



PreSense Speaks
on
Swami Vivekananda



Prime Point Srinivasan
Prime Point Foundation



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Introduction

Dedication



*To **Lord Sri Krishna**, the Almighty, my eternal guide and strength. Like the flute that sings only through His touch, this book flows through His divine will. May it serve as an offering at His Feet and illuminate minds with wisdom and purpose.*

🙏 **Jai Shri Krishna!** 🙏

Foreword From Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam For The PreSense100

Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam
Former President of India



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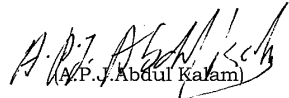
FOREWORD

I am very happy to know that the PreSense monthly ezine published by Prime Point Foundation is bringing out a book based on some of the unique articles, interviews and events published in its editions so far since from March 2006. The 100 issues of the publication have gone through an eventful journey, focusing on knowledge capture and important knowledge dissemination. I recollect my direct association with PreSense in July 2008, when I launched the cartoon character, 'Prince', created exclusively for PreSense.

I see PreSense continuing in its journey under the mentorship of Prime Point Srinivasan, maintaining its status as a must-read ezine, in the fast moving and evolving world of communication, knowledge and connectivity.

I congratulate the Editorial Team of PreSense for bringing out the 100th Edition as a Collector's Digest.

28th May 2015


(A.P.J. Abdul Kalam)

Author's Profile



K. Srinivasan, popularly known as Prime Point Srinivasan, after serving the banking industry for more than 25 years, took voluntary retirement in 1998 to start his own public relations and communication consultancy.

He also founded Prime Point Foundation in 1999 for promoting communication awareness. On the suggestion of Dr Abdul Kalam, he started an eMagazine PreSense in 2006 for positive journalism and also Sansad Ratna Awards in 2010 to honour the outstanding Parliamentarians.

He founded other flagship initiatives like Digital Journalists Association of India (DiJAI) and Next Gen Political Leaders (NGPL).

He is considered as one of the communication and perception management experts. He introduced the concept of Image Audit to study the hidden perception of stakeholders. He has authored several books and received several awards for his digital journalism.

Srinivasan can be reached at prpoint@gmail.com

Prime Point Foundation: 25 Years of Empowering India's Youth



**PRIME POINT
Foundation**

Since 1999, Prime Point Foundation has been helping young Indians become better leaders and communicators.

Founded by Shri K Srinivasan, a former banker turned digital journalist, this non-profit organisation has grown into one of India's most respected youth development platforms.

What We Do

The Foundation runs five key programmes that make a real difference:

eMagazine PreSense - Started in 2006 following Dr APJ Abdul Kalam's suggestion, this digital magazine promotes positive journalism. With 227 editions published till January 2026 and recognition from the India Book of Records, it includes the popular cartoon character Prince, which Dr Kalam himself launched in 2008.

Sansad Ratna Awards - Since 2010, these prestigious awards honour India's best-performing MPs and Parliamentary Committees. Dr Kalam inaugurated the first ceremony, and over 15 years, 143 Awards have been presented. The India Book of Records acknowledges this as the largest parliamentary award programme run by civil society.

Next Gen Political Leaders - This programme trains young people who want to enter politics, connecting them with experienced Ministers and MPs through workshops and mentoring sessions.

Education Loan Task Force - Helping students and families understand education loans since 2010. The team has answered over 30,000 questions and helped resolve 5,000 serious complaints with banks.

Digital Journalists Association of India - Training journalists to adapt to the digital age, including AI through workshops and seminars with industry experts.

All programmes are run by passionate volunteers and focus entirely on helping young people succeed. Prime Point Foundation proves that dedicated efforts can create lasting changes in Indian democracy and society.

Author's Note

The year 2013 marked a monumental milestone in our nation's spiritual and cultural history—the 150th Birth Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda. For many of us, Swamiji is not merely a figure from the past, but a living force, a "cyclonic Hindu" whose voice continues to echo through the corridors of time, urging the youth of India to "arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached." It was during those year-long celebrations that I felt a profound inner calling to share some of the lesser-known, yet deeply transformative, episodes of his life through the pages of *PreSense*.

This compilation is the humble fruit of that endeavour. As you journey through these pages, you will discover that Swamiji's influence extended far beyond the realm of traditional spirituality. He was a visionary who understood that for India to regain her rightful place in the world, she must marry ancient wisdom with modern scientific progress. You will read of his providential meeting with Jamshedji Tata on a ship to America—a conversation that sowed the seeds for the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. You will witness the moment his words touched the heart of John D. Rockefeller, sparking a legacy of global philanthropy.

Every article in this collection serves as a window into the character of a man who was as compassionate as he was courageous. Whether he was swimming across the shark-infested waters of Kanyakumari to meditate on his mission or teaching young boys the power of unwavering concentration, Swamiji's life was a masterclass in

purposeful living. His story is inextricably linked with the selfless support of the King of Ramnad and the dedicated students of Madras, reminding us that great movements are often built on the foundations of shared sacrifice and collective will.

Writing these articles was, for me, a process of personal discovery and deep spiritual alignment. Swamiji's teachings on facing one's fears, putting one's whole mind into every task, and the transformative power of a saint's touch are more relevant today than ever before. In an era of rapid digital change and shifting values, his message remains a steady anchor.

I offer this book as a tribute to the "Patriot Saint of India." It is my hope that these stories will do more than just inform; I hope they ignite a spark within you. May they inspire you to face your challenges with the majesty of a lion and serve your fellow beings with a heart full of love.

As you turn these pages, I invite you to walk the road that Swamiji paved—a road of wisdom, strength, and tireless service to humanity.

Articles on Swami Vivekananda

Indian Institute of Science is the Vision of Swami Vivekananda, Executed by Jamshedji Tata

India is celebrating the 150th year of Swami Vivekananda, who is a great source of inspiration to Indian youth. From this issue for another 12 months, PreSense will bring interesting episodes from the life of Swami Vivekananda to inspire the readers. Many Indians may not know that Swami Vivekananda was not only a great spiritual leader, but also had a strong vision for promoting science. In 1893, when Jamshedji Tata and Swamiji were travelling together



in a ship from Japan to USA, Tata told Swamiji that he was going to US to bring the steel industry to British India. Swamiji blessed Tata for his venture and suggested that steel industry had two components viz. (1) science of steel and (2) manufacturing of steel. Besides bringing the manufacturing technology, Swamiji suggested to Tata to develop the 'science of steel' in India itself. Visionary Tata took Swamiji's advice very seriously. From that day, Tata started visualising both steel industry and a world-class Science Research Institute in India. On 23rd November 1898, Tata wrote personally to Swamiji (picture below), recalling his conversation in the ship and requested him to be the captain of the new Science Institute and guide the initiative. Since Swamiji was busy in starting Ramakrishna

Mutt, he could not accept this invitation. Swamiji passed away in 1902.

Dear Swami Vivekananda,

I trust, you remember me as a fellow-traveller on your voyage from Japan to Chicago. I very much recall at this moment your views on the growth of the ascetic spirit in India, and the duty, not of destroying, but of diverting it into useful channels.

I recall these ideas in connection with my scheme of *Research Institute of Science* for India, of which you have doubtless heard or read. It seems to me that no better use can be made of the ascetic spirit than the establishment of monasteries or residential halls for men dominated by this spirit, where they should live with ordinary decency, and devote their lives to the cultivation of sciences - natural and humanistic. I am of the opinion that, if such a crusade in favour of an asceticism of this kind were undertaken by a competent leader, it would greatly help asceticism, science, and the good name of our common country; and I know not who would make a more fitting general of such a campaign than Vivekananda. Do you think you would care to apply yourself to the mission of galvanizing into life our traditions in this respect? Perhaps, you had better begin with a fiery pamphlet rousing our people in this matter. I should cheerfully defray all the expenses of publication.

With kind regards,

23rd November, 1898
Esplanade House, Bombay

I am, dear Swami,
Yours faithfully,
Jamshedji Tata
JAMSHETJI N. TATA

However, Tata continued the mission of establishing a Science Institute at Bangalore by offering a part of his property. Jamshedji Tata also passed away in 1904. His successors took the initiative further forward and launched the Indian Institute of Science known as Tata Institute at Bangalore in 1909. Tata Institute continues as a world class Science Research Institute, symbolising the vision of two great sons of India, Swami Vivekanada and Jamshedji Tata.

(Published in Jan 2013 edition of PreSense)

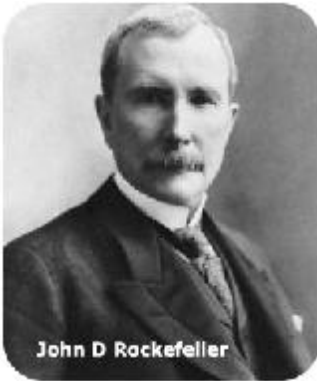
How did Swamiji inspire John D Rockefeller to give his first donation for a public cause?

The Rockefeller Foundation is celebrating its centennial this



year. Many people may not know that Swami Vivekananda triggered Rockefeller to give the first ever donation for public cause. Please read the fascinating story as recounted by Madame Emma Calvé (French lady) to Madame Drinette Verdier. Mr. X, in whose home Swamiji was staying in Chicago, was a partner or an associate in some business with John D. Rockefeller. Many times John

D. heard his friends talking about this extraordinary and wonderful Hindu monk who was staying with them, and many times he had been invited to meet Swamiji but, for one reason or another, always refused. At that time Rockefeller was not yet at the peak of his fortune, but was already powerful and strongwilled, very difficult to handle and a hard man to advise. But one day, although he did not want to meet Swamiji, he was pushed to it by an impulse and went directly to the house of his friends, brushing aside



the butler who opened the door and saying that he wanted to see the Hindu monk. The butler ushered him into the living room, and, not waiting to be announced, Rockefeller entered into Swamiji's adjoining study and was much surprised, I presume, to see Swamiji behind his writing table not even lifting his eyes to see

who had entered. After a while, as with Calvé, Swamiji told Rockefeller much of his past that was not known to any but himself, and made him understand that the money he had already accumulated was not his, that he was only a channel and that his duty was to do good to the world — that God had given him all his wealth in order that he might have an opportunity to help and do good to people. Rockefeller was annoyed that anyone dared to talk to him that way and tell him what to do. He left the room in irritation,

not even saying goodbye. But about a week after, again without being announced, he entered Swamiji's study and, finding him the same as before, threw on his desk a paper which told of his plans to donate an enormous sum of money toward the financing of a public institution. "Well, there you are", he said. "You must be satisfied now, and you can thank me for it." Swamiji didn't even lift his eyes, did not move. Then taking the paper, he quietly read it, saying: "It is for you to thank me". That was all. This was Rockefeller's first large donation to the public welfare.

Source: Madame Verdier's journal quoted in the New Discoveries, Vol. 1, pp. 487-

(Published in Feb 2013 issue of PreSense)

Interesting facts and unknown people behind Swami Vivekananda's visit to Chicago

Swami Vivekananda's visit to Ramnad



After Shri Ramakrishna Paramahamsar attained mukti in 1886, Swami Vivekananda began a padayatra of the country. In 1892, he visited Ramnad (now Ramanathapuram) and stayed with Bhaskara Sethupathy, the King of Ramnad. Shri Bhaskara Sethupathy, even at his young age of 24, was a great scholar in Saiva philosophy. At that time, he had an invitation from the 'Parliament of World Religions 1893', to be held in Chicago, and was preparing to travel to USA.

When Bhaskara Sethupathy interacted with Swami Vivekananda, he realised that Swami was the right person to attend the World Parliament of Religions and to present the Indian spiritual views. He became Swamiji's disciple and requested Swamiji to go to the USA to attend the World Parliament of Religions. He was even willing to fund his trip to the maximum extent, cancelling his own visit. Swamiji initially declined this offer.

Decision at Kanyakumari: Swamiji then moved to Kanyakumari, the southern tip of the country on 24th December 1892.

There is a rock in the sea, 500 metres from the mainland. Since the fishermen were busy celebrating Christmas Eve, no one was willing to take him to the rock. Without any hesitation, he immediately reached the rock by swimming

across the sea. He was in meditation for two days on the rock and got enlightenment about his duties. He decided that he would go to Chicago to participate in the World Parliament of Religions. This rock is now known as the Vivekananda Rock Memorial and is a popular tourist place.



Vivekananda rock memorial at Kanyakumari where Swamiji got enlightenment

Swamiji then returned to Ramnad and stayed with Bhaskara Sethupathy. He accepted his suggestion of going to Chicago and participating in the World Parliament of Religions.

Support by the Madras students

From Ramnad: Swami Vivekananda then visited Madras (now known as Chennai). Since he was in need of more money, Mr. Azhagiya Singaperumal, professor at Pachaiyappa's College, Madras, and many of his students went on a door-to-door collection of money to raise funds for Vivekananda's USA trip. Swamiji was highly inspired by the enthusiasm shown by Bhaskara Sethupathy and the

people of Madras about his journey to USA. From Madras, he left for Bombay and proceeded to Chicago by ship.



Returning to India after a victorious trip to America and Europe, After Swami Vivekananda's Chicago speech, he became very popular in India. After touring America and Europe for four years, he preferred to return to India via Ramnad and Madras as a mark of gratitude to the people who encouraged him to go to Chicago. On 26th Jan 1897, he returned to India by a steamer from Sri Lanka. When he was about to land at Pamban, Bhaskara Sethupathy, the King of Ramnad was waiting with his entourage to give him a royal welcome there. He reverentially bowed his head and offered it as a step for Vivekananda to land from the boat as Vivekananda was coming back to the Motherland after five years. But, Swamiji tactfully avoided by jumping from the boat on the land. Since the King was kneeling in this place to receive Swamiji, this place is now known as 'Kundukal', in Tamil, meaning 'kneeling'. A memorial is also

erected in this place to mark the historic landing of Swamiji after his visits to Chicago, and successfully establishing himself as the Spiritual Ambassador of India. After landing, Swamiji was to be taken in a procession to the town in a chariot with six horses.



After Swamiji boarded the ceremonial chariot, suddenly Bhaskara Sethupathy unyoked the horses from Vivekananda's ceremonial chariot and pulled the chariot manually with his entourage till it reached his palace despite the repeated cries of "no, no" by Swamiji. Later, he erected a victory pillar of 25 feet height

with the Upanishad expression Satyameva Jayate to commemorate the success of Swami Vivekananda at Chicago.

(Published in March 2013 edition of PreSense)

Interesting facts about the historic first meeting of Narendranath with Guruji

How many of us are aware that William Hastie, a relatively less featured individual of the British-Indian era, is the person behind Narendranath's (original name of Swami Vivekananda) transformation by motivating him to meet Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa?

Revered William Hastie

Scotland born William Hastie, after distinguishing himself in Physics and Mathematics, pursued his studies in philosophy and divinity in Germany and Holland. Since he was not interested in priesthood, he took a license from Church of Scotland to teach abroad. In 1878, he joined as Principal of the 'General Assembly's Institution' (now called Scottish Church College, Kolkata). After joining this college, Hastie restructured the Department of Philosophy. The scholastic reputation of Principal Hastie attracted Narendranath to join this college in 1881. William Hastie, through his simple lifestyle attracted his students.



State of trance or spiritual ecstasy

One day, Reverend William Hastie was discussing the poem "Excursion" written by poet William Wordsworth in the

class, where Narendranath also was present. He explained as to how the poet fell into a state of 'trance' (spiritual ecstasy) when experiencing the sublime beauty of nature. Hastie asked the students to meet Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, a priest at Dakshineswar (Kali temple), who had attained the status of 'trance'.

Meeting of Narendranath with Sri Ramakrishna

The 19-year-old Narendra got excited about this and immediately met Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa in December 1881 with a volley of questions. This meeting of two great souls has become a turning point in the spiritual history of India. After failing to get the right answers of real time experience from various people, Narendranath questioned Sri Ramakrishna, "Have you seen God?". Sri Ramakrishna spontaneously responded, "Not only have I seen God but I can also show Him to you. I see Him more intensely than I see you".

This conversation in the historic moment changed the mind of Narendra, and he surrendered himself totally to Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. This is the beginning of the spiritual journey of Narendranath, who later became Swami Vivekananda.

(Article by Krishna Raj)

(Published in May 2013 edition of PreSense)

“If you are afraid of anything, turn around and face it”



When Swami Vivekananda was coming out of the temple of Mother Durga at Varanasi, he was surrounded by a large number of chattering monkeys. They seemed to threaten

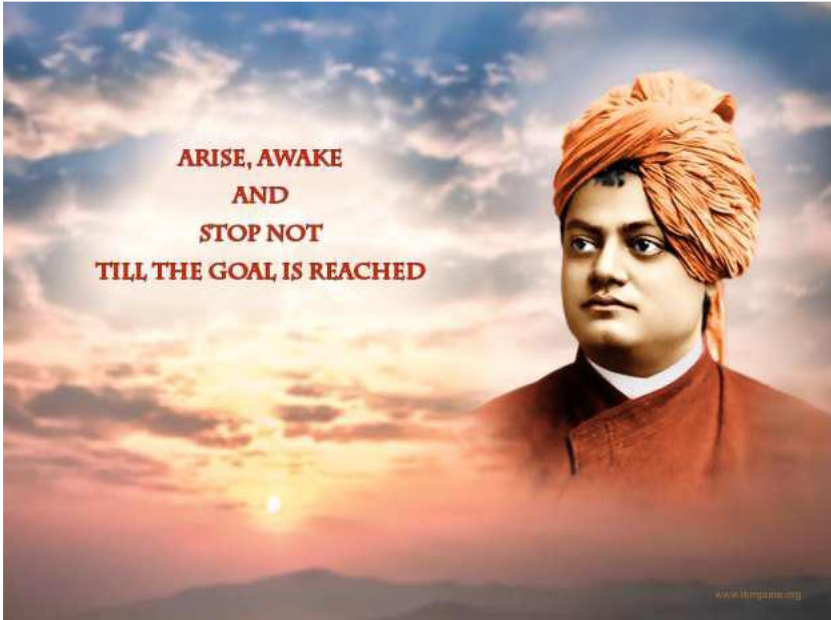
him. Swamiji did not want them to catch hold of him, so he started to run away. But the monkeys chased him.

An old sannyasi was there, watching those monkeys. He called out to Swamiji, ‘Stop! Face the brutes!’ The words brought him to his senses. He stopped running and turned majestically to boldly face the irate monkeys. As soon as he did that, they fell back and fled!

With reverence and gratitude, he gave the traditional greeting to the sannyasi, who smilingly responded with the same, and walked away. Many years later, Swamiji said: ‘If you ever feel afraid of anything, always turn round and face it. Never think of running away.’

(Published in the August 2013 edition of PreSense)

“Whatever you are doing, put your whole mind on it”



In America, Swamiji was watching some boys. They were standing on the bridge, trying to shoot at egg-shells that were floating on the river, but they always missed the target. Swamiji took the gun and aimed at the shells. He fired twelve times, and every time he hit an egg-shell. The boys asked Swamiji: ‘Well Mister, how did you do it?’ Swamiji said ‘Whatever you are doing, put your whole mind on it. If you are shooting, your mind should be only on the target. Then you will never miss. If you are learning your lessons, think only of the lesson. In my country, boys are taught to do this.’

(Published in the Sept 2013 edition of PreSense)

“The road ahead will be under your feet”



Swami Vivekananda was taking a long trek in the Himalayas when he found an old man extremely exhausted, standing hopelessly at the foot of an upward slope. The man said to Swamiji in frustration, ‘Oh, Sir, how to cross it; I cannot walk anymore; my chest will break.’ Swamiji listened to the old man patiently and then said, ‘Look down at your feet. The road that is under your feet is the road that you have passed over and is the same road that you see before you; it will soon be under your feet.’ These words emboldened the old man to resume his onward trek.

(Published in the October 2013 edition of PreSense)

Power of the saints



In Gazipur, a saint lived on the side of the Ganga. Devotees used to give a lot of offerings. Once, a dacoit broke into his ashram. He saw a lot of utensils. He took them and put them into his bag. Since it was making noise, the Saint came out of his meditation and saw the thief. When the thief saw the Saint, he started running, leaving the bag containing the utensils. Immediately the saint took the bag of utensils and ran behind the thief, asking him to stop. He overtook the thief and said: “Why are you afraid? These are yours. If you want, I will give you some more.” The thief was sent away with all the things he had in his house. Years later, when Swami Vivekananda was going on a pilgrimage to Kedar, Badri, etc., he saw a Sadhu lying on the icy region helplessly. Swami Vivekananda gave him his own blanket. Finding that Swami Vivekananda was a spiritual man, he started narrating his story. “Have you heard of Saint Pavahari Baba?”, he asked Swami Vivekananda. Then he told him about the incident that happened in the life of Pavahari Baba. He continued “I was the thief who robbed the Baba. That day when the saint Baba touched me, a transformation came into my life. I repented for my action. Since that time, I am trying to atone for my sins”. That is the power of the saints.

(Published in the November 2013 edition of PreSense)
