by Dr. T. Dhanapathi Rao, who explained about Baba's Avatarhood. Smt. P. Jagadamba spoke on Beloved Baba's Message of Love and Truth in simple and lucid Telugu and impressed the audience deeply. Earlier Dr. T. Dhanapathi Rao also inaugurated a short drama on 'Baba's Life and Work' by Sri P. Durga Prasad.

—Sri Bh. V. Ramana Rao

BANGALORE:

During his visit to Bangalore, in connection with the Select Committee meeting of Monopoly and restrictive trade, in June '68 Sardar Amar Singh Saigal, M. P. hap-

pened to come in contact with Sri M. Vazeer Ahmed, I.A.S. (Retd.), who became very much impressed with Baba's philosophy and His Messages. The result was—a public meeting held at the Secretariat Club, Govt. of Mysore. Sardar Saigal emphasised during his impressive talk that Meher Baba is the Ancient One and that He has come to awaken the people to Love, Truth and Reality and not to establish any religion or cult.

— Sri M. Vazeer Ahmed

VISHAKHAPATNAM AND ANAKAPALLE BABA LOVERS' PILGRIMAGE:

Baba lovers from Vishakhapatnam and Anakapalle, men, women and children, about 40 in number made a pilgrimage to 15 Centres and places including Mehersthan, Vijayawada, Guntur, Kakinada & Masulipatam, sanctified by Avatar Meher Baba during His Andhra tours. Sri N. V. Ramaniah, on whose initiative the programme was undertaken also accompanied the party, which was organised by Sri B. Dayakaram. They covered about 806 miles singing Baba songs, distributing Baba literature and addressing gatherings at various places on their way. The party also participated in nine public meetings, at which Smt. K. M. Gandhi, Sri Trinath Ratho, Dr. S. Bhagwandas, Sri M. Venkat Subbarao and Sri P. S. R. Swamy spoke on Baba's Avatarhood and His Divine Messages. The party were the recipients of heart felt love at all places. At some of the places grand receptions were arranged by the local Baba lovers. Masulipatam needs special mention, where the pilgrims were received at the outskirts of the town by prominent Baba lovers, were escorted to several places in the town sanctified by Beloved Baba and were actually drowned in their love and affection. Beloved Baba's presence was felt at all the places visited.

— Sri B. Dayakaram

HYDERABAD:

On the happy occasion of the 5th Anniversary of 'Meher Vihar', Beloved Baba is pleased to grant special permission to Bro. Adi K. Irani, His Secretary and disciple, to inaugurate and preside over the Celebrations and Baba-lovers' 'Sahavas' to be held on 24th and 25th August '68 at Sri Krishna Hall, Sultan Bazar, Hyderabad.

EXCERPT FROM THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
FRIENDS OF MEHER BABA (ENGLAND)

The Committee regret to announce the death of our good friend Mr. D. H. Eve, who gave such loyal service to the Baba Group as a member of the Committee and then Treasurer and Librarian. We will miss his kindness, generosity and devotion to Baba's cause and we extend our deepest sympathy to his widow Molly and his family who expressed their appreciation for the beautiful flowers sent by the Group.

The following cable was received from Baba:
(addressed to Mrs. Molly Eve).

'Beloved Baba says His very dear Douglas has come to Him and is eternally blessed and Baba wants you to be happy in Douglas's happiness and in Baba's Love for you and dear Anna and family.'

Mani

We are very grateful to Mr. D. H. Eve, who was of immense help to us. We express our deep sorrow to Mrs. Molly Eve in her bereavement.

— Editor

GUNTUR:

Smt. Lakshmi Devamma, mother of Bros. M. B. G. Shastry and M. Sriramamurthy, prominent Baba-lovers

passed away on the morning of 24th July 1968. On receipt of a telegram, Beloved Baba was pleased to send the following telegraphic reply:

LAKSHMI DEV AMMA HAS COME TO ME TO REST
ETERNALLY IN MY LOVE STOP INFORM MBG
SASTRY THAT HIS MOTHER IS BLESSED STOP MY
LOVE BLESSINGS TO MBG SASTRY PARIVAR.

—MEHER BABA.

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