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Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh

Address by Param Poojaniya Sarsanghchalak Dr. Shri Mohan ji Bhagwat
on the occasion of Sri Vijayadashami Utsav 2023
(Tuesday, October 24, 2023)

English translation of the original Hindi Text

The chief guest of today's program, Shri Shankar Mahadevan ji, respected Sarkaryavah ji, respected Sanghchalak of Vidarbha province, respected Sanghchalak and Sah-sanghchalak of Nagpur Mahanagar, other adhikaris of the RSS, gentlemen, mothers, sisters, and my dear fellow Swayamsevaks.

We celebrate Vijayadashami every year as the festival of strength (*Shakti-Parv*), of complete triumph of humanity over demonism. This year, the festival has brought pride, joy and events that have been encouraging to all of us.

Over the last year, our Bharat played host, as president, to a grouping of major countries called the G-20. Throughout the year, several programs of heads of states, ministers, administrators and intellectuals of member countries were organized at various places across Bharat. Inevitably, the experience of the warm hospitality extended by the people, Bharat's glorious past, and the exciting developmental march that is underway, left the participants from all the countries greatly impressed.

Everyone witnessed Bharat's genuine goodwill and diplomatic tact in getting the African Union accepted as a member of the coveted G-20 and in getting the Declaration Resolution unanimously passed on the very first day of the Summit held in New Delhi in September this year. Due to Bharat's distinct thoughts and vision, our guiding principle of '*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*' has now been incorporated in the philosophy of the entire world. Thanks to Bharat's endeavours, the economy-centric idea of G-20 has now transformed into human-centric. By successfully holding the G-20 Summit, our leadership has done a commendable job of firmly establishing Bharat as a major nation on the global stage.

Recently, our country's sportpersons brought us great pride and joy by winning 107 medals (28 gold, 38 silver and 41 bronze), leaping past the 100-mark for the first time in the Asian Games. We extend our hearty congratulations to them. The Chandrayaan Mission also gloriously showcased the resurgent Bharat's strength, intelligence and tact. The will of the nation's leadership seamlessly combined with the scientific knowledge and technical prowess of our scientists. Bharat's Vikram Lander touched down on the South Pole of the Moon for the first

time in the history of the Space Age. The scientists who accomplished this historic feat, which heightened the pride and confidence of us all, and the leadership that supported them, are being congratulated across the country.

The endeavours and efforts of a nation are driven by the national ideals that serve the global purpose of that nation. Therefore, a temple for Shri Ramlala, whose picture is depicted on a page of the original copy of our Constitution, is being built in Ayodhya. It has been announced that Shri Ramlala will be consecrated in the sanctum sanctorum of the temple on 22nd January, 2024. Due to practical difficulties and security reasons, only a limited number of people would be able to be present in Ayodhya on that auspicious occasion. Lord Shri Ram personifies dignified conduct for our ancient nation, is the epitome of dutifulness and *Dharm*, and symbolises affection and compassion. Same type of environment should be created at our respective places. On the occasion of the consecration of Ramlala, we should organize this event at a small scale in various places. This will awaken the Ram of one's mind in every heart, and embellish the Ayodhya of the mind, creating an atmosphere of affection, responsibility, and goodwill in the society.

Bharat has emerged stronger after battling centuries of crises, and our nation is now certainly moving forward on the path of material and spiritual progress. We are all extremely fortunate to bear witness to events and incidents indicating Bharat's unstoppable progress.

We are commemorating the 2550th year of Nirvana of Shri Mahavir Swami, who showed the path of non-violence, kindness and morality to the entire world through his exemplary life. This was also the 350th year of coronation of Chhatrapati Shri Shivaji Maharaj, who showed us the path of liberation from 350 years of foreign subjugation, by establishing the Hindavi Swaraj based on justice and public welfare. This also happens to be the 200th birth anniversary of Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati, who gave a clear and true vision of our 'Swa' or 'self' to the people of the country through 'Satyarth Prakash' to attain freedom from the British rule. The coming year is also the year of remembrance of two great personalities, who remain a source of eternal inspiration for our national efforts and endeavours. This would be the 500th birth anniversary of the indomitable Rani Durgavati, who made the supreme sacrifice for identity and independence. She is an icon, remarkable for her enterprise, courage, patience, intelligence, strength and bravery as well as her administrative skills and care for welfare of her subjects. She was a shining example of efficiency, leadership, unimpeachable character, and blazing patriotism of the women of Bharat. This year also marks the 150th birth anniversary of Chhatrapati Shahuji Maharaj, the ruler of Kolhapur (Maharashtra), who, with his welfarist vision and administrative acumen, dedicated his life to rooting out social inequality.

Further, we have just completed celebrations of 200th anniversary of the Tamil saint Srimad Ramalinga Vallalar, who began to awaken people for the country's independence right from his youth and the stove lit by whom, for the *Annadan* for the poor, still burns in Tamil Nadu. Besides his struggle for the country's independence, he persevered for Bharat's spiritual and cultural awakening as well as for a complete eradication of social inequality.

As we complete the Amrit Mahotsav of Bharat's Independence from the British colonial rule, remembrance of the remarkable lives of these inspirational personalities gives us the message of social equality, and unity and integrity and defending the 'Swa' or 'selfhood'.

It is a natural desire for a human being to make every effort to safeguard his 'Swa' and his inherent identity. As the world comes closer to each other at an astounding pace, nations are increasingly becoming worried about their inherent identities and their sense of the self or 'Swa'. Attempts to paint the entire world in the same colour or to achieve uniformity haven't succeeded so far, nor will they succeed in the future.

Thus, the desire to preserve the identity of Bharat and the identity of the Hindu society is only natural. It's no surprise, then, that a crisis-ridden world expects Bharat to emerge with a new vision, germane to the times, and based on its own value systems, to meet the contemporary needs and challenges of the globe. The world is facing the scourge of fanaticism, arrogance, and hysteria stemming from religious sectarianism. Any solution to conflicts like the war in Ukraine or the Gaza Strip, which arise due to a clash of interests and extremism, remains elusive. A lifestyle out of sync with nature is producing a string of new physical and mental-health issues amid unabashed consumerism. Vices and incidents of crime are on the rise. Families are breaking apart, as a sense of individualism deepens in the society. Pollution, global warming, imbalance in seasonal cycles and the resultant natural disasters are increasing every year as a result of unreasonable exploitation of natural resources. Terrorism, exploitation, and totalitarianism are getting a free run to wreak havoc. It has become abundantly clear that the world cannot counter these problems with its inadequate vision. Therefore, the world is looking towards Bharat expectantly to lead by example and show a new path to peace and prosperity, based on its own *Sanatan* (eternal) values and *Sanskars*.

A smaller edition of abovementioned events can be seen in Bharat as well. For instance, we recently witnessed a series of devastating natural disasters in the Himalayan region, from Himachal and Uttarakhand to Sikkim. It is already being feared that these events could be a sign of some serious and massive crisis in the future. This area, which marks out the northern border of Bharat, is critical for the country's border security, water security and environmental health, and must be protected at all cost. We need to consider the Himalayan region in totality by considering this region as a single unit from the standpoints of security, environment, demography and development. This naturally picturesque area is geologically new, still forming, and hence unstable. Arbitrary development plans were implemented without fully understanding the nature and characteristics of its surface, topography, geology, biodiversity and water resources. As a result of this mess, this region and, hence, the entire country is reaching the brink of crisis. We all know that this is the region that supplies water to all the countries of East and South East Asia, including Bharat. We are also long aware of China's presence on Bharat's northern border. Therefore, this area has special geological, geo-strategic and geo-political significance. Keeping that in mind, this area will have to be considered from a different perspective.

Although these incidents of natural disasters are occurring more in the Himalayan region, they hold a clear message for the entire country. Due to the development trajectories based on inadequate, excessively materialistic and consumerist vision, humanity and nature are slowly but surely moving towards destruction. There is a growing concern about this all over the world. Bharat will have to abandon those unsuccessful paths or gradually turn back, creating its own distinct development path, in tune with the times, based on Bharatiya values and the overall unified and integral vision of our Bharat. Such a model of development would be eminently suitable for Bharat, and also serve as an exemplar for the entire world. We must shun the tendency of sticking to the old and unsuccessful paths, of blind imitation, inertia, and dogma.

We ought to rid ourselves of the colonial mindset, and embrace from the outside world only what suits our country. The need of the hour is to adopt our own *Swadeshi* (indigenous) path of development based on ‘*Swa*’, by making what is already available in our country appropriate and relevant to the times. It is noted that some policy changes have recently been enacted that align with this distinct vision of development path.

In the broader society, too, an increasing number of new, successful experiments and innovations in the domain of agriculture, industry and trade-related services, cooperatives and self-employment are taking place. However, in the field of administration, there is a greater need for a similar kind of awakening among the intellectuals who shape the direction and vision in various areas of human activities. It must be remembered that only a ‘*Swa*-based’, time-appropriate policy of the government, a prompt, consistent and people-oriented work of the administration, and the cooperation and support of the society in thoughts, words and actions, will bring about a meaningful transformation for Bharat.

However, efforts are being made to ensure that this transformation is not achieved, that the social cohesion and unity gets ruptured, and conflicts increase. Due to our ignorance, imprudence, mutual distrust or carelessness, such undesirable disturbances and divisions are increasingly being witnessed in some places in the society. The purpose of Bharat's rise has always been the welfare of the world. But as a natural consequence of this rise, the selfish, discriminatory and deceitful forces seeking their sectarian interests are subject to curbs and regulations. Hence, there is a continuous opposition from them. Although these forces wear the mask of some ideology or the other, and claim to be working for some lofty goals, their real objectives are something else. People with credibility, who genuinely work selflessly, irrespective of their ideology and whatever kind of work they do, always prove to be a hindrance for such deceitful and destructive forces. These destructive, all-devouring forces call themselves cultural Marxists or Woke, or the awakened ones. But they have forgotten Marx since the 1920s. They are opposed to all orderliness and morality, beneficence, culture, dignity and restraint in the world. In order for a handful of people to have a complete control over the entire human race, they reward, promote and spread anarchy and indiscretion. Their modus operandi involve taking control of the media and academia, and plunging education, culture, politics and social environment into confusion, chaos, and corruption. Such an environment enables the creation of a vicious cycle of fear, confusion and hatred. A society that is divided

and entangled in mutual conflicts and confusion becomes weak and easily and unknowingly falls prey to these destructive forces that are seeking their own dominance everywhere. In Bharatiya tradition, this style of functioning which creates disbelief, confusion and mutual hatred among the people of any particular nation is called *Mantra Viplav*.

To achieve narrow political gains, attempts are being made to forge alliances with these undesirable forces in the country to defeat political rivals. This is unwise and harmful for the country. The society has already become amnesiac, ravaged by all sorts of divisions, and is caught up in a deadly pursuit of selfish interests steeped in jealousy and hatred. That is why these demonic powers are able to get the support of internal or external forces who want to break the society and the nation.

If we look at the current situation of Manipur, this fact becomes obvious. How did this mutual discord and hatred suddenly erupt in Manipur, which had been peaceful for almost a decade? Were there extremists from across the border also among those who committed violence? Why, and by whom, was an attempt made to give a communal tinge to this mutual conflict between the Manipuri Meitei and Kuki communities, who were apprehensive about the future of their existence? Who has a vested interest in trying to drag and besmirch an organization like the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, which has been engaged in serving everyone without any bias for years, into this unfortunate incident without any reason? Which foreign powers may be interested in taking advantage of such unrest and instability in Manipur, located between Nagabhoomi and Mizoram in this border area? Does the geopolitics of Southeast Asia also have a role in these events? Despite there being a strong government in the country, on whose strength and instigation has this violence continued unabated for so many days? Why did this violence erupt and continue even though there was a state government that wanted to maintain the peace that had prevailed over the last 9 years? Now, when people on both sides of the conflict are seeking peace, which are these forces that are attempting to trigger hatred and violence by causing an incident as soon as any positive step is seen being taken in that direction? Multidimensional efforts will be required to solve this grave problem. To resolve this vexed problem, we would need a strong political will, concurrent actions and efficiency. Simultaneously, the enlightened leadership of the society will also have to play a special role in bridging the gap of mutual distrust that has arisen due to the unfortunate situation between the two communities. The swayamsevaks of the Sangh are continuously and dedicatedly serving everyone and organising relief work, while appealing to the positive, influential people of the society to help bring peace. It's the Sangh's endeavour to keep everyone safe, organised, harmonious and peaceful by accepting everyone as its own, even if it entails great sacrifices. We are proud of our Swayamsevaks and activists, who made tremendous efforts in a calm and composed manner to help and take care of everyone in this terrible and disturbing situation in Manipur.

The right answer to this '*Mantra Viplav*', has to be found only through the unity of the society. This constant and unfailing sense of unity is the key element that keeps the conscience of the society awake. As a directive principle, our Constitution also exhorts us to achieve this emotional unity. In every country, the milieu and ground conditions that create this feeling of

unity are unique and distinct. It could be the language of that country, the common worship or belief system of the residents of that country, common business interests, or a strong bond of central power that binds the people of the country together. However, we must not forget that unity built on man-made artificial structures or on the basis of common self-interest is not durable or sustainable. Our country's diversity boggles the mind, so much so that it takes time for people to understand the existence of this country as one nation. But this country of ours, as a nation, as a society, is still surviving, thriving, and prospering, even after undergoing several ups and downs in the world history, maintaining an unbroken link with the threads of its glorious past.

"यूनान मिस्र रोमा सब मिट गए जहां से, अब तक मगर है बाक्री नामो निशां हमारा,
कुछ बात है कि हस्ती मिटती नहीं हमारी, सदियों रहा है दुश्मन दौरै जहां हमारा",

We are fortunate to have inherited a tradition of unity that startles the minds of the outsiders, but also attracts them. What is the secret behind such unity? Needless to say, it is our all-inclusive culture. It is our conduct, and way of life that transcends the differences between worship, tradition, language, region, caste etc., and extends our affinity from our own family to the entire world-family. Our forefathers realized the truth of the unity of existence. Thus, they became aware of the principle of *Dharm*, which fuels the progress of the Body, Mind and Intellect, and which leads to *Moksha* by balancing both *Arth* (Means) and *Kaam* (Ends). Based on that realization, they evolved a culture that implemented the four eternal values of *Dharmatattva* (truth, compassion, purity, and penance). Prosperous and secure from all sides, this was possible only because of the bountifulness of our motherland. This was possible only because of the food, water and air of our motherland which is secure and prosperous from all sides. This is why we devoutly worship our Bharatbhoomi considering her as the presiding deity of our values. Recently, we respectfully remembered the great personalities of the freedom struggle on the occasion of the 75th year of our Independence. Those great people, who protected our religion, culture, society and country, made necessary improvements in them from time to time, and enhanced their glory, were our perseverant ancestors who remain an abiding source of pride for all of us. These three elements (devotion to the motherland, pride in forefathers, and common culture) make us stand out proudly as one nation by tying together all the diversities of language, region, sect, caste, sub-caste etc. present in our country, and has been the unbroken thread of our unity.

The permanent unity of society stems from a sense of belongingness, not from selfish pursuits. Ours is a very large society, with a remarkable breadth of diversity. Over time, some aggressive, violent traditions from foreign countries also infiltrated our country, yet our society remained a society based on these three elements. Therefore, when we talk about unity, we must bear in mind that this unity will not be achieved through any transactions or deals. If this unity is attained by force, it will get ruptured again and again. In today's environment, many people are naturally worried after seeing the efforts being made to spread discord in the society. We come across the people who identify themselves as Hindus, and also those who are called Muslims and Christians because of their way of worship. They believe that leaving aside

‘Fitna – Fasad and Kitan’ (discord and strife and violence) – it is best to pursue *‘Sulah Salamati and Aman’* (reconciliation, security and peace). An important thing to keep in mind in these discussions is that it is not about different communities coming together in one land by chance, and becoming one. We are the descendants of common ancestors, children of one motherland, and inheritors of one culture, but have forgotten our mutual and inherent unity. We have to understand our inherent unity and get connected again on that basis.

Do we not have problems with each other? Don't we have any requirements and expectations for our own development? Don't we compete among ourselves to achieve development? Do all of us behave by following these principles of unity in mind, words and actions? We all know that this is not the case for everyone. But those who wish for this unity to take hold cannot insist that all problems should first end, all questions resolved, before we think about unity. It is easy to understand that if we change our behavior by embracing the vision of belongingness, then solutions to the problems will automatically emerge. We will have to work peacefully and with restraint, without getting distracted by the sporadic events happening here and there. Sure, the problems are real, but they are not limited to one caste or class alone. Along with the efforts to solve those problems, an enthusiastic and committed mindset of affinity and unity will also have to be created. To forge such a lasting unity in the society, we will have to shed the sense of victimhood, stop looking at each other with suspicion and avoid manoeuvres for political dominance. Sadly, politics only becomes a hindrance in such noble initiatives. But when we call upon the people to shed their sense of victimhood, or ask them to shun mutual distrust, this is not a form of surrender or compulsion. This is no call for ceasefire between two warring parties. Rather, this is an exhortation to all to recognize the thread of cultural continuity and unity that runs through our country's vast diversities. This is 75th year of the Constitution of our independent Bharat. That Constitution also points towards this direction. If we pay enough attention to the two speeches given by the respected Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar in the Constituent Assembly at the time of delivering the Constitution, then we will arrive at the same essence of cultural continuity and unity. This is not a task attainable overnight. Bitter memories of old conflicts continue to fester in the collective psyche. The wounds of the dreadful horror of Bharat's partition run very deep. The resentment caused in the minds due to incidents of 'actions and reactions' over that horrific partition often manifests in speech and behaviour. There exist bitter experiences, ranging from not being able to get a house in each other's localities, to being treated with mutual contempt. Blame-game ensues over incidents of violence, riots, harassment etc. Misdeeds of an individual are extrapolated and portrayed as misdeeds of the entire community, and then war of words ensues, followed by provocative invocations and calls to action. Forces that want to break the country by making us quarrel also take full advantage of this situation. Thus, we often see that a small incident gets exaggerated and publicized in a dramatic manner. Statements expressing concern and warning are elicited from within the country and abroad. "Tool kits" that incite violence are activated and mutual suspicion and hatred are further intensified.

All those who seek and favour harmony in the society need to be wary of these nefarious games. The solution to all these problems will only emerge gradually. But for that to happen, a climate of trust and harmony in the country is a prerequisite. It is vital that we increase mutual

dialogue and understanding with a calm and stable mind, and evolve respect for each other's beliefs. We must strive for harmony among all, and our minds, words and deeds must be in complete alignment with that larger objective of attaining deeper social cohesion and unity in the country.

We will have to work with the actual situation on the ground, and not be misled by propaganda or guided by assumptions. It is pertinent to persevere with our efforts for a long time, with patience, restraint and tolerance, shunning extremism, anger and fear in one's words and actions, with resolve and determination. It is only then that true resolutions made with a pure heart are fulfilled.

Regardless of the provocations, it is important and mandatory to follow law and order, abide by the Constitution, and maintain discipline. In an independent country, this behavior is considered an expression of patriotism. It is not advisable to get caught up or swayed by inflammatory propaganda carried out using the media, and the volley of allegations and counter-allegations that follows. The media should be used to propagate truth and harmony in the society. The correct solution to violence and hooliganism is for a society to become an organized force and to take the initiative in protecting law and order and to extend appropriate support to the government and the administration.

The country is going to hold elections to the Lok Sabha in the early days of 2024. Attempts to harvest votes by inflaming emotions are not desirable, but they still keep happening. Let us avoid these things, as they hurt the unity of the society. To cast vote is the duty of every citizen, and we must follow it. Cast your vote keeping in mind the vital issues of unity, integrity, identity and development of the country.

The year 2025 to 2026 is the year after the completion of 100 years of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. The Swayamsevaks will endeavor to fulfill these goals. Their preparation is going on. Let the words and deeds of the society strengthen the love for the country and forge a deeper social cohesion and belongingness. Any discrimination that might still exist with regard to accessing temple, water, or crematorium, must end. It is vital that family members continue to hold cordial dialogue everyday and maintain a love-filled relationship, while displaying a dignified and cultured behavior and sensitivity. They should stay united and continue to serve the society.

We should deepen our relationships with nature by saving water, removing plastics, and increasing greenery in and around our homes. Let's strengthen our reliance on 'Swa', or self, through Swadeshi. Wasteful expenditure ought to stop, too. Employment opportunities in the country should rise, and the country's money (capital) should be used within, and in the interest of the country itself. Hence, the practice of Swadeshi should start from home. Law and order, and responsibilities as a citizen, should be followed by all. A climate of harmony and cooperation should prevail in the society. Everybody expects these five behavioural elements to materialise. But it is imperative to make a sustained effort to make this behavior a part of our nature by starting with small things and practising them regularly and consciously. Apart from

-serving the needy members of the society, the Swayamsevaks will in coming days strive to make the society a participant and ally by carrying out these five types of social initiatives. As usual, the Swayamsevaks will continue to cooperate and contribute to whatever the government, administration, and the public-spirited members of the society are doing or would like to do in the interest of the society.

A nation prospers only when the society stays united and vigilant, and makes selfless efforts in all domains of human enterprise. A nation attains glory and radiance when the governance is welfare-oriented, and administration people-centric, driven by sustained cooperation based on the ideals of 'Swa'. When a nation, full of vigour and glory, has a culture like Bharat's Sanatan culture, which embraces everyone as its family, which guides us from darkness to light, from untruth to truth, and which leads us from mortality to the immortal life of meaningfulness, then that nation restores the balance of the world and brings the world the blessings of a happy and peaceful new life. This is the real purpose of the revival of our immortal nation that is Bharat in the present times.

"चक्रवर्तियों की संतान, लेकर जगद् गुरु का ज्ञान,
बढ़े चले तो अरुण विहान, करने को आए अभिषेक,
प्रश्न बहुत से उत्तर एक"

:: Bharat Mata ki Jai ::

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