## HH Bhakti Prema Swami Maharaj’s preaching visit to Sikar and Gurgoan

### Departing from Ujjain

On the evening of 27th May 2016, after Maharaj completed class on Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita, devotees gathered around him to bid him farewell for his preaching tour for next 5 weeks out of Ujjain. One by one many congregation members, brahmacaries and students met Maharaj. Devotees escorted Maharaj till the temple parking area and finally thanking all of them, Maharaj left for the railway station.

While in car Maharaj expressed himself that how he will miss devotees at Ujjain. When he realized that we left 15 minutes early from the temple for station, he told that we could have stayed with devotees more at temple. But then he told that it is better that they got free earlier and can take rest. Maharaj mentioned **how big our family has become now**. If we would be a simple common man then we would have a family of few members but now being in ISKCON, our family has become so big. While waiting for train Maharaj saw many parrots on the station and he **immediately connected it to Krishna** as Krishna loves two birds most i.e. peacocks and parrots.

When the train arrived and we entered the first class compartment, Maharaj immediately said, “With Guru Maharaj, I came many times to first class but for myself this is my first time.” We could see how he connects to Guru and Krishna in each situation. In night, a devotee from Vrindavan sat with Maharaj discussing about his realizations and although Maharaj was very tired, he kept on listening till late night.

### In Jaipur

In morning we arrived in Jaipur before time and then with HG Mukunda Murari Prabhu and HG Deva Krishna Prabhu, we left for Mukunda Murari Prabhu’s house.

When we arrived there, the family members welcomed Maharaj with flower carpet and garlands. When they came with paraphernalia to wash Maharaj’s feet, Maharaj immediately said that this paraphernalia was used to wash Guru Maharaj’s feet and **let it be for Guru Maharaj only**.

After doing guru puja, Maharaj gave amazing class on Sambandha, Abhideya and Prayojana. Maharaj described the three deities – Sri Sri Radha Madanmohan, Sri Sri Radha Govinda Deva, Sri Sri Radha Gopinatha. Maharaj also said that Srila Rupa Goswami established this elaborate worship of Sri Sri Radha Govinda Deva but no one knows him in Jaipur. So, it is **our responsibility as ISKCON devotees** in Jaipur to broadcast the glories of Srila Rupa Goswami. By the time devotees went to ask for washing his clothes, they found that Maharaj himself soaked the clothes in water for washing.

When we visited Sri Sri Radha Govinda Deva temple, Maharaj prayed for long time to the deities. After that he was mentioning how Lord is so merciful on these people and that it why so many people in Jaipur regularly visit the temple of Radha Govinda Deva. While returning we saw a man carrying his dog on his bike. Maharaj immediately connected it to the song of Bhaktivinoda Thakur – sarvasva tomar carane sampiya… In this song, Bhaktivinoda Thankur compares himself with the **dog of the Lord**. Maharaj sang the song and explained then meaning for the rest of the travelling till we reached to a special sculptor shop, the one who carved the deities for Ujjain temple.

Maharaj entered his shop and when he saw hundreds of deities, he offered his obeisances and had very nice talks with the owner. He thanked him for his service to Lord Sri Sri Radha Madanmohan, Sri Sri Krishna Balaram, Sri Sri Gaura Nitai, and Sri Sandipani Muni.

### Sikar

The same afternoon we reached Sikar. Here, many families have seriously taken up Krishna Consciousness. HG Yugal Prema Prabhu from Surat and his brother HG Lalit Govinda Prabhu from Sikar are developing preaching very effectively in Sikar.

Wherever Maharaj went, he always introduced the devotees travelling with him and made sure that they got proper accommodation. It was assumed that they will serve Maharaj, but soon they realized that **actually Maharaj was taking care of them** in all respects. Maharaj never took Prasad alone and preferred to honour prasad with all the devotees. When one afternoon, one devotee entered Maharaj’s room to take something, he found that instead of using the comfortable beg, which was arranged for him, Maharaj was sleeping on floor with a simple gamcha on his body.

Whenever Guru Maharaj called him for something, he always mentioned what all he did and where he is planning to come in next few days. Also he told local devotees how Guru Maharaj was happy with their practice. In this way he **pleases both Guru Maharaj and the local devotees.**

Maharaj brought separate Prasad packets from Ujjain for each host and whenever he moved from one place to another he gifted them that Prasad.

Maharaj was very **cautious in what to accept in prasadam**. At one home he found a man working in kitchen who was not devotee and he immediately asked the host for the reason. Another place when bundi raita was served, he asked quietly whether the bundi was made at home or was brought from outside. Maharaj only accepted Prasad made by devotees at home and when he found that it was not, he avoided to eat there. Like at once place he simply took chida dahi.

Every day Maharaj used to take two main programs in morning and evening. Both programs started and ended with ecstatic Kirtan and sandwiched between was Maharaj’s enlightening class. People loved Maharaj and asked many questions after class. The examples Maharaj used were so relevant and people could really relate with the philosophy.

When one devotee asked about the material attachments, Maharaj said that we should know the difference between potatoes and gold. **Can we sacrifice a kilo of gold for carrying a kilo of potatoes? So, how can we sacrifice our service to Krishna for anything material?**

Maharaj was later mentioning that there is great scope of preaching in Sikar. However, as a sannyasi his work is to simply inspire people and then ground work has to be done locally by someone. Maharaj said that same he is doing for youth preaching.

In between the morning and evening programs, there were series of house visits which Maharaj made and took class and Kirtan at each place. At one point, while Maharaj was taking break for 5 minutes between two consecutive programs, one devotee asked Maharaj that the schedule was very hectic. Maharaj agreed it was but he said that is his duty and thus there was no problem. Maharaj said that although he has nothing new to say, he has to present things in a way people get happy in Krishna Consciousness.

When at one place he was served ice-cream, he immediately remembered how once he asked Guru Maharaj whether we can take ice-cream or not. Guru Maharaj just said “What is the problem in taking ice-cream?” and from then on Maharaj started to accept it.

While going in car of a devotee, there was Guru Maharaj’s Kirtan going on the music player and Maharaj mentioned that how in the initial days Guru Maharaj used to sing only this tune in Kirtan. One time when Maharaj himself was singing this tune for a long time in Kolkata temple, one man stood there for the whole Kirtan. After the Kirtan then man approached Maharaj and asked, “Are you disciple of Bhakti Charu Maharaj?”

At one house program, when Maharaj was inspiring house members to chant, the daughter-in-law was very adamant and was not ready to accept. Maharaj told her, “You know when you don’t call your mother-in-law as ‘Maa’ how much she suffers. You may do everything for your mother-in-law but if you don’t call her ‘Maa’ and talk to her favourably, she terribly suffers inside. You can’t realize that pain until you are in that situation. Similarly, **Krishna is our father and mother. When we don’t call his names, you can never imagine how much painful it is for Krishna.**”

When Maharaj found one of the devotees in congregation was passed from NIT Durgapur, was initiated disciple of HH Jayapataka Swami Maharaj, he immediately called him personally and inspired him to start youth preaching there. Maharaj told him that before he joins temple as full time devotee, he should make sure that there are some youth preaching centres in Sikar.

As the stay at Sikar came to end, Maharaj told the devotees travelling with him, “I am very sorry that I couldn’t give you chance to speak. It would have been better if people would have got chance to hear from multiple devotees.”

Maharaj told that his coming to Sikar was nice and he is planning to visit regularly. Maharaj said that not that people will be inspired by just your lectures but when you visit them regularly then they can develop relationship with you. Maharaj also inspired devotees from Jaipur HG Mukunda Murari Prabhu and HG Deva Krishna Prabhu to give time in Sikar and especially to the children and youth. Maharaj concluded, “**Bhakti means relationships.**”

There were 3 devotees who also wanted to go with Maharaj to Delhi. Maharaj already had his flight ticket but when he heard that these devotees are going by train, he said that he will also go by train. For catching that train he had to travel at 10 PM from Sikar, reached Jaipur at 12.30 AM midnight and then early morning had to travel half an hour to station. Moreover he couldn’t take proper breakfast that day and train reached Gurgaon 40 minutes late. All this he accepted just so that he can be with the devotees travelling with him and not going separately by flight.

When someone asked Maharaj that he feels inspired by hearing some kirtans while not so much inspired by others, Maharaj answered it as, “**Never judge the quality of sugar when you are jaundiced.** When we don’t have taste for holy name, how can we judge anyone?”

### Delhi

After reaching Gurgaon, we went to procure Maharaj’s passport from Switzerland embassy. Somehow the things delayed till evening, Maharaj was going to different places, meeting various officials and also didn’t take lunch. These are the times we can get glimpse of what all austerities a preacher has to undergo for preaching Krishna Consciousness far and wide.

We reached by late evening to Delhi temple, Sri Sri Radha Parthasarthi. There a group of devotees welcomed Maharaj. Next day when Maharaj was asked to lead mangal arti, he preferred to sing Narsinga arti rather. HH Gopal Krishna Goswami Maharaj was also present. While Maharaj was leading Guru puja, HH GKGM came and Maharaj offered him obeisances while HH GKGM embraced him. Then Maharaj gave mike to some other devotee and went to meet HH GKGM. After that Maharaj gave SB class. Everyone was so happy. Maharaj appreciated Delhi devotees for their dedication in preaching and book distribution. Maharaj told how devotional service is so simple and we need not to do austerities like Prithu Maharaj. While Maharaj was leaving, a senior local devotee told Maharaj that “Just as Chaitanya Mahaprabhu felt for Sanatana Goswami, whenever I see you, my heart breaks by your true humility.” Maharaj met the senior devotees in Delhi and then left for Gurgaon.

### Gurgaon

At house of HG Shyam Bihari Prabhu, family offered Maharaj a hearty welcome. After some time, Maharaj called for all devotees and sang the song ‘ei baro karuna karo.’ After that he was meeting some students and was sharing the song “atmanivedana tuwa pade kori” Maharaj was so absorbed with closed eyes, singing each line and explaining the meaning. Then in evening we left for another place for the evening program.

While in car, Maharaj was telling his experiences of reading Srila Prabhupada books. Maharaj told that we should **actually relish scriptures and not just read page by page**.

In evening program Maharaj explained the song, “Durlabha Manava Janma labhiya samsare” and lead most amazing Kirtan. Maharaj emphasized how the first qualification to accept Krishna Consciousness is to get frustrated with the materialistic way of life.

When he saw the devotees came with him are staying at different place from his, he called them and told, “I am just sleeping there. We will be together in the morning. Is it ok?”

Next day Maharaj gave class on “Gopinath gucao samsara jwala” at ISKCON Gurgaon temple and also observed total fasting from food and water for Ekadasi. In afternoon Maharaj gave a personal class to a small group of devotees, where he urged them to be sincere. (Notes attached separately for this class). After the class one devotee told Maharaj that after hearing him they can’t help but fall in love with him.

In evening Maharaj gave the final program at Gurgaon on Srila Prabhupada’s song “Vrindavane Bhajan.” Most of the devotees didn’t know about these songs by Srila Prabhupada and they requested Maharaj to continue the class till late evening. Maharaj ended the program by singing a part of song and Hare Krishna Kirtan. Maharaj requested devotees to help in preaching in Gurgaon and to keep the temple in the centre for their spiritual activities. He mentioned it several times at different places that **we should all preach in a way that in our own lifetime we can see whole world Krishna Conscious.**

Whenever devotees would leave and come to meet him, Maharaj himself used to offer them dandavat pranams and arranged for their Prasad and travelling aids.

With his genuine humility, deep devotion to Lord and natural affection for devotees, he conquers the heart of everyone, yet he leaves a strong impression in their hearts to be more sincere and dedicated to serve Srila Prabhupada and his mission.