

Eastern African Residential Retreat .

Speke Resort, Munyonyo, Uganda

2nd April – 5th April

The Retreat began with blessing from Bapdada, Vedantiben and Nizarbhai to mark the welcome of BK's from 12 countries –Australia, Burundi, Equatorial Guinea, Gambia, Kenya, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe-at the Marina Restaurant of the luxurious Speke Resort, Munyonyo, Uganda. Majority of the participants had travelled by road from Nairobi for almost 14 hours. Two young angels welcomed all with a beautiful dance.

The venue was positioned centrally with a view of Lake Victoria. Its accommodation was made up of deluxe hotel type rooms. Housing around 68 BK's, the resort gave their Marina restaurant kitchen and dinning facility to use for cooking all meals and sessions. A beautiful area outside the restaurant had been set up with round tables facing the lake for meals. Although it was the long rains season nothing stopped the brahmins from attending sessions including walking in a heavy down pour from the rooms to the hall at amritvela.

The first session comprised of a panel discussion held on the theme 'Making Intense effort'. Five experienced BK's were interviewed on

- 1) Baba has emphasized on the word 'Always'. Why children are not always content? What plan have you put to be always content and cheerful?
- 2) Baba has given clear directions in the Avyakt murlis of 2010 that children should be Free from Anger. What plan have you put to be free from anger?
- 3) Children are too action conscious and forget Baba. How you would combine action with Yoga?

The conclusion drawn from it was - to make effort it is important to draw a chart for the self, pay attention to amritvela and Murli and the measure of its success is the level of happiness one feels.

Special drills for each amritvela were selected from the season's murli. Many shared that this helped them to bring the focus and attention especially during the day.

All Brahma bhojans and snacks were held facing the lake in a bistro style table layout. Cooking done with love and remembrance, the sisters and mothers presented their best of African and Indian dishes, not to mention the Continental breakfasts which provided fresh passion fruit and pineapple juices.

Following was a workshop on avyakt murlis of the season. The discussions were on 5 topics Anger why it comes, causes, experiences and methods of overcoming it; Waste Thoughts – main causes and how to stop them in a second; Holding Court – How to hold court everyday and keep the mind, intellect and sanskars in order; Contentment – What does it mean and how does one remain content; Faith – What it means to have faith in the self, Baba, Drama and family. All enjoyed the in depth discussions.

Reflection and meditation on healing the self and letting go of sorrows using the power of silence was another session. Find where I hold anger or hurt, putting it cleanly and plainly in front of God in a letter. The session ended with a Yoga Bhatti with a unified consciousness I am a light angel. I am healed, whole and complete.

This was followed by a cultural programme by a group of young children from Sizzlers Club who are in contact with the centre. BK's also showed their talents through dances and songs, sharing experiences and a vote of thanks to all and garbas followed by dinner.

The final day was the cherry on the cake, as a candle lit amritvela seated the whole group in a round circle with guided commentary on 'being a bestower', in the background. Feedback from majority was that they felt Baba's presence.

Sharing deep self efforts in small groups divided according to the age in gyan was meant to be the final session of the retreat. There were 4 groups bhakti to gyan, easy effort making group, principle and maryadas group and intense effort making group.

On the return trip to Nairobi the group went to Jinja to see the Bujagali Falls. Since it was raining heavily the bus got stuck for almost 3 hours in the sticky mud. The Bk's had an adventure helping the bus to coming out and eventually ended up pushing the bus and staying overnight in Jinja. This was a good chance to serve the contact souls in Jinja as well.

The aim of this retreat was intense self effort and tapasya which is what drama made everyone experience. Om Shanti.