

Future of Power – Chennai, January 2010

Summary report for Rosary

“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.” Mr Gurumurthy, Famous journalist

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.

Examples cited of successful use of power ranged from a little girl’s refusal of chocolates that she loved, because her two-year-old sister had been diagnosed diabetic, to the moral certainty that helped an anti-corruption campaigner survive 72 hours of continuous interrogation by the police.

A strong theme that emerged was the need to stop idolizing “hard” power, which makes things happen in a coercive, physical way, and understand the importance of “soft” power, which works through influence and persuasion. Either can be used for good or ill, but soft power works best when love and trust are present. “You cannot soften your power unless you soften your soul” was how one participant put it.

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.

Nearly 30 VIPs, all of whom have distinguished themselves through their work and ideas, took part in the dialogue. Some of them included:

Mr. Naresh Gupta - Chief Election Commissioner of Tamil Nadu

Sri M.M Rajendran – Former Governor of Orissa

Justice Mohan - Former Justice, Supreme Court of India

Mr. G R K Reddy – Chairman and MD, MARG Limited

Dr. Badrinath – Chairman Emeritus, Shankar Nethralaya

Mr. Krishnaswami – Famous Film Director and Producer; Founder, Krishnaswami Associates

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.

“Power is our ability to do things and be able to influence other people’s thinking. Power springs entirely from people. They can do and undo things. There are those who exercise power on behalf of people. But, in the process, distortion takes place. Ultimately, those entrusted with power exercise it in a way that suits his/her own will. It does not come from physical – it comes from the indomitable will.” Mr Krishnaswamy, Film Director and Producer

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

The first dialogue was held in Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh, last November. A series of similar events/dialogues is to take place across India over the next couple of years.