



ON THE OCCASION OF DASHEHRA

## SETU SAMUDRAM PROJECT REPRESENTS PEOPLE'S FAITH

*B.K.Soin*

A person should possess highest qualities in order to become a divine person of this world. Only then that person is counted amongst the great personalities of the country. Rama is a respectable and divine figure for the supreme qualities he possessed because he obeyed his parents and fulfilled his duties like an ordinary person. On the other hand Ravana and Bali are disrespected because Ravana tried to show his authority on Rama's wife Sita and Bali spread terrorism in the society instead of protecting it and crossed the social boundaries. In our culture such people are called anti-social and those who protect the society from such evil elements are called saviours or fathers.

Shri Rama gave priority to the development of individuals in Aryan culture but the Asian and European societies always considered material development and physical strength to be their ideals. We bow down in front of Shri Rama and goddess Sita. Sita's obedience towards her husband Rama and her sacrificial nature have left a deep impression on the minds of Aryan women. Lakshman's quality of tolerance and Bharat's love towards brother inspire us to inculcate these qualities and represent strong character.

The worship of goddess Aparajita on the Dashera has also originated from mythological period. The goddess Aparajita has been known in different names like Kalika and Chandi and the practice of worshipping her has practically hidden the Nirajana process.

On the pious occasion of Dashera or Vijayadashami we should focus our attention on most controversial topic on this day, i.e., Setu Samudram project. As mentioned earlier, lord Rama is worshipped in Indian culture for his supreme qualities. He fought a great war against injustice and irreligion and protected social fabric and duties. Shri Rama is the center of faith and respect for innumerable number of Hindus living in India and abroad. Here it is necessary to say that it is not correct to play with the sentiments and faith of people.

The controversy on Ram Setu project has been raised at a time when the Archeological Survey of India mentioned in its affidavit that Ramayana and Ramcharita Manas authored by Valmiki and Goswami Tulsidas respectively are important elements of ancient Indian literature but the characters mentioned in these epics do not have any historical authenticity. This affidavit was presented as a defense against the appeals made against the breaking down the Rama Setu or

Adam's bridge for the construction of this project.

This raised hullabaloo in India when questions were raised against the very existence of Shri Rama. It hurt the sentiments of Indians faith and beliefs. On seeing this the Archeological survey of India withdrew its affidavit and expressed its happiness on accepting the existence of Rama and the construction of Rama Setu by Rama. But at the same time it raised objection on the appeals made stating that Rama broke down the bridge and that it was not a man-made but a bridge made by some superman. It is indeed a mockery to say that lord Rama broke down the bridge. It is a direct attack on the beliefs and faith of the people.

At this juncture it is necessary to know about the Rama Setu? A range of lime stone mountains is present on the northwestern part of Sri Lanka in Mannar Islands and southeastern banks of Rameshwaram in western India. 48 km long mountain ranges separates the Mannar gulf and Palk Strait. It is believed that this was accessible till 15<sup>th</sup> century but it got submerged in water due to storms and other climatic changes.

According to Ramayana, Rama's army constructed this bridge and reached Sri Lanka through it. American space agency NASA had taken a picture of this Adam's bridge from space and said that it is not possible to see from space and say whether this bridge was man made or not.

According to Indian underground survey department Adam's bridge is not a natural construction. It believes that it is impossible that nobody can bring the stones to that place. Some stones are so light that they can even float on water.

Under this project, there is a proposal to construct a canal like Swiss canal between Palk Strait and Mannar gulf of India and Sri Lanka. 83 km long canal will be navigable for large ships. A British engineer Alfred Dundaj Tailor made the concept for this project for the first time in 1860. Setu Samudram project committee was set up under the leadership of Dr. A. Ramaswamy Mudilial in 1955. The state government sanctioned it on March 13, 2003 and finally the present ruling government United Progressive Alliance (UPA) began the project on June 2, 2005.

It is believed that after the completion of the project all the big international ships will pass through this canal instead of the present long route through Colombo port. According to one estimate more than 2000 ships would

be using this route every year. The project would earn a business worth 5000 crores in a period of 19 years but the investment would be 2000 crores.

The religious leaders say that the place of canal is the mythological Ram Setu and its existence would end with the construction of this new canal. Besides, drilling and blasting inside sea would cause a threat to the underwater creatures and environment. This area is very prosperous part of the country from the view point of natural underwater resources. There are thousands of varieties of sea plants and underwater life.

The government has told the Supreme Court in its statement issued to calm down the controversy of this project that it is trying to find alternative solutions before implementing this project. The path to be found for the construction of this project is a different question but it is not correct to play with the heritages having historical, religious and environmental importance. There are thousands and millions of devotees of lord Rama who worship him with deep faith. Setu Samudram represents their faith and beliefs. Therefore any such act could hurt their sentiments.

**VEDOPADESH**

# VEDIC APPEAL

**VAISHAKH-7**

Acharya Abhayadev Vidyalankar

## BLESSINGS OF GOD

उत नः सुभगौ अरिर्वोचेयुर्दस्म कृष्टयः ।  
स्यामेदिन्द्रस्य शर्मणि ॥

Rig.. 1/4/6

**Sage:** Madhuchanda || **Lord :** Indra || **Prose:** Gayatri

**Word meaning:** Dasma – evil eliminating Indra; Ari Uta – even enemy; Na Subhagana – tell our good qualities and achievements; U – and; Krishtaya Vocheyu – ordinary people should tell, even then we; Indrasya Ita – of you lord only; sharmani – in happiness; syam – be.

**Appeal** – Oh Lord! You eliminate all types of sins and evils. I should reach a great height with your blessings that even my enemies should praise about my qualities. I should not have any enemy from my side but my opponents who have different mindset and who live in a different atmosphere all together. It would be natural for my opponents that they would always listen something against me and they would develop such attitude towards me. But oh Lord! If my life is completely pious, my behaviour is always true and pure then it would have an impact on even those people who have different thoughts. Oh Lord! Remove all the bad qualities present within me and make me so great that my goodness, superior qualities should impress even those who are far from me (maintain a distance). The ordinary people will definitely call me a good person, they would praise me but even my opponents should recognize my qualities. This is my desire. The fame, which I would get from my true opponents, would be pure fame; it would not be exaggerated at any stage. We get fame from friends and admirers but it is not special and it has no value.

But oh lord! I will not become proud, or forget you with this fame, but on the other hand I will always think of you and be happy with this kind of fame. This fame would be an identity of my unique qualities not the reason for my happiness. My real happiness is present in your shelter. The outside world could speak against me, defame me but I would be happy with the results obtained with your blessings in the same way as with the fame from external world. My happiness or unhappiness will not be affected with external fame or defame. Oh lord! Please bless me that I should be always happy, cheerful and satisfied with the happiness from you. I should never have the desire to get happiness from external fame. Even if I get external fame, I should not have the desire to get happiness from that. I should always looks for happiness from you.