

This had its bad effects also. The late Dr. Ambedkar had said that our *Gram Panchayats* were so strong that we neglected the throne of Delhi. We did not remain alert as regards the State, as much as we ought to have done, thinking that Nation's life did not depend on the State. We forgot that, though it may be central, the State is definitely an important institution serving some needs of the Nation like a limb of the body. It is possible to pluck a hair without much harm, but along with the hair, if some skin is also removed, and a little further, if the head too is cut off, then there will be great loss for the body. Therefore, the body must be protected. Although the various limbs of the body are not absolutely indispensable, yet each of them serves an important purpose. From the same standpoint, State too, should have been deemed important in the life of a Nation. There were persons who had paid attention to this aspect. It was for this reason that the great teacher of Shivaji, Samarth Ramdas Swami, directed him to establish his kingdom. *Dharma* wields its own power. *Dharma* is important in life. Shri Ramdas would as well have preached to Shivaji to become a mendicant and spread *Dharma* following his own example. But on the contrary, he inspired Shivaji to extend his rule, because State too is an important institution of society. However, to consider something important is different from saying that it is supreme (सर्वोपरि). The State is not supreme. The question arises, then, that if the State is not of fundamental importance, what is it that is absolutely important. Let us consider this question.

***Dharma* Sustains The Society**

We shall have to examine the reasons why the State was established. No one will dispute that the State must have some specific aim, some ideal. Then this aim or ideal must be considered of highest importance, rather than the State which is created to fulfil this ideal. As a watchman is not deemed greater than the treasure he is supposed to protect, so is the case with the treasurer. The State is brought into existence to protect the Nation, and to produce and maintain conditions in which the ideals of the Nation can be translated into reality. The ideals of the Nation constitute *Chiti*, which is analogous to the soul of an individual. It requires some effort to comprehend *Chiti*. The laws that help manifest and maintain *Chiti* of a Nation are termed *Dharma* of that Nation. Hence, it is this '*Dharma*' that is supreme.

Dharma is the repository of the Nation's soul. If *Dharma* is destroyed, the Nation perishes. Anyone who abandons *Dharma*, betrays the Nation.