

Memories of Srila Prabhupada at Hare Krsna land

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Occasion: 42 nd anniversary of Sri Sri Radha Rasabihari

ISKCON Juhu

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So, welcome all the assembled devotees, great souls! Prabhupada disciples are also present. We welcome them, haribol. I wasn't sure whether to say Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya, so it's normally sung at katha. I wasn't sure but I thought for sure I will talk about Radha Rasabihari Ki Jai! And we have to talk about Srila Prabhupada and he is a Mahabhagavat. So, it's a katha, Bhagavat katha. So why not sing Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya? That was appropriate? You think also?

Haribol.

So, it is a big occasion today for Radha Rasabihari Temple Juhu Hare Krishna land, Srila Prabhupada's office. As this is the day, forty two years ago when I was there. Some of you anyone else attended? Its 42nd is now and there will be 100 th anniversary and there'll be always a celebration of this occasion, or the anniversary festival of Radha Rasa Bihari Temple opening ki Jai

I did say I was there. Many others were there. Of course, Gopal Krishna Maharaja was there, Giriraj Maharaja more over Sridhar Maharaja was there, Mukunda Maharaja was there. Big international media was invited to cover the event. The Chief Minister of Maharashtra Vasant Dada Patil. He did the opening. And we had some central ministers and it was a big gathering so many were invited. And we were badly missing physical presence of one person. And that was, what do you think that we're missing? Devotees: Srila Prabhupada As yesterday I said

at another gathering I was addressing and I said, we were missing Srila Prabhupada's presence. Srila Prabhupada ki Jai or he was conspicuous by his absence, being conspicuous by someone's presence and being conspicuous by someone's absence so Srila Prabhupada was conspicuous by his absence.

The idea was that temple would be opened by Srila Prabhupada in his presence and Prabhupada had even come to Bombay from London because his health was not good. But instead of going to America, to Gita Nagari, he had to return. Srila Prabhupada attended Janmashtami at Bhaktivedanta manor and next day his Vyas Puja also was celebrated there at London. And then "Bring me back, let's go back, Back home".

Where is Prabhupada's home? Vrindavan. Vrindavan is my home. Mayapur is my place of pilgrimage, place of worship and Bombay is my office. So, he wanted to go to Vrindavan. And month of September 77 Srila Prabhupada was very much here, up there. The fifth floor, which tower is that? Prabhupada tower. Srila Prabhupada ki Jai. This is Prabhupada's tower, whole thing is Prabhupada's of course. Temples also and that tower was one other one also.

One tower is named after Prabhupada. So Prabhupada was at that floor. Prabhupada was not well. During this visit a lot of things that are different for first time kind of we had different experience. There were no more morning walks. So, walking and talking. Japa. Walk Japa talk Japa with Dr. Patel and company, debating and so that was not happening. And 77 September, every morning after walk Srila Prabhupada returned. And we all eagerly awaiting Prabhupada's return, "Prabhupada is coming, Prabhupada is coming." So, always had this spirit, because this was his office.

Doesn't person spend more time in the office than any other place somebody spends time at the home and the other place where he spends a lot of time most of his time is the office. So Srila Prabhupada spent lot of time, lot of time in Bombay,

his office. So many trips. Those days he was spending half time overseas and other half time in India. So he was landing, "Prabhupada is coming, Prabhupada is coming" from Nairobi.

Gopal Krishna Maharaja is coming from Nairobi today I heard. Jayapataka Maharaja is also coming from London today. So, those days, "Prabhupada is coming from his came from yours came from this country, that country that continent, Prabhupada is coming." And then we would be preparing to receive Prabhupada and anticipate to associate with Prabhupada. And morning walks with Srila Prabhupada.

And then Prabhupada returning to the temple after morning was such a great anticipation. So, we were so much conscious of Prabhupada consciousness was very wide spread and very thick in the air, "Prabhupada consciousness." So, as he returned from the morning walk, we used to greet Radha Rasa Bihari and this was all happening during Prabhupada days. Prabhupada tower is underneath. That old temple just cement sheet roof and some poles were supporting and very tiny structure which was even attempted by municipality to demolish, so many things. Memories of Srila Prabhupada! This had become Kurukshetra also. Hare Krishna land was also battlefield land [Laughter] guarding all night long with a gun, literally there were guns.

Prabhupada was in Australia, and he got the news on telephone, Srila Prabhupada was delighted, "Narsimha has killed him." The funeral ceremony they were taking his body to the cremation ground from this road. Ladies satsang was going on in the temple, Mrs. Single had been organizing weekly mahila satsanga, Hare Krishna mahila satsang. So, they were doing kirtana. When they found out who was it, they were all happy.

They were all delighted, there is a celebration. "paritranaya sadhunam vinasaya ca duskrtam Sure, who else Radha Rasa Bihari was behind all this. The battle of Hare Krishna land went on and on and on from 72 onward till literally opening up the

temple. Mr. Shetty was the contractor, he took up the task of building one additional floor to be added. On the top of all the buildings, tenants had occupied, when the construction was going on, one time Prabhupada was doing the inspection, he wanted to check the progress and personally. When he saw Shetty that he was doing this great service, creating accommodations or building accommodations. Then Prabhupada had also declared, "You are building accommodations for devotees and Lord has already made house for you in Vaikuntha." The temple was built and the deities stood mostly all the time till the opening they were they were there. So, Srila Prabhupada would return from morning walks and he greeted Radha Rasa Bihari with folded hands.

He would always bow down, bow down whenever he offered his obeisances to the deities. Even in his old days or ill health Srila Prabhupada he not with folded hands or doing panchang, but every time he did full dandavat. Approved by Srila Prabhupada, we started playing Govindam Adi Purusam recording in the Radha Rasa Bihari temple. Then we would do Guru puja, Srila Prabhupada's guru puja and there were times there was no Guru Puja. Prabhupada founded ISKCON in 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, to all these years there was no guru puja in any Iskcon temple. And one time, as Prabhupada arrived at Santa Cruz Mumbai and Dum, dum Kolkata.

Prabhupada was greeted and worshipped, some puja was offered to him. Aditya mataji something to do, she took some initiative or leadership for this idea and then others joined and we did offer Guru puja short one at the airport and from then we started, we did guru puja at Radha Rasa Bihari temple And the word got out and then whole world started doing guru puja. Others were saying, "Prabhupada accepted Guru puja at Radha Rasa Bihari temple, Bombay, his office" So, a lot of new things were also taking place happening here and there. Bombay's his office some new standards were being followed, whole world was following. Hari, Hari.

And we did kirtans during Guru Puja and very special kirtans, very ecstatic and excited kirtans. And Srila Prabhupada's presence in the presence of course of Radha Rasa Bihari and towards the end of Guru Puja kirtana and Guru puja, Srila Prabhupada used to take lots of flowers and he would throw that at us and then we used to jump to catch those flowers, this side and then that party is jumping and in the middle and that party is jumping to catch some of those flowers on this side. And then adding the further dimension to the excited and ecstatic kirtans. And then Jai Om Vishnu Pada Pramhamsa ki Jai, Ki Jai. And then Srila Prabhupada would begin, "Jaya Radha Madhava Kunja Bihari" Prabhupada playing kartals and Prabhupada, fully absorbed. Occasionally, opening his eyes are some side long, long glance at us sitting at his feet and occasionally we would notice some tears gliding down his cheeks.

As he was with Radha Rasa Bihari while chanting Jaya Radha Madhav. Almost in trance, Prabhupada would sing and then Bhagavatam class.

Then Prabhupada would return to his quarters.

Srila Prabhupada ki jai