

“The Currency of Vices and Ill Feelings is Now Withdrawn from Circulation”

**Celebration of India’s Independence Day and Raksha Bandhan
St. Petersburg, Russia**

August, 2024



The ultimate freedom and independence are achieved through complete purity of our thoughts, relationships, diet and lifestyle. This message has been shared by the Brahma Kumaris members in St. Petersburg at various venues on the occasion of Independence Day of India and the pure festival of Raksha Bandhan.



On August, 15, a group of BK students joined the official **flag hoisting ceremony at Consulate General of India** in this city. After listening to a special address delivered to the nation by Smt. Draupadi Murmu ji, President of India, on the eve of 78th

Independence Day celebration, there was a space for friendly communication with the Consulate staff, members of the local Indian community and guests of St. Petersburg (especially a large group of retired police officers from Delhi and other cities of Bharat). The song “Ye dosti” (“We’ll never leave this friendship”) performed by BK Anna got everyone singing, and it contributed a lot in creating the atmosphere of love in the gathering.



Later on the same day, **Santosh Didi shared her words of blessings at a grand reception** held by the Indian Consulate at K2, the Russian government’s events hall at Krestovsky Island of St. Petersburg.

On Sunday, August, 18, Lighthouse became a venue for a double celebration. The **public event “A Thread of Purity and Protection”** told the audience an engaging story of spectacular achievements of modern India and of today’s challenges caused by the negativity in the minds of people. “Spiritually, Raksha Bandhan is the festival that becomes a foundation for all the celebrations throughout the year, as it brings a message of purity and spiritual love”, said Santosh Didi in her inspiring talk about “3 Dimensions of True Freedom”. She underlined that although we may consider ourselves citizens of free nations, we cannot enjoy real and complete freedom if we have 1) mental pain and sufferings, 2) ill feelings in our mind for any other human being, 3) diseases and poverty. These three are born from the major vices of lust, anger, greed, attachment and ego. God, our Supreme Father, is ready to accept from us this now-obsolete currency and convert it into a strong currency of virtues and powers.

Addressing the audience, **Mr Kumar Gaurav ji, Consul General of India in St. Petersburg**, said, "Raksha Banhdan is the celebration of love, affection and care between brothers and sisters. And if we extend it spiritually, I think all the wars, miseries, and sorrows in this world will be over very soon."



The guests of Lighthouse, including the Indian Consulate staff with their families, special VIP guests and everyone else were inspired to create a determined thought and burn their "old currency" of weaknesses and vices in the sacrificial fire set on the stage of the Diamond Hall. The Rakhi tying ceremony continued for another one hour and a half in a powerful atmosphere of silence and self-contemplation.

