

Hare Krishna Centre - Leicester, UK - New Year Greeting

Written by Hridayananda das Goswami

Wednesday, 05 January 2011 21:10 - Last Updated Wednesday, 06 June 2012 05:26

Dear Devotees,

Jaya Srila Prabhupada. On the last day of 2010, I wish you all a wonderful Krishna conscious 2011. For me, the greatest and most inspiring challenge in the coming year is to strengthen ISKCON in the western world.

When I joined the movement in 1969, ISKCON seemed like a North American movement with branches in Europe, Australia and East Asia.

In 1970 Srila Prabhupada dramatically established ISKCON in India. The movement also spread throughout East and Southeast Asia.

Prabhupada planted a transcendental seed in the Soviet Union which blossomed into a huge, powerful mission throughout Russia and other CIS countries.

I helped to expand the movement in Latin America in the mid 70's and ISKCON is now well established throughout that region.

However it is ISKCON in India that has expanded beyond comparison. Of course, India has a huge, natural advantage. It is the land of Krishna. Even in America, ISKCON congregations in most large cities consist mainly of devotees from an Indian background. We find the same phenomenon in the UK and South Africa, and in most other countries that host a significant Indian diaspora.

This phenomenon is not so evident in most of Latin America, or in some parts of Europe, where there is a comparatively small Indian population.

Still, the massive expansion and unique wealth of many Indian devotees, both in India and other countries, presents an interesting challenge to the International Society for Krishna consciousness. Is ISKCON destined to be basically an Indian movement with branches in foreign countries? Or is it meant to be a truly international society that establishes the yuga dharma as a dominant spiritual process throughout the world?

In India, ISKCON's influence at all levels of society is enormous. In America, and most European countries (England and Hungary might be exceptions) ISKCON's national influence is

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insignificant.

Personally, I believe that ISKCON can fulfill Srila Prabhupada's and Lord Caitanya's vision only as a truly international society that presents Krishna consciousness as a non-sectarian, non-ethnic spiritual science. I learned this from Prabhupada himself. Thus it is the responsibility of those of us who serve Srila Prabhupada in the west to do all we can to reignite the fire of a powerful, relevant movement in our respective countries.

I find this vision, of reestablishing the full power and relevance of ISKCON in the west, to be a most inspiring challenge. It is to the fulfillment of this vision that I wish to dedicate myself in 2011. I invite all the devotees to share and serve this awesome vision.

Wishing you all a year of health, happiness and potent service in Lord Krishna's divine mission, I invoke this blessing: Krishna-shaktir astu te! May the force of Krishna be with you!

With best wishes,

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