

summary report
the future of power

Chennai • January 2010

A series of exclusive conversations exploring the forthcoming 'shifts in power'
and their impact on leadership in the 21st Century

An initiative of the



BRAHMA KUMARIS
WORLD SPIRITUAL UNIVERSITY



Ripon Building in Chennai, India

Chennai, formerly known as Madras, is the capital city of Tamil Nadu state and is the fourth largest metro city in India. The city is widely spread, over about 180 sq. kms. It is a major trade centre, being well linked by road, rail and air to important cities besides being a sea port. Compared to the other major metros of India, it is far less congested and polluted.

Chennai is a journey into timeless India, a kaleidoscope of moods. Rich in the treasures of history, from temples and shrines to forts and palaces, the landscape of the past lives easily with the present. Retaining much of its traditional charm, this 350 year old city is the gateway to the south, providing many a fascinating vignette of southern heritage.

Chennai city is a large commercial and industrial centre and it is well known for its cultural heritage and temple architecture. Chennai is also known as the automobile capital of India because nearly 40% of the automobile industries have a base there. Chennai is also referred to as the Detroit of South Asia. Chennai has diversified economic support mainly through automobiles, software services, hardware manufacturing and financial services.

participants and feedback



DADI JANKI: Dadi (elder sister) Janki, is the 94-year-old Head of the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University, an international non-governmental organization working at all levels of society for positive change. The principles of her unique model of leadership guide the organisation in more than 8,500 centres in 125 countries worldwide, including a permanent presence at the United Nations. She is a rare spiritual teacher and leader who lives her teaching in effective global action. Dadi is one of the 10 'Keepers of Wisdom', an eminent group of spiritual and religious leaders, convened at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 and at Habitat II, to advise political leaders on the spiritual dilemmas underpinning current worldwide issues.



THIRU. SURJIT SINGH BARNALA: The Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu, he assumed office on 3rd November 2004. He has travelled widely and has represented India at the United Nations and other international organizations. Mountains are of special interest to him. He has travelled extensively through the mountains of India, and also the Alps in Europe, and American and Canadian Mountains. A nature lover, he is fond of painting, reading and writing. He has painted scores of paintings, mainly during various stints served in jail for his principled stands on a variety of issues. His book entitled "Story of an Escape", published first by Penguin and the second edition as "Quest for Freedom - Story of an Escape" by Natraj Publishers; was released by the then President of India Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam. It has been published in Punjabi, Telugu, Tamil, Hindi and Urdu and has been set in braille also.

“ The future of power dialogue has been organized to encourage ideas of love, of a free country, and of a high and spiritual mind. Spirituality is the basis for everything.”

DR S BADRINATH, Chairman Emeritus, Sankara Nethralaya, Chennai has won the Economic Times Award for Corporate Excellence 2006-07. At a time when efficiency is associated only with for-profit firms in a highly competitive market, Sankara Nethralaya's benign presence shows that an organisation can be both charitable and efficient. Its initiatives such as teleophthalmology, targeted at the poor, and the number of free treatments and surgeries it has provided, reflect its success as a charitable institution. Behind these successes stands a 65 year old man - Dr SS Badrinath. His colleagues say he is soft, kind and courteous, but expects high standards and dedication from his co workers.

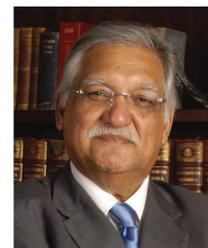


“ Whatever we achieve in life is the result of collective efforts rather than individual. Together, we are holding on because of blessings. Feelings of being powerful and successful are temporary.”



DR. S. KRISHNASWAMY: In 2009, the President of India conferred the Padmashri Award on Dr. S. Krishnaswamy, writer-producer-director of documentary films and TV serials. In 2005, he received the coveted Lifetime Achievement Award conferred by the US International Film & Video Festival, Los Angeles, and became the first Afro-Asian recipient of this honour in 40 years of that festival. After studying Film & Television at Columbia University, New York, he collaborated with Prof Erik Barnouw and wrote the acclaimed "Indian Film" (Columbia University Press 1963 & Oxford University Press 1980). Soon after he founded Krishnaswamy Associates in 1964, he won four National Awards for his short films, and the "Special National Award to commemorate the silver jubilee of Independence, for his experimental film titled "I". In a 45 years he has made over 400 short films.

NIZAR JUMA: The Future of Power project is Nizar's concept and he is the host of this series of dialogues. Nizar is a Nairobi-based industrialist, and is currently the Chairman of over 40 companies involved in hydro power generation, banking, insurance, fibre optics cable systems, industrial development and manufacturing of textiles, leather, packaging, food processing and pharmaceuticals. His 27 year association on a voluntary basis with The Aga Khan Development Network has included seven years as Chairman for The Aga Khan hospitals and Medical Centers throughout East Africa. He was awarded The Silver Star of Kenya for outstanding service to the nation. His 20 year association with the Brahma Kumaris has made them the natural sponsors for The Future of Power project.



MR SWAMINATHAN GURUMURTHY: A Chartered Accountant & Corporate Advisor based in Chennai. He is the convenor of the Swadeshi Jagaran Manch, and a well-known columnist whose articles have found a place on several dailies and periodicals. He is known for his association with RSS and his pro-Hindu views. He is a strong proponent of the traditional Indian economic wisdom that was a part of every home and village model, but has also been associated with some of the biggest corporate deals in India. Besides politics, he enjoys considerable clout in corporate circles. His role in controversy surrounding the Reliance group was portrayed by R. Madhavan as Shyam Saxena in the movie GURU.

“ Power is not what we want it to be. It is coercive and persuasive. We have to recognize it... how do we handle it? Power was generated in India, moved out and has come back. If we see how this civilization has worked, we will know how to use power. In this country, we have learned to live with differences. Power is power – we can make it more benevolent.”

P.S. RAMAN is the Advocate-General, Tamil Nadu. He studied at Vidya Mandir, Chennai and graduated in commerce from the Loyola College, Chennai. He has a law degree from Madras Law College and has been a lawyer for the past 24 years, practising in the Madras High Court and Supreme Court. He is a second-generation lawyer, son of the late V.P. Raman, a former Advocate-General of Tamil Nadu and Additional Solicitor-General of India. Mr. Raman had assisted his seniors in several leading constitutional and civil cases. He was designated a Senior Advocate of the Madras High Court in September 2004. After the new government was formed in the State in 2006, he was appointed Additional Advocate-General.



MR. NARESH GUPTA, I.A.S: Chief Electoral Officer, Tamil Nadu. A true Gandhian in thoughts, words and action, he believes in simple living and high thinking. He has no desire for luxury or pomposity. He goes strictly by the rules. His intake of food is light and there are days during the election when he skips his lunch or/and dinner. He practices Yoga and Dhyana on a daily basis. He acquired his M A in Gandhian thought through correspondence.

DR. ASHOK R. MEHTA: In recognition of his scientific work, he was elected fellow qua surgeon of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow (FRCS) on April 4, 1995. This is in addition to being a Fellow and Member of many international surgical societies. He is currently Head of the Department of Oncology, Dr. Balabhai Nanavati Hospital and Medical Research Centre, Mumbai; Surgical Oncologist, Lilavati Hospital & Research Centre, Mumbai; Medical Director, BSES MG Hospital, Mumbai; and Hon. Medical Director, J. W. M. Global Hospital and Research Centre, Mount Abu. Dr. Mehta was formerly Professor and Head, Department of Surgery and a Surgeon and Chief of Head & Neck Service 'A', Department of Surgery, Tata Memorial Hospital, Mumbai, and Surgical Oncologist at the Jaslok Hospital, Mumbai.



MS. SIVASANKARI: Writer & activist, Chennai. An awareness of social issues; a special sensitivity to social problems; a commitment to set people thinking - these are the unique characteristics of Sivasankari. Her career has been devoted to touching the hearts of the people through in-depth research, and she has carved a niche for herself in the Tamil literary world over the last four decades. Her works include more than 36 novels, 48 short novels, 150 short stories, 15 travelogues, seven collections of articles, 13 collections of short stories, one talking book, three volumes of literary research, two volumes of anthologies, and two biographies - of Smt. Indira Gandhi, the late Prime Minister, and of Sri. G.D. Naidu, a pioneer in many fields.



PROF. MAYIL VAHANAN NATARAJAN: Vice Chancellor, Tamil Nadu Dr M.G.R Medical University, Chennai, is a Padma Shri and also the recipient of the Dr. B.C. Roy National Award from the Medical Council of India and the National Award for the Welfare of Persons with Disabilities in 2005. In his chosen field of specialisation, orthopaedic surgery, he is credited with several innovations that include designing eight types of custom mega prosthesis and 15 prosthetic designs. At the Madras Medical College, he established a bone bank, ortho skills lab and orthopaedic implant bank. The disaster management project, implemented along with various government departments, was also conceived by him.

“ Achievement is power; each achievement in life gives the feeling of being successful and powerful.”

MR. T. S. KRISHNAMURTHY: Former Chief Election Commissioner of India, graduated with distinction in history, economics and political science and holds a Degree in Law. Later, he obtained M.Sc (Fiscal Studies) from the University of Bath (UK). He has worked with the Bank of India, and later joined the Indian Revenue Service, rising to Chief Commissioner of Income Tax, Mumbai. He also worked as General Manager of Hindustan Shipyard. Mr Krishnamurthy has more recently advised and reported on the electoral system in Indonesia and was a member of the Commonwealth observation team for overseeing elections in Zimbabwe and Uganda. He is on the Board of numerous NGOs and companies. His book 'Amazing Democracy' based on his Indian and international experiences, is expected to be released in April 2008.



B. K. BRIJ MOHAN BHAI is one of the Principal Secretaries of Brahma Kumaris and also Secretary of the Rajyoga Education and Research Foundation. He is one of the principal spokesmen of the Brahma Kumaris and the Editor of the "Purity" monthly newspaper, published from New Delhi. B. K. Brij Mohan Bhai completed graduation in commerce in 1953, and law in 1955, from Delhi University and has been a qualified chartered accountant since 1956. He came across the Brahma Kumaris in 1955 and left his job as Finance Manager of the Fertilizer Corporation of India to join the organisation full-time in 1973. He has participated in several international conferences and also represented the Brahma Kumaris at United Nations conferences in New York. He has visited Russia, the USA, Canada, South America, Europe, Australia, New Zealand, Kenya, S.E. Asia and Caribbean countries. He started correspondence courses of Godly knowledge and the Rajyoga Meditation Course in eight different languages. He has also written spiritual books on different subjects and is interested in spreading Values Education and Rajyoga Meditation to the whole of mankind.

“ Power is a spiritual concept not a physical concept. It is related to will power or mind power; we are able to go nearer to our inner power and this will lead us to happiness. What we require is the power to conquer our minds; avarice, selfishness, etc all emanate from the mind. We need to please our mind and make it a garden of love.”

MR. M. B. NIRMAL, Founder, Exnora International, Chennai, is a powerful and motivating speaker. He has addressed meetings of UN bodies, the World Bank, US Government organisations, the Indian Institute of Technology, the Technical Teachers Training Institute, universities, and district conferences of service clubs. He chaired a session of the UN Centre for Human Settlements at Shanghai, China. As a trainer he has received critical acclaim for his one-day training workshops entitled "7th Sense" and "Motivation". He has conducted these training programmes globally since 1990. Mr. Nirmal has written many books in English as well as Tamil to address various problems that society faces today.



MR. KARUMUTTU T. KANNAN: Chairman, VTM Limited & MD, Thiagarajar Mills Limited, Madurai, is connected with a number of organisations related to industry, education and charity. He is Chairman, Board of Trustees, Arulmigu Meenakshi Sundareswarar Thirukoil, Madurai; a Member of the Tamil Nadu State Planning Commission; of the Syndicate, Anna University, Tirunelveli; and of a high-level advisory committee to ensure better administration in temples under the control of the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department, Govt of Tamil Nadu. He is also chairman of the Textiles Committee, Mumbai, and a director of several companies.

DR. V. SHANTA: Chairperson and Director, Cancer Institute (W.I.A), Chennai, was born to an illustrious family and raised in a world of books, ideas, and high achievement. Resisting the conventional path for women, she studied medicine at Madras Medical College and was strongly influenced by Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy, a social reformer and India's first woman medical graduate. In 1954, under Dr. Reddy's leadership, the Women's Indian Association Cancer Relief Fund founded the Cancer Institute (WIA) in Madras, now Chennai. Drawn to Reddy's vision, young Dr. Shanta spurned a more lucrative post to join the Institute. She has never left.



“ In times of great difficulty and betrayal, I maintain the “let it go” attitude and I get the energy of forgiveness and that gives me peace. I have made that my guiding principle of life and I feel so powerful.”



RAJYOGINI BRAHMA KUMARI MOHINIBEN is an outstanding spiritual leader and highly respected teacher who has studied and practised Raja Yoga as taught by the Brahma Kumaris for more than 50 years. She is the President of the Brahma Kumaris Organisation in the USA and a primary representative at the United Nations in New York. She is also actively involved in the administrative matters of the university and serves as an advisor to international projects and in interactions with non-governmental organizations and inter-faith organizations. She has served as an ambassador of the Brahma Kumaris in meeting several heads of state and diplomats. She is also a regional coordinator of the BKs for the Americas and Caribbean. BK Mohiniben is a frequent speaker at national and international conferences and seminars on spiritual issues and has inspired thousands of people, touching their lives and bringing clarity of thought and insight into their outlook.

“What is force and what is power? It is the ability to sway, and can be both negative and positive. Instead of “force”, if we use the word “energy”, then we will focus on it and develop it further and can concentrate on it. It is a positive way of looking at it instead of negative. Energy makes me feel good; power is shared through trust and is a source of empowerment for the self and others. Love is a conquering force comprising positive vibrations which also help by creating an aura of protection.”

SHRI. M. M. RAJENDRAN has wide experience in development administration, having been District Collector of two major districts, and Secretary in the Rural Development and Local Administration Department of the State of Tamil Nadu. He has extensive experience in labour and industrial Relations as a successful Labour Commissioner and member of the Committee on Labour Welfare and National Committee on Child Labour.

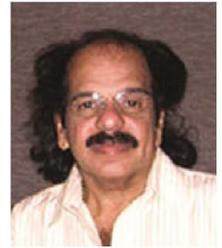


“ I relate more to the word power as strength. Strength keeps us together. Power has ego and corruption so strength is more internal and goes into different areas. ”



MR. G.R.K. REDDY, a first generation entrepreneur, is a post graduate in commerce and an alumni of Kelloggs, USA. Mr. Reddy began his career in 1985 as a merchant banker and gained expertise in advising and structuring financial closures. An astute businessman with far-reaching vision, Mr. Reddy recognized that infrastructure and real estate would drive second generation reforms in India and envisaged that “Space Creation” would play a critical role in driving the Indian economy He is currently the Chairman, Chennai zone. Mr. Reddy is a Charter Member of TIE - ‘The Indus Entrepreneurs’, a global network fostering entrepreneurship.

NATARAJA KRISHNAMOORTHY, better known as Soorya Krishnamoorthy, is the founder-director of the SOORYA Stage and Film Society. The Society, based in Thiruvananthapuram (Trivandrum), promotes Indian arts and culture and is now renowned for organizing the Soorya Festival - the longest and one of the most prestigious cultural events in India - conducted annually and now lasting for more than a hundred days in which the finest and most accomplished artists in Indian classical dances and music participate. Soorya has the professed aim of disseminating Indian culture and achieving “Integration through Culture”. Soorya is a pioneer of the Light and Sound show in Malayalam. He has also ventured into the first mobile Light and Sound Show, and pioneered a new theatrical art form - “THEATRE OF FREEDOM”. He has also written, conceived and directed various stage shows.



“ You cannot look for fruit – it will come on its own. If we work for a cause with our heart, the means will come searching for it.”



MR. JUSTICE SHANMUGHASUNDARAM MOHAN graduated from the Presidency College, Madras, and took a law degree from the University of Madras. He was awarded the Lakshminarasa Reddy Gold Medal. He also took a Master of Law Degree in Constitution and International Law and was a recipient of the Sri Muthuswamy Iyer Scholarship. Enrolled as Advocate in the High Court of Madras in August, 1954, he was appointed as Assistant Government Pleader in 1966, special government pleader in 1967, and government pleader in 1969. He acted as an Advocate General of Madras in 1971.

DR G BAKTHAVATHSALAM: Eminent surgeon, and Managing Trustee of Dharmaveera K Govindaswamy Naidu Medical Trust, which runs the K.G. Hospital in Coimbatore, a centre of healthcare management, medical research and education. He also established the K.G. Eye Hospital, where 85,000 free cataract surgeries have been done for the poor. He has conducted 200 free heart surgeries, 1,500 free dialysis treatments, screened over 300,000 people free of cost for blood pressure, and saved 35,000 accident victims. He recently received the D.Sc. (Honoris Causa) from the MGR Medical University, Tamil Nadu, India. In 2005, he was awarded the Padma Shri (for his work in Medicine) given to him by former President APJ Abdul Kalam.



Chennai • January 2010

Power in all its forms was discussed at the second Brahma Kumaris "Future of Power" dialogue held at the Hotel Park Sheraton in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, on 23 January. Nearly 30 people, all of whom have distinguished themselves through their work and ideas, took part in the dialogue.

Delegates also heard that power comes from understanding, which then enables us to perform good actions. When those actions are fully elevated, the help of the divine also becomes present, bringing further strength that automatically benefits others. In this way, real power grows and a better future is secured.

The essence of the dialogue findings was shared on 24 January at a function hosted by H.E. Sri Surjit Singh Barnala, the Governor of Tamil Nadu, at Raj Bhawan (the Governor's house) in Chennai. About 200 invited guests attended – leaders from all sectors of society, education, media, politics, arts, governance etc. Sri Barnala said the dialogue had been organized to encourage ideas of love, of a free country, and of a high and spiritual mind. "Spirituality is the basis for everything," he said.

Dadi Janki, administrative head of the Brahma Kumaris, who attended both events, said the power of love and truth is present in India, but needs to be made fully practical in order that it can be restored globally.

"Bharat is the land of action, the land of character. Here, there are so many memorials of those who have done such good actions and there is so much praise of their character. Through our actions and our character, we can make spirituality practical now and create our memorials." Dadi Janki