

Chapter 25

Departure from East Africa

On 16 October 1955, a grand feast was organized for all the devotees of East Africa. A.B. Patel, Dr. Yagnik, and many others were present on this occasion. Swamishri and Mota Swami declared a large donation for the library of the Royal Technical College that was taking shape in Nairobi. This donation was offered to Dr. Yagnik.

In today's farewell *sabha*, Swamishri addressed the assembly, "We wish to tell everyone that all of you should assist in the mandir and satsang activities. Second, I wish to tell you that I have no selfish motive. Follow *niyams*. Maintain unity within Satsang. Do not perceive distinctions amongst devotees. Do not make cliques. Do not be derelict in your duty. Such is my blessing.

"We have established fifty-one *yuvak mandals* to which we will now write letters that

you should distribute everywhere. If the *yuvak mandals* expand there will be a spiritual awakening. We should value the *yuvak mandals*, interact with them, and engage with them. The *jiva* has no zeal for liberation. When this zeal is kindled, then Satsang will grow. Maintain solidarity. Come together and deliver and listen to discourses.”

Now, there were only two days left. Thus all the devotees became emotional at Swamishri’s impending departure.

At 12 noon on 18 October 1955, an assembly was arranged in which Ishwarbhai Daji was honored with a medal. All the devotees offered flower garlands to Swamishri and the sadhus. At 12:30 p.m., Swamishri set out for the airport. The devotees filled three large buses as well as countless cars to come to the airport to see Swamishri off. East African Airways had arranged for Swamishri’s seating according to the rules for sadhus.

At the airport, the atmosphere was filled with the sorrow of separation, and tears flowed

from the eyes of Mota Swami, Ishwarbhai Daji, and the sadhus and devotees. With everyone enveloped in a cloud of grief, Swamishri said, “When the mandirs are completed in Kampala and Tororo, we will certainly return. We will come back to do the *murti-pratishtha*.”

Swamishri gave everyone darshan for ninety minutes. Everyone had become as still as wax figures. Once Swamishri boarded the plane and it took off, everyone turned away with the understanding that although we will no longer have Swamishri’s physical presence, in his divine form, he is forever within us. Soon, Swamishri and the sadhus arrived in Aden.