

We have a long way to go

Venue: Pandharpur

Dated: 23 rd July 2018

Occasion: Vyas pooja

Jay Vitthala Vitthala Vitthala

Mazya Vitthala Panduranga

Hare Krsna all the assembled devotes, disciples, friends and followers. Have you heard me singing this song before?

Jay Vitthala Vitthala Vitthala

Mazya Vitthala Panduranga

Oh! **Vitthal** You are my **Panduranga**. This **Vitthal** is another name is **Panduranga** there are many other names. These are the names of the Deities here at **Pandharpur** and this is where we had been celebrating **Vyas pooja** today. I think we had been doing this some dozen years, every year on this day. There is a big occasion here not because my birthday or **vyas pooja** celebration. For **Pandharpur** this is the biggest event of the year. The day of **Shayani ekadasi** and with this commences the **caturmasya**, Lord goes to sleep. He would be sleeping for four months; this is all described in **Padma Purana**. So before the Lord goes to sleep thousands not just thousands one and half million pilgrims come here walking. Not just walking but walking and dancing, using same mridanga they call it pakhawaj, kartals they sing.

Jay jay ramkrishna hari jay jay ramkrishna hari

This is one of the song or mantra they sing. They also sing hundreds of abhangs of Tukaram Maharaja and other vaishnav saints of Maharashtra, followers of Panduranga. They arrive here day before ekadasi, they all arrived yesterday. We have Hare Krsna padayatra, padayatra party we also participate in this march they call it dindi here. Then on ekadasi mostly

there is darsana, because before Lord goes to sleep they would like to have glimpse of the Lord. So this becomes very major event in **Pandharpur**. By Lords grace by **Shri Krsna's** grace **Pandhuranga's** grace I was born on this day. Instead of saying I was born I could have said I was given birth by that Lord on this day. So that makes me happy, that Lord chose such a day for my birthday. Around 5000 **ISKCON** devotees, friends and followers are here at **ISKCON Pandharpur**. We have just now finished infact not totally finished we started at morning 8 o'clock and concluded the first session at 4pm. So it was 8 hours marathon.

May be some of you were watching on **Mayapur TV**. Many of you have written your offerings and I will be reading them. Thank you for your wishes. Devotees all day were wishing me, happy birthday, happy vyas puja day. I am sure you would also like to express that. I am not able to hear but I am sure that's on your mind, so thank you. I also said to the assembled devotees that I am happy today as its birthday but I said I am happy because **Srila Prabhupada** gave me the mantra and asked me to chant and be happy. I had been doing this chanting my prescribed number of rounds, more than prescribed number of rounds daily without fail. If I am happy today and I was happy yesterday and I will be happy tomorrow because **Prabhupada** said "**Chant Hare Krsna and be happy**" and I had been doing that. I had been following that one instruction of **Srila Prabhupada** every single day. So I also said today is vyas poja day or birthday. But **Srila Prabhupada** also gave me birth that was my second birth. And I was born in Vrindavan during Kartik of 72. Then I was accepted as disciple of **Srila Prabhupada** that was my actual or spiritual birthday. Or I was brought back to life by **Srila Prabhupada** by giving me initiation, giving me this **Hare Krsna** mantra which is Lord Himself. So I am grateful to **Srila Prabhupada** for giving me such a gift.

This is my **69th birthday** today. I did not say that to the assembled devotees today during the day. But I have been

thinking otherwise. This year 69 in **Srila Prabhupada's** life, the 69th year was very significant for him. When **Srila Prabhupada** turned 69 that was when after a lifetime in preparation, he had left for the West. He started execution of his Guru's order, the mission that **Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakura** had given him. So that started at the age of 69.

I was thinking although I have done a few things, there is yet much more to do. I wish that beginning with this year 69 I would also do the execution of the remaining things on my list, on my mind and some things that's very close to my heart. So may be these times and the year 69 give me a further boost, inspiration and the strength because we do not know. When **Srila Prabhupada** also many times he would say when he was in his seventies, many times he would also say, "This is the ripe age, this ripe age to move on. Get out of this body and go to the Lord." I don't know how much more time is at my disposal, but whatever time is there. So many projects are pending.

Prabhupada wanted a temple in Nagpur. He was sitting with a big map of India when he returned from the West and he was now starting his mission in India. He was sitting with a group of his Western disciples. He was pointing out – here... here we should have **ISKCON** here, a temple here... here and he pointed to Nagpur which is part of my zone in central India, Maharashtra. That is something that I wish to complete. Here also in **Pandharpur** we are working on constructing a very beautiful, very huge ghat, bathing ghat called **Prabhupada** ghat. That work is still unfinished. And then the temple project is also here.

And many more padayatras in more countries, more towns and more cities. **Prabhupada** said, "We should have millions of carts all over the world." We have a long way to go. Just yesterday three carts came from three different directions. All India Padayatra arrived here yesterday. And the Dindi processions. As I mentioned to you millions of pilgrims come walking. There are two groups of **Hare Krishna** Dindis. They all

arrived. So there were three carts, three **Gaur Nitai** Deities and three groups of people. It was quite a conference, big sammelan. So that's three carts. Some more Padayatras need to be organized. This means bringing the holy name to more towns and more villages. And then I wish to study **Srila Prabhupad's** books more and also our **Gaudiya Vaisnava acharyas** commentaries and that literature. That is one of my unfulfilled desires. I would like to spend some time going deeper into **Gaudiya Vaisnava** philosophy and commentaries. That is reading. Then there is writing. There are so many more writing projects in the pipeline. So many are in the mind. Likewise there are a lot of things.

A Western poet said,

"The woods are lovely, dark and deep. But I have promises to keep, and miles to go before I sleep." He was referring to death as the final sleep. Miles to go means so much more to do, so much more to accomplish before that final moment comes. So I would like your prayers and of course assistance from all of you for me to continue with my services or the services given by **Srila Prabhupada** and some are coming, originating from me. So we have evening session here, we have **maha-abhishek** of **Vitthal Rukmini** on the stage. There is also drama "**Saint Tukaram**." There will be lighting of thousands of lamps in **Radha Pandharinath** temple that's called "**Deepotsava**" also there will be kirtan. Three days there was 24 hours kirtan in the temple. The Deities are giving darsana throughout the day, they are not resting. Thousands of **Srila Prabhupada** books are being distributed every day. And our ghat though unfinished the pilgrims have been using, it's all crowded like ants crawl pilgrims are crawling all over. One time our **Radha Pandharinath** temple was kind of secluded place, like a desert. People were wondering why Maharaja chosen such a special land, who would come? But now our temple has become like a center.

All the pilgrims are coming to our temple. Hundreds and thousands people are crowding.

You all are online, I wish there was some way to reciprocate or communicate, it's like one way traffic. I don't even know who's there and how many of you are there. Thank you for your participation and for our wishes. On my **69th vyaspooja** day I also wish you a happy day. Chant **Hare Krsna** and be happy. I was appealing today to devotees to join this campaign of propagation of **Krsna** consciousness far and wide. I reminded them the instructions of **Caitanya Mahaprabhu**, "**amara ajnaya guru hana tara ei desa yare dekha tare kaha Krsna upadesa**" Where ever you are in your country, in your circle propagate **Krsna** consciousness. "**yare dekha tare kaha Krsna upadesa**" Give **Krsna** in form of Holy name, in form of prasadam, in form of **Srila Prabhupada** books, give **Krsna** give **Krsna**. So you have received **Krsna**, you have **Krsna** so now you have to give **Krsna** to others. By doing so make your life perfect. Be happy and make others happy.

There is no other way, there is no other way, there is no other way. **Krsna** Consciousness is the only way.