THE QUESTION OF DEATH MAKES A PERSON SPIRITUAL

JAGGI VASUDEV, Spiritual leader

How did you become interested in yoga?
At my grandfather's village, there was a deep well. As children, we used to jump in and then climb up just for fun. The well had no steps or ladder and it was a hard climb up. One day, a 70-year-old man who was watching us, jumped into the well. I thought he was finished. But he managed to come up faster than me. When I asked him how he did it, he said, "Come and do yoga." That's how I got into yoga.

Are you afraid of death?
No. But it is the question of death that makes a person spiritual.

What supernatural powers do you have?
I can sit without a thought on my mind for a day. If I walk into a hall full of people, I can have their energies going crazy. I can inflame people. I think miracles like producing a gold chain are stupid. My greatest miracle is that I've created thousands of people who have not been angry for months on end.

How important is sex to a human being?
If your intelligence is completely hijacked by your hormones, then it is absolutely important. It all depends on the state of evolution a human being is at.

You are said to be close to DMK leader M. Karunanidhi, who is a rationalist.
I am not a rationalist, but I am rational. I have not spent much time with Karunanidhi. I don't know him personally.

How do you feel when people kill in the name of religion?
There are all kinds of idiots on the planet. But the religious and spiritual idiots take the cake.

What do you think of the Sangh Parivar's brand of promoting Hinduism?
They are damaging the Hindu way of life, which has never been a religion. No matter how much the Sangh Parivar tries, they cannot organise the Hindus. My problem is, the Hindus think I am against them because I make fun of their gods, and the Christians think I am against them because some conversions are not happening because of me. Muslims, of course, think everybody is against them.

How do you feel when people celebrate you as a backward caste yogi?
Oh! I didn't know I belonged to a backward caste (laughs). As long as people find some excuse to celebrate, I'm fine. Perhaps people are celebrating me as a non-Brahmin yogi. There is some joy about that in people's mind.