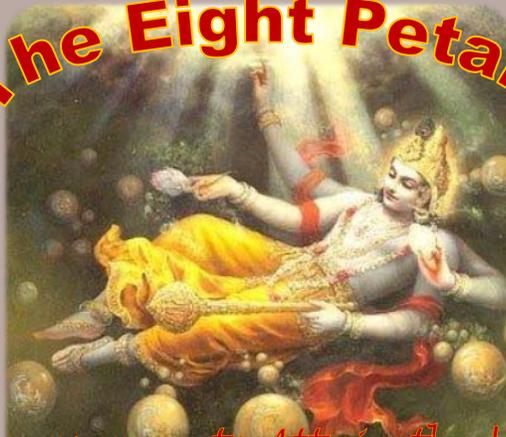




The Eight Petals



In Support of Varnayama to Attain the Lord's Lotus Feet

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Focus on Development



Highlights of the issue:

- ↑ Sanatan Dharma Inhibiting Progress?
- ↑ Development or Entanglement?
- ↑ The Real Development
- ↑ Mantra for Economic Development
- ↑ Are Economic Development and Bhakti Mutually Exclusive?

Economic Development is No Progress

Srila Prabhupada: People who accuse followers of Vedic civilization of laziness or of "inhibiting progress" do not know what real progress is. The Vedic civilization is not interested in the false progress of economic development. For instance, sometimes people boast, "We have gone from the hut to the skyscraper." They think this is progress. But in the Vedic system of civilization, one thinks about how much he is advanced in self-realization. He may live in a hut and become very advanced in self-realization. But if he wastes his time turning his hut into a skyscraper, then his whole life is wasted, finished. And in his next life he is going to be a dog, although he does not know it. ... We see so many men working so hard. Does this mean that every one of them will become a Ford, a Rockefeller? ... Ford was destined to become a rich man..., and so he became a rich man. Another man may work just as hard as Ford, but this does not mean he will become as rich as Ford. ... You cannot change your destiny simply by working hard like asses and dogs. No. But you can utilize your special human energy for improving your Kṛṣṇa consciousness.



Make Vrindavan Villages

Srila Prabhupada Speaks on Development



Sanatan Dharma Inhibiting Progress?

The charge is false. Those who have made that charge do not know what "Hinduism" is. First of all, the Vedic scriptures make no mention of such a thing as "Hinduism." but they do mention *sanātana-dharma*, the eternal and universal religion, and also *varṇāśrama-dharma*, the natural organization of human society. That we can find in the Vedic scriptures.

So it is a false charge that the Vedic system inhibits the progress of mankind. What is that "progress"? A dog's jumping is progress? [Laughter.] A dog is running here and there on four legs, and you are running on four wheels. Is that progress?

The Vedic system is this: The human being has a certain amount of energy—better energy than the animals', better consciousness—and that energy should be utilized for spiritual advancement. So the whole Vedic system is meant for spiritual advancement. Human energy is employed in a more exalted direction than to compete with the dog.

Consequently, sometimes those who have no idea of religion notice that the Indian saintly persons are not working hard like dogs. Spiritually uncultured people think the dog race is life. But actual life is spiritual progress. Therefore the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* [1.5.18] says,

*tasyaiva hetoḥ prayateta kovido/ na labhyate yad bhramatām upary adhaḥ
tal labhyate duḥkhavad anyataḥ sukham / kālena sarvatra gabhīra-rāmhasā*

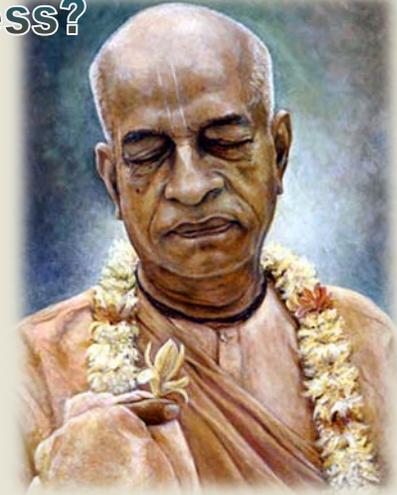
The human being should exert his energy for that thing which he did not get in many, many lives. Through many, many lives the soul has been in the forms of dogs or demigods or cats or birds or insects. There are 8,400,000 material forms. So this transmigration is going on, but in every one of these millions of forms, the business is sense gratification. The dog is busy for sense gratification: "Where is food? Where is shelter? Where is a mate? How to defend?" And the man is also doing the same business, in different ways.

So this struggle for existence is going on, life after life. Even a small insect is engaging in the same struggle—*āhāra-nidrā-bhaya-maithunam*—eating, sleeping, defending, and mating. Bird, beast, insect, fish—everywhere the same struggle: "Where is food? Where is sex? Where is shelter? How to defend?" So the *śāstra* [scripture] says we have done these things in many, many past lives, and if we don't get out of this struggle for existence, we'll have to do them again in many, many future lives. So these things should be stopped.

Therefore Prahlāda Mahārāja advises his friends [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.6.3],
*sukham aindriyakam daityā / deha-yogena dehinām
sarvatra labhyate daivād / yathā duḥkham ayatnataḥ*

"My dear friends, material pleasure—which is due simply to this material body—is essentially the same in any body. And just as misery comes without our trying for it, so the happiness we deserve will also come, by higher arrangement." A dog has a material body, and I have a material body. So my sex pleasure and the dog's sex pleasure is the same. Of course, a dog is not afraid of having sex on the street, in front of everyone. We hide it in a nice apartment. That's all. But the activity is the same. There is no difference.

Still, people are taking this sex pleasure between a man and woman in a nice decorated apartment as very advanced. But this is not advanced. And yet they are making a dog's race for this "advancement."



Prahlāda Mahārāja says we are imagining that there are different types of pleasure on account of different types of body, but the pleasure is fundamentally the same....

Therefore Prahlāda Mahārāja says that everything about material pleasure is already fixed. The uncivilized men in the jungle are having the same sex pleasure as the so-called civilized men who boast, "Instead of living in that hut made of leaves, we are living in a skyscraper building. This is advancement."

But Vedic civilization says, "No, this is not advancement. Real advancement is self-realization—how much you have realized your relationship with god."

Sometimes people misunderstand, thinking that sages who try for self-realization are lazy. In a high court a judge is sitting soberly, apparently doing nothing, and he is getting the highest salary. And another man in the same court—he's working hard all day long, rubber-stamping, and he is getting not even one-tenth of the judge's salary. He's thinking, "I am so busy and working so hard, yet I am not getting a good salary. And this man is just sitting on the bench, and he's getting such a fat salary." The criticism of Hinduism as "inhibiting progress" is like that: it comes out of ignorance. The Vedic civilization is for self-realization. It is meant for the intelligent person, the person who will not just work like an ass but who will try for that thing which he did not achieve in so many other lives—namely, self-realization.



...The Vedic civilization of self-realization begins from the *varṇāśrama* system of social organization. *Varnāśramācāravatā puruṣeṇa paraḥ pumān viṣṇur ārādhyate*: "Everyone should offer up the fruits of his occupational duty to the lotus feet of the Lord Viṣṇu , or Kṛṣṇa." That is why the Vedic system is called *varṇāśrama*—literally, "social organization with a spiritual perspective."

The *varṇāśrama* system has four social and four spiritual divisions. the social divisions are the *brāhmaṇas* [teachers and priests], *kṣatriyas*[administrators and military men], *vaiśyas* [farmers and merchants], and *śūdras* [laborers and craftsmen], while the spiritual divisions are the *brahmacārīs* [students], *gṛhasthas* [householders], *vānaprasthas* [retirees], and *sannyāsīs* [renunciants]. But the ultimate goal is *viṣṇur ārādhyate*—the worship of the Supreme Lord, Viṣṇu , by all. That is the idea.

But the members of the modern so-called civilization do not know of *varṇāśrama*. Therefore they have created a society that is simply a dog's race. The dog is running on four legs, and they are running on four wheels. That's all. And they think the four-wheel race is advancement of civilization.

Vedic civilization is different. As Nārada Muni says, *tasyaiva hetoḥ prayateta kovido na labhyate yad bhramatām upary adhaḥ*: the learned, astute person will use this life to gain what he has missed in countless prior lives—namely, realization of self and realization of God. Someone may ask, "Then shall we do nothing?" Yes do nothing simply to improve your material position. Whatever material happiness is allotted for you by destiny, you'll get it wherever you are. Take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. You'll get these other things besides.

"How shall I get them?"

How? *Kālena sarvatra gabhīra-rāṁhasā*: by the arrangement of eternal time, everything will come about in due course. The example is given that even though you do not want distress, still distress comes upon you. Similarly, even if you do not work hard for the happiness that is destined to be yours, still it will come.

Similarly, Prahlāda Mahārāja says, *na tat-prayāsaḥ kartavyam*: you should not waste your energy for material happiness, because you cannot get more than what you are destined to have. ... "Therefore why shall I waste my time trying to avoid distress and gain so-called happiness? Let me utilize my energy for Kṛṣṇa consciousness." That is intelligence. ...

[Source: In conversation with Pusta Krishna]

HH Bhakti Raghava Swami Speaks on Development

Development or Entanglement?



The very word “development” is used in many ways, most of which are actually incomplete and hence misleading. Searches on the website related to the word “development” include the following: “sustainable development”, “economic development”, “community development”, “iphone development”, “human development” and many more. The most popular use of the word “development” in modern day so called advanced society is in the context of “economic development” and “sustainable development”, both of which, however, deal only with one’s material well-being. Unfortunately, when viewed from a Vedic perspective or a perspective of complete knowledge, none of these definitions include the higher and most important dimension of “spiritual development” which involves development of consciousness.



Development of Consciousness

The Vedas speak of five levels of consciousness development beginning with what is termed as “annamaya”, and gradually rising to “pranamaya”, “jnanamaya”, “vijnanamaya” and finally “anandamaya”. The first three are connected with the field of activities of the living entity, “annamaya”, being consciousness of our own body and its basic needs such as food, “anna”; “pranamaya”, being consciousness of other forms of life, “prana” while “jnanamaya” being consciousness of our mind and intelligence whereby we can cultivate ordinary material knowledge, “jnana”.

The other two levels of development transcend these two and bring one to “vijnanamaya”, realizing ourselves as different from our material body, to be eternal spirit souls, the beginning stage of realized or transcendental knowledge, “vijnana”; and the last stage, the perfection of all knowledge culminating in anandamaya, blissful consciousness, “ānanda”, where there is realization of self as eternal servant of Lord Krishna and one is situated in pure devotional service. According to the Vedic culture, the human form of body is actually meant for “jīvasya tattva jijñāsā”, enlightenment in knowledge of spiritual values. Only once having come to this platform can one factually speak of real development.

Development of Atma: Body, Mind, Society and Soul

We understand from sastra, and from our daily experience as well, that we all have basic needs to fulfill. These are known as bodily needs, mental needs, social needs, and spiritual needs.

Body Development

The gross physical body will develop properly if our living habits conform to the directives found in the sastra. For example, of paramount importance is the need for young boys and girls to remain celibate until they get married. Therefore we find the statement “*tapasyā brahmacaryeṇa śamena ca damena ca*” [SB 6.1.13], human form of life is meant for austerity, beginning with celibacy, control of the mind and control of the senses. Most people in modern day society are unaware of the devastating



effects on the body when one indulges in unrestricted sex life. From a purely practical as well as medical point of view, one who does not discharge semen in teenage life will remain healthier and his intelligence will be more developed. Therefore Srila Prabhupada has written: “Our prescription is that in the beginning of life the child should be taught self-restraint (brahmacarya) and when he is past twenty he can marry. In the beginning he should learn how to restrain his senses. If a child is taught to become saintly, his semen rises to his brain, and he is able to understand spiritual values. Wasting semen decreases intelligence. So from the beginning, if he is a brahmacārī and does not misuse his semen, then he will become intelligent and strong and fully grown.” [Journey of Self-Discovery, 73]. Engaging in unrestricted sex bring about senility and suffering in old age. “The more one enjoys in youth, the more he suffers in old age.” (SB 4.28.1)



Mind Development

When the mind and intelligence remain on the gross bodily platform, as explained in the Bhagavad-gita, our hard struggle for existence begins: *manah-ṣaṣṭhānīndriyāṇi prakṛti- sthāni karṣati* [Bg 15.7]. The vast majority of people, because of being devoid of spiritual knowledge, remain situated on the material mental platform and are forced to experience the four defects of material human existence: 1) they make mistakes, 2) they tend to be illusioned, 3) their every sense is imperfect and 4) they have a cheating propensity. No one can be happy in such a precarious condition.

For the mind and the intelligence to develop properly, both must become purified by contact with the spiritual dimension of life. As the gross body is a source of suffering and must undergo the six phases of: 1) birth, 2) growth, 3) producing by-products, 4) staying for some time, 5) dwindling and 6) dying, similarly the material mind (with the use of the material intelligence) like a computer, registers and stores all kinds of material impressions in the form of desires and attachments which force one to again take up another material body.

Real mind development begins when one purifies the mind's three material activities of thinking, feeling, and willing from its contaminated material level to regain its original pure state of spiritual consciousness, i.e. thinking favourably of Krishna, developing loving feelings for Krishna and willing to engage in His devotional service.

Social Development (Varnasrama Dharma)

All human beings have a basic need to interact with others. That basic need is there due to our original spiritual nature of being in spiritual relationship with Krishna. The most ideal social structure which favours such natural and spontaneous relationships with both Krishna and His devotees is the scientific system of varnas and asramas. This is the conclusion of all acaryas such as Srila Bhaktinoda Thakura and Srila Prabhupada. “But a devotee who desires to properly pass his life still accepts his duties according to varnasrama, as those duties are favorable to devotional service and counted as part of devotional service. All these activities are no longer called karma.” [Sri Bhaktyaloka, Six Faults that destroy bhakti]

“With the assistance of varnasrama dharma, a person should cultivate bhakti. It is also necessary to follow the rules of varnasrama in the cultivation of bhakti.” [From “Sri Chaitanya Siksamṛta, Chapter 3] “Though all humans have a right to practice bhakti, those who follow the regulations of varnasrama have a much easier time.”



The original and perfect social system has been created by Lord Krishna [Bg 4.13] and therefore remains the most ideal for developing both materially and spiritually. For not having kept this scientific system intact and for not having re-introduced the basics of this system, human society is presently in chaos where almost everyone is caught up in *ugra-karma*, abominable activities, and where we are simply increasing unwanted population of *varna sankara*.

Soul Development (Bhagavat Dharma)

In the Vedic culture, more emphasis is given to spiritual development than to material development. While the material development is not neglected; differently from the modern day society, the material development



does not take precedence over the spiritual development. In the modern society, the spiritual development tends to be neglected.

The more one becomes absorbed in material development, the more one becomes entangled. The more we enjoy materially, the more we create, increase and prolong our suffering in this world. Hence in the Vedic culture, one would voluntarily minimize material development and material enjoyment understanding the transient nature of our material existence and would rather concentrate on the spiritual dimension of life.

The whole Vedic way of life was to simplify one's living and thus more easily favour spiritual development. That training and education began at an early age and took shape especially in the educational system of gurukula. Separation of the sexes was of paramount importance to help all individuals in society keep focussed on the main goal of life, the development of self-realization.

In the Vedic culture, three levels of development were stressed. The first level of development directly protected the cows which in turn favoured the development of brahminical culture which then favoured the development of self-realization. Actual economic development in an agrarian based society was based on the protection and proper utilization of land and cow. As stated in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, "the basic principle of economic development is centered on land and cows. The necessities of human society are food grains, fruits, milk, minerals, clothing, wood, etc. One requires all these items to fulfill the material needs of the body. Certainly one does not require flesh and fish or iron tools and machinery." [SB 1.10.4]

"Progressive human civilization is based on brahminical culture, God consciousness and protection of cows. All economic development of the state by trade, commerce, agriculture and industries must be fully utilized in relation to the above principles; otherwise all so-called economic development becomes a source of degradation. Cow protection means feeding the brahminical culture, which leads towards God consciousness, and thus perfection of human civilization is achieved." [SB 1.19.3]

"The Bhāgavata says that you can make economic development as far as it maintains your body and soul together. Not that making whole life economic development and real purpose of life forget. This is foolishness." [Conversation, July, 1975, Philadelphia]

- *HH Bhakti Raghava Swami*



The Real Development

- HG Campakalata Dd



Development means progress, growth, expansion, maturity, ripeness or elaboration. It also means “advancement” that everybody looks forward to. In general most of the people associate “advancement” or development with economic, social, and bodily development etc. Since we are in human form all sorts of development are essential and if they lead us to spiritual development only then it can be said that the human race is taking the right step forward. Globalization and industrialization have taken both the developed and developing countries far ahead in different fields of Telecommunication, transport etc. Along with the development we are confronted with disastrous natural calamities, global environmental concerns, scarcity of food, hike in prices of essential commodities and serious mental and physical health concerns of humanity to name just a few.

We have witnessed worst of the global financial crisis which threw the complete world out of gears and in a serious economic turmoil which will take years to heal. It left lakhs of people unemployed, banks high and dry while shriveling the economies revealing the fragile structure on which we have built our edifices. Companies big and small looked frantically for solutions to put their house in order and announced new policies to minimize the effect of recession. But, nothing really worked. Political parties also announced new social/economic policies to boost the fast declining health of the world economy. But nothing could help fuel the growth engine. This is a classic example of people’s greed deflating the complete world economy.

On the other hand, nature frequently unraveled its fury in the form of major environmental changes which led to erratic temperature fluctuations resulting in floods, storms, droughts which in turn devastated the crops. The already grim situation of food scarcity was further aggravated, jacking up the price of grains, vegetables - the basic necessity of “Food”.

Apart from this, major climatic changes also led to outbreak of several diseases like swine flu, avian flu etc. Disease is a biological expression of climate instability.

Most of these unfavorable situations are due to one main reason - we do not keep Lord Krishna at the center of every activity. We are so busy in pleasing our senses and working towards our material growth, perceived as ‘Development’ that we do not give time to realize our true selves.

What is the panacea from all these problems? What is real ‘Development’? How can real DEVELOPMENT be achieved?

Lord Krishna has given us the most valuable knowledge to live a healthy, happy, serene and spiritually invigorating life [B.G 3.14]:

annad bhavanti bhutani parjanyaad anna sambhavah:

yajnad bhavati parjanyo yajna karma samudbhavah:

“All living being subsist on food grains which are produced from rains. Rains are produced by performance of sacrifice and yajna is born of “prescribed duties”.

Here if we focus on the words “prescribed duties”, we understand that Lord Krishna gave the solution of how one can perform one’s prescribed duties to achieve progress of every kind. The



simple following of bhakti in a daivi varnasrama set up is the most conducive set up. After all varnasrama is His set up.

catur-varnyam maya srstam

guna-karma-vibhagasah

tasya kartaram api mam

viddhy akartaram avyayam [B.G 4.13]

“According to the 3 modes of material nature and the work associated with them the divisions of human society are created by Me. And although I am the creator of this system you should know that I am yet the non doer being unchangeable”



Birth is not the only criterion of being a brahmana, ksatriya, vaisya or a sudra. It is defined by other factors too which define our natural propensities. Our occupations are nothing but an expression of those natural proclivities we choose our occupation and our caste gets decided by the nature of the work we perform. The best part is that in a daivi varnasrama set up, whatever we do we are serving the lord. The result of our work is offered to Krishna, there is no room for ugra karma. Further, since we work with a God centric attitude and offer its result to Krishna, the progress is manifold both spiritually and economically. By using minimum resources if we can do our karma to maintain our body and dovetail our consciousness towards Krishna we can achieve great benefits not only at a personal level but also at a global level. A small piece of land and a cow can fulfill our basic needs. Chanting the Holy name and Daivi Varnasrama is a practical solution to weed out various calamities, degradation of our Mother Earth who is supporting a wide range of living entities. We as individuals have great responsibility to first understand what changes we and our Earth are going through and to check its degradation we need to concentrate on chanting the mahamantra, move towards daivi varnasrama set up and cow protection.

We know that to treat a diseased person the doctor needs to diagnose the root cause and offer a medicine to the patient. Similarly we need to first comprehend the problems and accept what Lord told in the Gita to resolve them but under the able guidance of a Spiritual Master who is situated on a transcendental platform and well connected to the parampara. The awareness is yet to grow and to keep up with this endeavour we are coming up with more farm communities which concentrate on farming and cow protection. Farm communities will set up a model for others to follow the example of Simple Living and High Thinking and sustainable development, revolutionizing to bring about the true development that the World awaits!!

More Material Advancement Translates to More Suffering

“In your country, nice city, New York City, but every moment there is fire -- dung-dung-dung-dung-dung-dung-dung-dung. Why? Very nice city, big city, big roads, big -- but there is suffering. Who wants this fire? But government has to make arrangement for fire brigade, and because it is great nation, very prosperous nation, there is very constantly, very frequently there is fire. Frequently. You won't find such fire in India, at least. We have no such experience that every moment there is fire brigade. Is it not? I am exaggerating? Huh? You see. We have got so many cities in India, but we don't have such arrangement that constantly, twenty-four hours, dung-dung-dung-dung-dung-dung. At least we haven't got. Less suffering, because we are not so advanced. The more materially you become advanced, the more suffering. Daivi hy esa gunamayi mama maya [Bg. 7.14]. [Source: Srila Prabhupada speaks on: Material Advancement—Suffering, Vrndavana, September 18, 1976]



Make Vrndavan Villages

Mantra for Economic Development

- HH Bhakti Raghava Swami

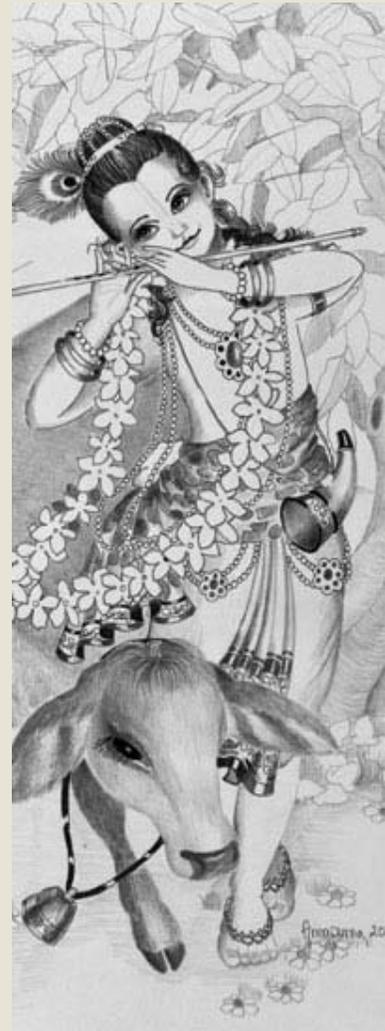
Best economic development is based on agriculture. Agriculture has always been, not only for India, but for whole world, the most important and strongest economic basis....Economy is based on cow because agriculture is meant to be done with the use of cows and bulls. Tilling of the land is to be done by ox. That's the natural way. If we deviate from this and use tractors then the result is very detrimental to the soil, it creates unemployment as well and it is encouraging what is called monocrop and cash crop,

which is not the proper way of doing agriculture. And without panchagavya, the Brahmanas become unemployed. So all of this is very interconnected. Krishna has created a very scientific system. This varnasrama system is very scientific system. Therefore Krishna explains, *catvar varnyam maya srtam, guna karma vibhagashah*. So Krishna has created this system, so this system is necessary. So who are we to reject that system or try to invent new system? Of course there have been deviations. So that is why our acharyas have used what is called - Daivi Varnasrama. Daivi Varnasrama means, that we work within that system that Krishna has given and but the focus is on serving Krishna. There is no undue difference. We are servants of God and we are all endeavoring to practice devotional service regardless of our temporary material position or responsibilities. ...By nature in every country, some are more inclined to intellectual activities; others are more inclined towards manual activities. So these natural divisions are there. When the focus is missing, then it becomes a problem. So we need to focus to bring back the Krishna element because if Krishna element is there, then everything becomes harmonious.

So we are doing these two things. Rural development means not only on the material side, but also on the spiritual side.

Spiritual element and material element need to be blended together because we are made up of both. We have this material body but we are spirit soul. So we have to learn how to blend both of them.

[Excerpts from HH Bhakti Raghava Swami's (Minister, ISKCON Daiva Varnasrama Ministry), interview to "Divya Bhaskar" - India, on December 14, 2010, ISKCON Ahmedabad.]



Make Amalavan Villages

Are Economic Development and Bhakti Mutually Exclusive?



- Vrindavanlila dd

Development has generally, unless specified, has come to be understood as “economic advancement”. Let us understand this material or economic development little more analytically.

"Having attained this human form of life, we should inquire after Brahman." "What is God? Who is God? What is my relationship with Him?" These questions distinguish human being from animals, and mark the beginning of Krishna consciousness - *atatho brahma jijṣasa*.

The modern civilization may foolishly encourage boatmen to go sailing without rudder, but traditionally people's material life was also guided by spiritual paradigms. They catered to everybody's interest. Vedic way of life recognized catur purusharthas or the four goals of human life in the material world – moksha (liberation), dharma (religiosity), artha (economic development), and kama (sense gratification). Moksha and dharma take care of the higher spiritual development of a human being - mind, while the other two – artha and kama – though considered inferior to other two, are responsible for securing the bodily requirements of a human being.

Moksha and Dharma, though superior to the other two goals of human endeavor are still not considered worth striving for by a devotee. No wonder, the whole Kartik mas devotees, while lighting the lamp to the Lord sing,

*varam ḍeva moksam ḥna moksāṁvadhim ṁvā
na canyam ṁrṇe ham ṁaresād apīha
idam ṁe vapur nātha gopāla-bālam ṁ
sadā me manasy āvirāstām kim anyaih.*

[O Lord, although You are able to give all kinds of benedictions, I do not pray to You for the boon of impersonal liberation, nor the highest liberation of eternal life in Vaikuntha, nor any other boon (which may be obtained by executing the nine processes of bhakti). O Lord, I simply wish that this form of Yours as Bala Gopala in Vrindavana may ever be manifest in my heart, for what is the use to me of any other boon besides this?]

In a similar strain, the Lord Himself tells Arjuna to abandon all kinds of ‘dharma’ that take him away from the Lord's lotus feet:

*sarva-dharman parityajya / mam ekam saranam vraja
aham tvam sarva-papebhyo / moksaisyami ma sucah*

[Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto Me. I shall deliver you from all sinful reaction. Do not fear.]

One may feel that when the higher goals itself are being eliminated, where is the room for other two, which are anyways obviously considered lower, catering only to the physical requirements.

The beauty of Vedic life lies in recognizing difference in the nature of different human beings, in their proclivities and natural capabilities (that is why varnasrama) and further sanctifying everything, including the carnal requirements (that is why daivi-varnasrama); therefore the pursuit of artha and kama was also defined by dharma or morality. Hence, while Vedas extolled being “*anyabhilashita shunyam*” also acknowledge the presence of desires in majority of people and thus suggest ways how they can accomplish their desires without compromising on the spiritual component. So, the



Make Vrindavan Villages

superscript of dharma – one could indulge in sense gratification but on the condition that it did not violate the injunctions of dharma (varnasrama dharma).

Artha or economic development was also defined. One's material acquisitions were defined and limited. One was supposed to adhere to the dictum of simple living and high thinking, keeping just enough to keep the body and soul together! *Srimad Bhagavatam* 11.8.9 clearly states:

stokam stokam grased grasam / deho varteta yavata

grihan ahimsann atishthed / vrittim madhukarim munih

[A saintly person should accept only enough food to keep his body and soul together. He should go from door to door accepting just a little bit of food from each family. Thus he should practice the occupation of the honeybee.]

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu rejects all the four to give us the highest goal of life, the pancham purushartha of achieving devotion for the Lord or bhakti. *Narayan* confirms this in the following verse:

ya vai sadhana-sampattih/ purusartha-catustaye

taya vina tad apnoti / nara narayanasrayah

The four purusarthas remain different processes of fruitive activities and help in making a human being lead more civilized life than animals and slowly help him evolve towards realizing the higher goals of life. But where are we when studied in relation to this perspective?

Our departure from the vedic paradigms has been so drastic that it has become a good example of the inverted tree image parallel given in the *Bhagavad Gita*. We are not just following the lower purushartha of just 'artha' but also with all possible distortions. There is no room for bhakti to prosper. Rather, artha has come to define simply economic or material prosperity with the destructive combination of its divorce from dharma and moksha. The absence of the latter has made it the lowest and an absolutely material goal. The time where material requirements were kept to the minimum to leave one with more time to utilize for spiritual evolution we have regressed to if not total rejection of the spiritual objective to its relegation as the last priority. Wallowing in the deepest mire of ignorance, and thus forgetting our real identity, we have turned ourselves to the biggest worshippers of matter. No wonder, the present society is hedonistic and founded on sense gratification – pride, prostitution, intoxication and falsehood. Our economic development is geared to pamper these four impulses (violating the four tenets of dharma - austerity, cleanliness, mercy and truthfulness). It is noteworthy to read Srila Prabhupada's words (SB 4:22:34 Purport):

"The four principles of life allow one to live according to religious principles, to earn money according to one's position in society, to allow the senses to enjoy the sense objects according to regulations, and to progress along the path of liberation from this material attachment. As long as the body is there, it is not possible to become completely free from all these material interests. It is not, however, recommended that one act only for sense gratification and earn money for that purpose only, sacrificing all religious principles. At the present moment, human civilization does not care for religious principles. It is, however, greatly interested in economic development without religious principles. ...Similarly, although the government may license liquor shops, this does not mean that liquor shops should be opened unrestrictedly and illicit liquor smuggled. Licensing is meant for restricting. No one has to take a license for sugar, wheat or milk because there is no need to restrict these things. In other words, it is advised that one not act in a way that will obstruct the regular process of advancement in spiritual life and liberation. The Vedic process of sense gratification is therefore planned in such a way that one can economically develop and enjoy sense



gratification and yet ultimately attain liberation. Vedic civilization offers us all knowledge in the sastras, and if we live a regulated life under the direction of sastras and guru, all our material desires will be fulfilled; at the same time we will be able to go forward to liberation."

Though we are aware of cultivating bhakti being the only worthwhile goal of life but since not everybody is a devotee like Haridas Thakur just by dint of they also being humans. There will always be variegation in basic nature and propensities. In this age, economic development will almost always appear top on the chart as it facilitates other sense gratifications, but our intelligence lies in acknowledging these differences and working out a solution. Are economic development and spiritual development (bhakti) mutually exclusive? Fortunately, they can coexist. Daivi varnasrama set up is a social set up which allows for our differences, even those with lower intelligence have room to grow and find themselves gradually on the path of bhakti (by serving other classes).

Economic prosperity, even when seen from common sense perspective, appears shallow. What will it ultimately allow? - Better comforts, better and more luxurious way of enjoying our senses (eating, sleeping, mating, and defence). Does it make us in any way different from animals? Speeding around on our four wheelers has only made us compete with dog (who also runs on four feet), we are mere "royal editions of animals". *Srimad-Bhagavatam* denounces human beings who waste their life working hard to earn money and are compared to asses kept by washermen which carries the heavy load of washing, in the hope of a handful of grass. But it never occurs to him that grass is growing everywhere and that he could get it freely without so much endeavor. Working in this way, human beings are missing the aim of life, which is spiritual development.

Economic development is not necessarily abominable as long as it is based on land and cows. But in the present age, it is however thriving on distorted versions of the dictum. Instead of land or bhoomi it is real estate business or exploitative activities of mindless mining, tantamounting to raping of bhoomi and instead of worshipping the cows, it is cow slaughter, but restoration of economic development with the sight of 'dharma' (realization of our original relationship with the Lord) and 'bhakti' (desire to develop devotion towards Him) as the two eyes will again set the order right. The example of Kardama muni and Devahuti are beautifully relevant in the context. One does not need big factories for economic development. Srila Prabhupada says emphatically, "You don't require industries, trade. You don't require. If you have got land and cow, then everything is complete. This is basic principle of Vedic civilization. Have some land. Have some cows. *Dhanyena dhanavan gavayah dhanavan*. Not industry. There is no need of industry. Because you want some food, nice food, nice milk, nice fruit, that will be produced by nature. You cannot manufacture all these things in the factory. At the present moment, the big, big factories, they are the activities of the *asuras* [demonic persons], *ugra-karma* [terrible, harmful activities]." While living in a Krsna-centric world of daivi varnasrama, vaishyas, the engineers of economic development need to possess the following five attributes (SB 7.11.23):

deva-gurv-acyute bhaktis tri-varga-pariposanam

astikyam udyamo nityam naipunyam vaisya-laksanam

The three primary activities of vaishyas are [Bhagavad-gita 18.44]: *krsi-goraksya-vanijyam vaisya-karma svabhava-jam*

Once economic prosperity is steeped in *krsi* (agriculture), *go raksha* (cow protection) and *vanijyam* (trade and commerce) and is imbued in the love for Guru and Godhead, everybody will have the opportunity to make the most of their human birth. Thereby allowing artha (economic development) and bhakti go hand in hand. Hare Krsna!



• Devotional Activities at Govardhan

Devotional Programs at Govardhan during the month



- Ishta goshti with HG Bhadra Govinda prabhu-HG GitaGanya dd and local devotees
- Organized house program on Vaikuntha Ekadasi at new houses.
- Organised Vaikunth Ekadasi function at Sri Sri RadhaMadhava temple, Balrama Kshetra
- Received devotee guests in HG Bhadra Govind prabhu (Singapore), HG GitaGanya dd (Singapore), HG Prabhu Nityananda (Sridham Mayapur), Bhaktin Tina (Australia, of HG Sri Prahlad fame) with her husband Bhakta Pulkit from Sydney, Bhakta Madhava prabhu(Australia), HG Sthanadhatri dd (Indonesia), HG Govinda prabhu (Shimoga), HG Harikirtan prabhu (Chirala), and many more devotees from Andhra Pradesh itself.
- Introduced basic sadhna for the devotees. This month included the following:
 - Sloka for the week included: *Bhagavad Gita*: 1.31, 3.22, 10.8 and 9.9
 - Vaishnava Songs for the fortnight: **Jiva Jago** and **Yashomati Nandana...**
 - Verse for the month: First 20 verses from **Brahma Samhita**
- Coming up:
 - Free Sanskrit Course for the devotees
 - Deity Worship Course for the devotees

Those interested are requested to contact: gourgopal.brs@gmail.com

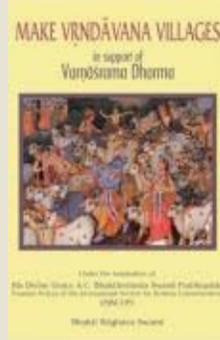


New Govardhan (Mahindra Hills, Secunderabad), which had served the devotees with locally grown vegetables like pumpkins and snake gourds last year, this time got its first yield of delicious banana. At the same time papayas with mango-like sweetness continued to attract the devotees. Now one can see beautiful roses, other wild flowers in white, purple, and bright pink, magenta, and red colours growing luxuriantly around.



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• Varnashrama Literature

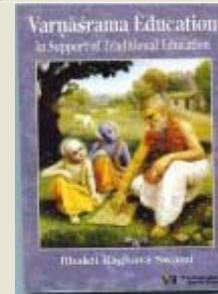


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H.H. Bhakti Raghava Swami, who heads the Varnashrama Ministry, India has authored several books on Varnashrama, including this. This book is meant to serve as a general introduction to some of the basic concepts of varnashrama-dharma. In essence, the subject matter deals with both the topic of education as well as social and spiritual upliftment through a well established and scientifically planned educational system and social structure which encompass all spheres and all dimensions of life.

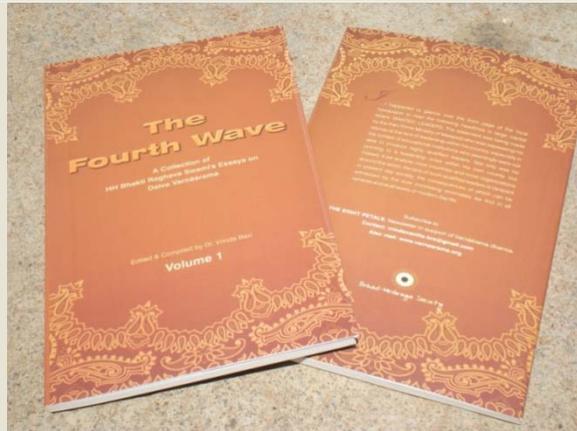
Varnashrama Education

The topic of education, a highly debated and controversial subject among many many educationalists and students alike, has always been of extreme importance and relevance to any society, especially in the most traditional oriental cultures. This book deals with the aspect of Education in the context of Varnashrama.



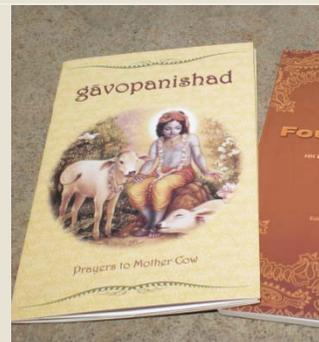
The Fourth Wave

It is a wonderful collection of HH Bhakti Raghava Swami's essays on Daiva Varnashrama addressing a wide range of concerns of daily life beginning from the very definition of the term, dharma, administration, family system, education, food, to technology. The 'Preface' for *The Fourth Wave* has been written by HG Patita Pavan Adhikary, a senior disciple of Srila Prabhupada, a strong daiva varnashrama supporter, a prolific writer, and an astrologer who has the distinction of having served as ISKCON Temple President and Director (Book Reviews) for BBT.



Gavopanishad: Prayers to Mother Cow

Cows, dear to the Lord Himself- Gopala, Govinda - have been integral to the concept of varnashrama and have functioned as the defining features of Vedic social, economic, and spiritual system. This small attractive book contains lovely prayers in the glorification of Mother Cow, complemented by short but interesting information on the significance of cow and panchgavya products. The 'Foreword' to *Gavopanishad* has been written by H.H. Bhakti Raghava Swami himself.



In addition to the above there are many more books in the pipeline and several documentary movies. In order to get more information one can contact: vrindavanlila.brs@gmail.com

For Panchgavya products one can contact: gourgopal.brs@gmail.com



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• Varnashrama News



Varnashrama Ministry Directorate in Sridham Mayapur [By HH Bhakti Raghava Swami]

November 5, 2010. Hebri. The Daiva Varnashrama Ministry Promoting Rural Development in India will soon have its own satellite office in Sri Dham Mayapur and will be called the Mayapur Varnashrama Directorate.

The office will be strategically located on the first floor of the Chakra Building (generally known as the "Long Building"), in close proximity to the Lotus Building and the existing Sri Mayapur Chandrodaya Mandir. Plans are underway to equip the office with basic services for visiting devotees interested to know more about the varnashrama mission and who may like to be involved. Various paraphernalia such as books, pamphlets, DVD documentaries produced by the ministry's Varnashrama Media Productions (VMP), photo albums, project reports and various other literatures will be made available for interested people. The ministry looks forward serving the ISKCON Vaisnavas world-wide. More details of this new facility will soon be posted after its official opening expected within a few weeks.



Fourth Annual Convention – Global Varnashrama Mission – March 4-7, 2011 [Based on inputs given by HH Bhakti Raghava Swami]

The ISKCON Daiva Varnashrama Ministry Promoting Rural Development in India is planning the 4th Annual Convention "Global Varnashrama Mission" in Sri Dham Mayapur in conjunction with the Mayapur Institute from March 4th to 7th, 2011 (four days). This year's theme will be *Save Our Cows, Save Our Villages*.

It is planned to have various speakers making presentations on topics related to the varnashrama mission, intermixed with Power-Point presentations and documentaries.

Interested devotee who may like to give a presentation are requested to kindly confirm their attendance and participation. The organizers of the event need to receive the response before the end of December, 2010, in order to plan out the four day seminars. Those interested in presenting a paper are requested to inform the National Coordinator, HG Bharat Chandra Das (Bharat.Chandra.BRS@pamho.net) or the Head, DAIVAM, His Holiness Bhakti Raghava Swami (Bhakti.Raghava.Swami@pamho.net) of the topic one wishes to present. All speakers are requested

to send an 'Abstract' of their topic one month before the seminar. One is also welcome to recommend a devotee who may like to give a presentation.

There are limited Modules of 90 minutes each during this 4 day convention, hence one is requested to confirm one's attendance at the earliest (please indicate which day may be more suitable for you). The devotees' participation will be confirmed by the ministry before the end of January, 2011. Also visit: www.iskconvarnashrama.com



Human Development of Prime Importance [www.dnaindia.com]

December 28, 2010. Pune. "India is witnessing phenomenal economic growth, but for the overall development of the country, efforts also should be made to improve the human development index," said deputy chairman of the planning commission, Montek Singh Ahluwalia.

"The saints of our country had a broad vision of Indian culture, tradition and customs," said Ahluwalia.



New CRZ Norms Fuel Hope for Planned Growth (www.hindustantimes.com)

December 28, 2010. Mumbai. The stakeholders in the city's development have welcomed the soon-to-be-announced Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) rules 2010, which will give Mumbai 'special status' with separate CRZ rules for the city. The new rules expected to be announced by union minister of environment and forests (MoEF) Jairam Ramesh soon are expected to bring about a sea-change in Mumbai's skyline by giving a push to redevelopment projects.

"This will bring relief to lakhs of families living in precarious conditions in dilapidated buildings across the city," said state minister for housing, Sachin Ahir. Ahir also was referring to more than 16,000 old and dilapidated buildings in densely populated pockets of south and central Mumbai that will open up for development.



Yahoo! India delivers 30% of global IP [Economic Times]

December 28, 2010. Bangalore. An increasing proportion, close to 30%, of Yahoo's intellectual property development is taking place out of the firm's Bangalore research centre as it looks to capitalise on local talent and focus on emerging markets. With the passing years, the Indian IT-BPO industry has matured to a large extent



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although it still has to strike the huge global market. To generate an increasing share of revenues from the already emerging segments like engineering and infrastructure management in the future by offering cost-effective delivery options is the main aim.

The level of opportunity underlines the immense growth opportunities for the industry players to create innovative service models and broaden its geographical reach, says Dun & Bradstreet in a report that gauges the Indian IT-BPO industry outlook for 2011.



Toxic culture leads to destruction of ecosystem: Vandana Shiva [*Economic Times*]

December 28, 2010. Thiruvanthapuram. Noted environmental and social activist Vandana Shiva today called for a nationwide ban on the pesticide endosulfan, which has caused serious health hazards in Kerala.

Shiva said a "toxic culture" was leading to "total destruction" of the ecosystem in the country. In Punjab, the number of cancer patients was going up with the increase in the use of pesticides in farms, she said.



Ex-president Offers Roadmap to Enlightened Society

December 26, 2010. Pune. Former president of India APJ Abdul Kalam has proposed a unique concept evolution of enlightened society' for creating global peace and harmony. Addressing a huge gathering of students at the Maharashtra Institute of Technology (MIT) on Sunday, Kalam shared a three-pronged action plan - education with value system, religion transforming into spirituality and economic development for societal transformation for a happy, prosperous and peaceful society.

Elaborating on the component of economic development, he said, "It's essential to ensure that citizens are empowered with good quality of life encompassing nutritious food, good habitat, clean environment, affordable healthcare, quality education and productive employment. To achieve that growth rate, we have identified five areas where India has a core competence for integrated action. They are agriculture and food processing, education and healthcare, information and communication technology, infrastructure development such power, transportation and communication and self reliance in critical technologies."



India is caught between scams and slums: Sri Sri Ravi Shankar [*The Indian Express*]

December 17, 2010. Bhubaneswar. India is caught between "scams and slums" and needed spiritual knowledge to overcome the situation, Art of Living guru Sri Sri Ravi Shankar said here.

"India now essentially needs spiritual knowledge as it is caught between scams and slums," Ravi Shankar said after meeting Orissa Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik here.

The spiritual guru said that during his meeting with the chief minister he had expressed keenness to be involved in rural development activities in the state.

"We plan to set up an agriculture college at Kalahandi which will help introduction of multi-crop system in the valley of river Indravati," he said.



17,368 farm suicides in 2009 [*The Hindu*]

December 28, 2010. Mumbai. At least 17,368 Indian farmers killed themselves in 2009, the worst figure for farm suicides in six years, according to data of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB). This is an increase of 1,172 over the 2008 count of 16,196. It brings the total farm suicides since 1997 to 2,16,500. The share of the Big 5 States, or 'suicide belt' — Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh — in 2009 remained very high at 10,765, or around 62 % of the total. Maharashtra remained the worst State for farm suicides for the 10th successive year, reporting 2,872. Karnataka, is second worst, logging 2,282 farm suicides.

Economist K. Nagaraj, author of the biggest study on Indian farm suicides, says, "That these numbers are rising even as the farmer population shrinks, confirms the agrarian crisis is still burning."



600 US soldiers chant Hare Krishna for three miles [*Reported by HG Partha-Sarthi Dasa*]

I am a soldier in the US Army and thought you all might get a laugh at what happened the other day. We had to do a 6 mile run for fitness. Its custom to sing during these runs to build soldier cohesion. So they asked me to sing. I agreed so we were running down the street, when the idea popped in my head to get them to chant. Now this wasn't 6 or 7 people, it was a total of 600 soldiers. And they were into it, for 3 miles they chanted the Maha Mantra as loud as they could and were really into it. Amazing what the power of the Holy Name can do!



• Mails to the Editor

Dear Mataji Hare Krishna,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Sri Guru and Gauranga. All glories to Srila Prabhupada.

I hope you have completely recovered from your illness now and in good health.

The Newsletter is great. As we had discussed earlier, I have added the newsletter to ISKCON Varnasrama site. <http://www.iskconvarnasrama.com/cms/node/156>. The link is Varnasrama Reading -> The Eight Petals.

...I will be happy to add the earlier issues also. ...Your consistent effort to push varnasrama mission is very much appreciated by me.

Your Servant,

- *HG Parasurama Dasa*, Hebri

Hare Krsna mataji,

It is good to see so many efforts in this direction....I suggest that instead of attaching the file to your cover letter you post the file on a public web server and then include the link to the file in your cover letter. Then the cover letter can be sent along to various conferences. Those who are interested can download it. You can also set up a Google Group and invite the members of these large conferences to join the Google Group, and then you can directly send the newsletter to the Google Group where only interested devotees will receive it directly by email.

Your servant,

- *HG Bhaktarupa Das*, Bhubhneswar

Dear Vrndavanlila mataji,

Hare Krishna!

All glories to Srila Prabhupada! Please accept my obeisances!

Thank you for the newsletter! I found your service very very important! The information is very useful and I would ask you : could I send it to some devotees here in Bulgaria? I can feel, at least in my country, the misunderstanding of the importance of Varnasrama education. But a hope that in the future we will pay more attention to our children's education and training.

- *HG Saci-Sundari dd*, Bulgaria.

Hare Krishna Mataji.

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada.

I have been waiting so eagerly for your newsletter; I thought of writing to you and asking you about the date when the next issue was about to come.

But then I thought that you must be already so busy with your services that I need not unnecessarily trouble you asking such questions. I am so happy to get the newsletter today.

I pray to Srila Prabhupada, and Mother Cow that you further the cause of Varna-Ashrama by leaps and bounds, and please your spiritual master.

I am extremely embarrassed to say this, but I have one observation to share with you. In the picture of Srila Prabhupada which appears on the second of the current issue, he is seen with his bead-bag in his left-hand. I think the image which you have used is a mirror-image of the original image, because of which it appears the way it is. I am extremely sorry for not contributing anything positive, and instead pointing out some anomaly in the output of your service. Please forgive me for that.

However, since I have yet to go through the content of the newsletter, just by looking at the title of the articles they appear to be thoroughly interesting. Thank you Mataji for your wonderful services. May you continue with more vigour and enthusiasm.

Your humble servant,

- *HG Amar Gaur das*, Pune

Hare Krsna mataji, Please accept my humble obeisances.

I really appreciate your article on "unemployment' – "Is Unemployment Equivalent to Murder?" Your efforts for expressing the real picture of urbanised India is really dead on target! Thank you so much.

- *Bhaktin Ruchi Grover*, Chandigarh.



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Hare Krsna dear devotees,
Please accept my humble obeisances,
All Glories to Srila Prabhupada
All Glories to Sri Sri Guru and Gauranga



As we approach the new year, which is just round the corner, I wish to take the opportunity to thank all the readers for their constant support and interest in spreading the varnasrama mission, which is so enthusing. There were several enquiries from Mexico, Malaysia to know more about the newsletter and procure its old issues. Space restriction may not allow me to mention all the names, but every response is very precious for taking the effort forward.

I also received several mails from different corners of the world, praying for my health, notably HG Patita Pavana prabhu (Bulgaria), Bhakta Ravisankar (Australia), HG Radhavallabh prabhu (Libya). I owe my recovery to such devotees. I therefore would like to dedicate this issue, which would not have been possible in otherwise situation to all the vaishnavas who were so compassionate in showering their prayers and good wishes, and thus facilitating my humble service towards fulfilling Srila Prabhupada's dream.

I wish you all a very very spiritually prosperous and Krsna –Conscious loaded new year 2011!

Thank you once again for your interest and support to Daivi-varnasrama dharma.

Aspiring to serve,

Vrindavanlila dd (Editor)

Happy New Year 2011

Srila Prabhupada: "Progress"—first you must understand what actual progress is. The thing is that if you try to progress vainly, what is the use of trying? If it is a fact you cannot change your material destiny, why should you try for that? Rather, whatever energy you have, utilize it for understanding Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That is real progress. Make your spiritual understanding—your understanding of God and self—perfectly clear. ... in our International Society for Krishna Consciousness, our main business is how to make advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We are not enthusiastic about opening big, big factories with big, big money-earning machines. No. We are satisfied with whatever material happiness and distress we are destined. But we are very eager to utilize our energy for progressing in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This is the point. So the Vedic system of civilization is meant for realizing God: viṣṇur ārādhyate. In the Vedic system, people try for that. Actually, the followers of varṇāśrama-dharma—they never tried for economic development.

The mails/ articles can be posted to eightpetalsnewsletter@gmail.com or vrindavanlila.brs@gmail.com

Focus for the next issue -

Postal address:

Civilization

New Govardhan, #89, 9th Cross, Trimurty Colony, Mahindra Hills, Secunderabad, AP (India)

For further details: Contact: +91-9949698297 (Vrindavanlila devi dasi)

Hare Krsna Hare Krsna Krsna Krsna Hare Hare Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare



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