

58. Spiritual quotient in resurgent India

By Gopal Krishna Agarwal,

Three great social movements are simultaneously taking place presently in India and will have long-lasting effect on India's future. There is a sort of revolution that is taking place.

The mass movement by Swami Ramdev is transforming ordinary person's way of living on a daily basis. Making him aware of healthy benefits of Yoga, Pranayam and Ayurveda. He has created a revolution among people where persons from all walks of life are getting aware of big benefits from daily practices of yoga and Pranayam. The mass appeal of his movement is so effective that from a rickshaw-puller to a housewife and to a professional or a businessman, all are being benefited from his teachings and have started practising it in their daily routine and adopting it in their lifestyle.

The yoga programmes are being held across the length and breadth of the country. Even in Europe and other foreign his sessions are attended by large gatherings. It is a seven-day course in the morning from 0500 AM to 0730 AM with attendance in thousands. Millions of people watch these sessions live on television channels. adopt these techniques and are being benefited.

The second important mass movement, which is transforming Indian life, is the Sudarshan Kriya by Art of Living Foundation of His Holiness Sri Sri Ravi Shankar. The Kriya is being taught in a seven-day basic and advance courses and involves a breathing technique. Along with this technique his message of love, peace and positive thinking is appeal to the intellectual mind and influence affluent middle-class to a great extent. It is transforming their life, creating a bonding among his followers.

He travels and teaches internationally reminding us that great spiritual traditions have common goals and values. His talks programmes and Sudershan Kriya have helped people in reducing stress, experiencing physical and emotional healing and developing a sense of belonging. His work is getting recognition in all parts of the world. Art of Living Foundation has its offices in 157 countries around the world, and the teachings are being adopted by all without any distinction of caste, creed or religion. He is a strong contender for Nobel Peace Prize.

The third slow and steady movement having potential of a spiritual revolution is Vipasana. The observation technique, which is a Pali word meaning insight, i.e. seeing things as they are, encourages people not to react to external stimulus. The reaction to external stimulus by an individual takes away his calmness, peace of mind thereby causing exhaustion. By observing these external and internal stimulus and its effect on human body and analysing their nature of impermanence, a person acquires a balance whereby slowly his reactions subside. He stops reacting to external stimulus, and slowly this process helps him overcome internal disturbances caused by past actions and situations. Vipasana is one of India's most ancient techniques of meditation. Some 2500 years ago, it was rediscovered by Gautam Buddha and taught by him as a universal remedy for universal ills. It is now being propagated by Shri S.N. Goenka through a ten-day course. During the ten days, participants remain within the area of the course site, having no contact with the outside world they refrain from reading, writing and all forms of communications and get into deep meditation and 1 of the course. The mediator in as that whatever mental strength was gained during the course can be applied in daily life for the good of others and for one's own benefit. Life becomes more harmonious, fruitful. and happy.

Shri S.N. Goenka says: I do not wish to convert people from one organised religion to another. But conversion

is involved: from misery to happiness, from defilement to purity, from bondage to liberation, from ignorance to enlightenment.? He has never sought publicity, preferring to rely on word of mouth to spread interest in Vipasana. For these reasons he is less widely known than he deserves to be.

I think the three main movements along with the economically resurgent India are creating a mindset that is preparing India for the role it well deserves in the future.