The Last Birthday

Pyare Lal

The Last Birthday is a poignant account by Mahatma Gandhi's Secretary Shri Pyare Lal. The reader cannot but feel moved on learning about what all transpired during the Mahatma's last birthday. On previous years, Mahatma Gandhi's birthday used to be an occasion for joy and rejoicing. But we learn from Pyare Lal Ji's account that Bapu's last birthday turned out to be rather a solemn occasion. The Mahatma's constant refrain before all visitors and well-wishers was that he no longer wanted to live on in an India in flames. To quote Bapu himself, "I do not wish another birthday to overtake me in an India still in flames." Further, "What sin must I have committed that He should have kept me alive to witness all these horrors?" Naturally the visitors who came in joy went away in a sombre mood. As Pyare Lal Ji informs us, "Recorded the Sardar's daughter, Manibehn, mournfully that day in her journal: 'His anguish was unbearable. We had gone to him in elation; we returned home with a heavy heart.'" All in all a sad account of the Mahatma's agony, who was once looking forward to live for 125 years!

A.A.

The second of October, 1947, was Gandhiji’s birthday - the last to be celebrated in his lifetime. Members of his party came in the early morning to offer him their obeisances. "Bapuji," one of them remarked, "on our birthdays, it is we who touch the feet of other people and take their blessings but in your case it is the other way about. Is this fair?"

Gandhiji laughed: "The ways of Mahatmas are different! It is not my fault. You made me Mahatma, a bogus one though; so you must pay the penalty!"

He observed his birthday, as usual, by fasting, prayer and extra spinning. The fast, he explained was for self-purification, and the spinning a token of the renewal of his covenant to dedicate his being to the service of the lowliest and least in God’s creation. He had turned his birthday celebration into celebration of the rebirth of the spinning-wheel. It stood for non-violence. The symbol appeared to have been lost. But he had not stopped the observance hoping that there might be at least a few
scattered individuals true to the message of the wheel. It was for their sake that he allowed the celebration to continue.

A small party of intimate friends was waiting for him when he entered his room after his bath at half past eight. They included Pandit Nehru and the Sardar, G.D. Birla - his host - and all the members of the Birla family in Delhi. Mirabehn had gaily decorated his seat by improvising in front of it an artistic Cross, *He Rama* and the sacred syllable *Om* from flowers of variegated colours. A short prayer was held in which all joined. It was followed by the singing of his favourite hymn, “*When I survey the wond’rous cross*” and another devotional hymn of his choice in Hindi - *He Govinda Rakho Sharan*.

Visitors and friends continued to come all day to offer homage to the Father of the Nation. So also came the members of the Diplomatic Corps, some of them with greetings from their respective Governments. Lastly Lady Mountbatten arrived with a sheaf of letters and telegrams addressed to him.

His request to all was to pray that “either the present conflagration should end or He should take me away. I do not wish another birthday to overtake me in an India still in flames.”

The occasion burnt itself on the memories of the visitors as one of the saddest in Gandhiji’s life. “What sin must I have committed,” he remarked to the Sardar, “that He should have kept me alive to witness all these horrors?”

He seemed to be consumed by the feeling of helplessness in the face of the surrounding conflagration. Recorded the Sardar’s daughter, Manibehn, mournfully that day in her journal: “His anguish was unbearable. We had gone to him in elation; we returned home with a heavy heart.”

After the visitors had left, he had another spasm of coughing. “I would prefer to quit this frame unless the all-healing efficacy of His name fills me,” he murmured. “The desire to live for 125 years has completely vanished as a result of this continued fratricide. I do not want to be a helpless witness of it.”

“So from 125 years you have come down to zero,” someone put in.

“Yes, unless the conflagration ceases.”
Many had come to congratulate him, he remarked at the evening prayer. He had also received scores of telegrams both from home and abroad. Flowers had been sent to him by refugees and he had received many tributes and good wishes. There, however, was nothing but agony in his heart. His was a lone voice. The cry everywhere was that they would not allow the Muslims to stay in the Indian Union. He was, therefore, utterly unable, he said, to accept any of their congratulations. Where did the congratulations come in? “Would it not be more appropriate to offer condolences?” He could not live while hatred and killing choked the atmosphere. He pleaded with the people to give up the madness that had seized them and purge their hearts of hatred.


Eliminating Cancer. The Alternative Way*

After years of telling people Chemotherapy is the only way to try and eliminate Cancer, John Hopkins is finally starting to tell you there is an alternative way.

**Cancer Update from Johns Hopkins:**

1. Every person has cancer cells in the body. These cancer cells do not show up in the standard tests until they have multiplied to a few billion. When doctors tell cancer patients that there are no more cancer cells in their bodies after treatment, it just means the tests are unable to detect the cancer cells because they have not reached the detectable size.

2. Cancer cells occur between 6 to more than 10 times in a person’s lifetime.

3. When the person’s immune system is strong the cancer cells will be destroyed and prevented from multiplying and forming tumors.

4. When a person has cancer it indicates the person has multiple nutritional deficiencies.... These could be due to genetic, environmental, food and lifestyle factors.
5. To overcome the multiple nutritional deficiencies, changing diet and including supplements will strengthen the immune system.

6. Chemotherapy involves poisoning the rapidly-growing cancer cells and also destroys rapidly-growing healthy cells in the bone marrow, gastro-intestinal tract, etc., and can cause organ damage, like liver, kidneys, heart, lungs, etc.

7. Radiation while destroying cancer cells also burns, scars and damages healthy cells, tissues and organs.

8. Initial treatment with chemotherapy and radiation will often reduce tumor size... However, prolonged use of chemotherapy and radiation do not result in more tumor destruction.

9. When the body has too much toxic burden from Chemotherapy and radiation, the immune system is either compromised or destroyed, hence the person can succumb to various kinds of infections and complications.

10. Chemotherapy and radiation can cause cancer cells to mutate and become resistant and difficult to destroy. Surgery can also cause cancer cells to spread to other sites.

11. An effective way to battle cancer is to starve the cancer cells by not feeding it with the foods it needs to multiply.

**What Cancer Cells Feed On:**

a. Sugar is a cancer-feeder. By cutting off sugar it cuts off one important food supply to the cancer cells. Sugar substitutes like NutraSweet, Equal, Spoonful, etc., are made with Aspartame and it is harmful. A better natural substitute would be Manuka honey or molasses. But only in very small amounts. Table salt has a chemical added to make it white in colour. Better alternative is Bragg’s aminos or sea salt.

b. Milk causes the body to produce mucus, especially in the gastro-intestinal tract. Cancer feeds on mucus. By cutting off milk and substituting with unsweetened soy milk, cancer cells are being starved.

c. Cancer cells thrive in an acid environment. A meat-based diet is acidic and it is best to eat fish, and a little chicken rather than other forms of meat. Meat also contains livestock antibiotics, growth hormones and parasites, which are all harmful, especially to people with Cancer.

d. A diet made of 80 per cent fresh vegetables and juice, whole grains, seeds, nuts and a little fruits help put the body into an alkaline environment. About 20 per cent can be from cooked food including beans. Fresh vegetable juices
provide live enzymes that are easily absorbed and reach down to cellular levels within 15 minutes to nourish and enhance growth of healthy cells. To obtain live enzymes for building healthy cells, try and drink fresh vegetable juice (most vegetables including bean sprouts) and eat some raw vegetables 2 or 3 times a day. Enzymes are destroyed at temperatures of 104 degrees F (40 degrees C).

e. Avoid coffee, tea, and chocolate, which have high caffeine. Green tea is a better alternative and has cancer-fighting properties.

Water -- best to drink purified water, or filtered, to avoid known toxins and heavy metals in tap water. Distilled water is acidic, avoid it.

12. Meat protein is difficult to digest and requires a lot of digestive enzymes. Undigested meat remaining in the intestines become putrified and leads to more toxic buildup.

13. Cancer cell walls have a tough protein covering. By refraining from or eating less meat it frees more enzymes to attack the protein walls of cancer cells and allows the body’s killer cells to destroy the cancer cells.

14. Some supplements build up the immune system (IP6, Flor-ssence, Essiac, anti-oxidants, vitamins, minerals, EFAs, etc.) to enable the body’s own killer cells to destroy cancer cells. Other supplements like vitamin E are known to cause apoptosis, or programmed cell death, the body’s normal method of disposing of damaged, unwanted, or unneeded cells.

15. Cancer is a disease of the mind, body, and spirit. A proactive and positive spirit will help the cancer warrior be a survivor. Anger, unforgiveness and bitterness put the body into a stressful and acidic environment. Learn to have a loving and forgiving spirit. Learn to relax and enjoy life.

16. Cancer cells cannot thrive in an oxygenated environment. Exercising daily, and deep breathing help to get more oxygen down to the cellular level. Oxygen therapy is another means employed to destroy cancer cells.

*Received by e-mail from “Samiksha Acharya” samiksha85@gmail.com on Friday, 17 April, 2009.