

Politico-spiritual Rendezvous

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Rudyard Kipling once said, "East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet." This maxim has been proved untrue as far as the West and the East equation is concerned, but of spirituality and politics, this undoubtedly holds true.

Spirituality and politics are both full-fledged disciplines, both need total involvement. So, each can become involved in the other's discipline only at the cost of the erosion of his own. The spiritual person will lose his dedication in the realm of politics, while the politician will lose his political interest if he involves himself in spiritual matters.

However, both disciplines are needed to build a better society. If spirituality is inner science, politics is external discipline. We need both. How to combine them? The answer lies in a single word: complementarity. Each must complement the other, while maintaining its own identity.

Spirituality is inner beauty without having external shakti, while politics is external shakti having little inner beauty. They need each other. So why not adopt the sharing formula? The spiritual person must serve as counsellor to the politician, and the politician must serve as booster to the spiritual person. This sharing will benefit both.

The spiritual person is Self-centred according to his nature; the politician can help him by taking him out of his individual cell, so that he may acquire more experience of human life. The same is true of the politician. Politicians are by nature over-ambitious and this sometimes leads to disaster. It is at this juncture that a spiritual person can give them practical advice which will enable them to curb the over-ambitious side of their nature, making them more realistic.

In our ancient tradition, dharma gurus

were advisers to the kings and kings were their supporters. In our present society, in terms of number, we have enough spiritual persons and we have politicians in abundance as well. But, we are not able to benefit from the two because of a lack of sharing process between them.

We need to develop a dual system of education – formal and informal. Formal education can produce educated politicians, and that is good for our society, but we also need all members of society to be spiritualised. This goal cannot be achieved through formal education. We shall have to evolve an informal type of education whose teachers are spiritual gurus, and also ruhani murshid. These gurus and murshids can teach our present-day generation through interaction, discourses and dissemination of literature.

In my experience, informal and formal education, both, are independent disciplines: any attempt at amalgamation cannot yield positive result. Each discipline can try to be helpful to the other, without interfering with the other's systems.

In a partial sense, I can say we need spiritualised politicians and politicised spiritual persons. Both are important: each can support the other, but only on the condition that they strictly refrain from interference.

Spiritual persons have much to share with others, and the same can be said of politicians. But presently, few of them carry out this task. The reason is that people generally adopt a complaining attitude towards others and if they try to share with others, they don't know the difference between sharing and interference. If any of them want to share with the others, they must avoid complaining and must refrain from interference. Without following this course, no one can prove to be a useful member of society.

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