Lamps of clarity

In Indian culture, there was a time when there used to be a festival every day of the year — 365 festivals in a year. The idea was to make our life into a celebration. Since, you won’t just celebrate life while walking on the street, or while going to the office, these festivals

were an excuse to celebrate. The idea of Diwali is to bring the spirit of celebration into your life. That is why firecrackers are burst. So the purpose of Diwali is not just to have fun on this day and then forget it all. Celebration of life must happen within us everyday. If we simply sit idle, our life energy, heart, mind and body must be exploding like a live cracker. If you are a damp squib, then you need a cracker from outside everyday. Our life should be full of activity round the year. Diwali is the festival of lights. On Diwali, you will see every town, city and village is lit up with thousands of lamps. But the celebration is not just about lighting lamps outside; rather an inner light has to come about. Light means clarity. Without clarity, every other quality that you possess will only become a detriment, not a gift, because confidence without clarity is a disaster. Today, too much action in the world is performed without clarity.

On a certain day, a rookie policeman was driving for the first time through a town with an experienced colleague. They got a message on the radio, which said that there was a group of people loitering on a certain street and were asked to disperse them. They drove into the street and saw a group of people standing at one of the corners. As the car came close by, the new policeman rolled his window down with great enthusiasm and said, “Hey, all of you. Get off that corner!” The group looked at each other in confusion. Then he yelled louder, “Didn’t you hear me? I told you to get off that damn corner!” They all dispersed. Then, pleased with the effect, the policeman looked at his experienced partner and asked, “Did I do well?” His partner said, “Not bad at all, considering that it was a bus stop.”

Without the necessary clarity, whatever you try to do will be a disaster. Light brings clarity to your vision — not just in a physical sense. How clearly you see life and perceive everything around you decides how sensibly you conduct your life. Diwali is the day when dark forces were put to death and light was lit. This is also the predicament of human life. Like the dark clouds which brood in the gloomy atmosphere, not realising that they are blocking the sun, a human being does not have to bring any light from anywhere. If he just dispels the dark clouds that he has allowed to gather within himself, light will happen. The Festival of Lights is just a reminder of that.