



A Double Festival at the Brahma Kumaris Centre (St. Petersburg, Russia)

A public event that took place on 14 August was dedicated to the Independence Day of India as well as the ancient festival of Raksha Bandhan. The programme was attended by Mr. Chander P. Gandhi, acting Consul General of India in St. Petersburg, and his spouse. About 150 residents and guests of St. Petersburg who took part in the event had at least two things in common. All of them love India, and all of them feel that the best way of making our world a better place to live is the path of moral and spiritual transformation.



A video presentation that was offered to the audience threw light on the great achievements of the Indian civilization that constitute its legacy for the entire humanity. Beautiful songs glorifying Mother Bharat and the importance of purity in life filled the atmosphere with serenity, spiritual light and might.



After walking the guests through the traditional ways of celebrating Raksha Bandhan in India, Didi Santosh disclosed the subtle, spiritual significance behind the physical rituals and traditions. “On the day of Rakhi a sister ties a sacred colourful thread on the wrist of her brother expressing her love for him and expecting in return that her brother should protect her in the future. But if I stay here, in Russia, and my brothers with whom I have blood relations are now in India, then how can they possibly protect me? However, if I become soul conscious, that is if I remember that I am basically an eternal spiritual being and a child of

the Supreme Father, then I become aware of the Unlimited Brotherhood. All souls in the world are my brothers because they are the children of my Father! Since they are my brothers, my attitude towards them shall be that of acceptance, love and care. And it is this inner purity of feelings that is going to keep me safe under any circumstances. Without purity of thoughts, words and actions I cannot even dream of being ever-protected.”

The beautiful scene that followed was indeed worth seeing! Everyone would come in front in deep silence and have their Rakhi tied, promising to throw their negative traits or habits into the Ocean of the Father's love. Tilaks of sandalwood were applied and the mouths of all the participants were sweetened with traditional Russian doughnuts which are so large that when you open your mouth to eat them, it seems that you are smiling broadly. And otherwise also, everyone was smiling because bathing in the atmosphere of purity is something that makes our mood constantly elevated!

