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Let noble thoughts come to us from every side - Rig Veda, 1-89-i

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Words of Eternal Wisdom



I object to violence because when it appears to do good, the good is only temporary; the evil it does is permanent.

-Mahatma Gandhi

Conduct yourself in this world as if you are here to stay forever, and yet prepare for eternity as if you are to die tomorrow.

-Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

It is not power that corrupts but fear. Fear of losing power corrupts those who wield it and fear of the scourge of power corrupts those who are subject to it.

-Aung San Suu Kyi, Freedom from Fear

Peace is so important a concept in Judaism that Jews have a religious obligation to pursue it. "Seek peace, and pursue it"—seek it in your own place, and pursue it even to another place as well".

-Leviticus Rabah 9:9

Shallow understanding from people of good will is more frustrating than absolute misunderstanding from people of ill will.

-Martin Luther King Jr.

If garments get soiled with blood stains, how can they be pure in mind who suck the blood of humankind? Says Nanak, remember God with a wholesome heart and truthful tongue, the rest is mere ostentation with false deeds that we are wont to do.

-Guru Nanak

Since my release, I have become more convinced than ever that the real makers of history are the ordinary men and women of our country; their participation in every decision about the future is the only guarantee of true democracy and freedom.

-Nelson Mandela, 1990. The Struggle is My Life

"Someone is sitting in the shade today, because someone planted a tree a long time ago".

**-Warren Buffett,
American Investor and Philanthropist**

Are you Alive or Merely Living?

The question is asked because, if one carefully examines, he will be startled to find, that out of every thousand persons living in this wonderful planet, not more than one is really alive.

To be really alive, means more than simply being a moving, breathing, eating, drinking, and talking human creature. One who is actually alive would find the days to be too short for all the wonderful explorations which life offers. He would find life to be a continual adventure, an unfolding panorama, with opportunities for pleasure and achievement at every turn.

A really alive person would perceive himself as a crude chunk of Eternity, and that inherent in him are all the powers and possibilities latent in the Universe and that also inherent in him is the will to work out these possibilities.

It does not stop here. The man who is practising the art of being alive to its full extent has an alert, receptive brain and an awakened spirit. Without these he would simply be a splendid animal. With these he is the highest expression of the Creative Power visible to mortal vision. And with these he finds his opportunities for happiness, usefulness and pleasure in existence.

He knows the pleasures of the physical plane, for which his body is fashioned; he draws to himself the pleasures of the mental plane, and he senses the pleasures of the spiritual plane, which lies near, and derives power there from.

A person who is actually alive in all these ways must radiate light, cheer, sympathy, and helpfulness to all who come within his aura. Being alive to the vibrations from the three –physical, mental and spiritual realms, he knows all temptations; and from having made many wrong steps himself on his road

to gradual ascend. He can sympathise, counsel and help those who have not been able to keep step with him in his progress.

He must discover and use his own position in the world and his own environment as the first field of action if he hopes to reach success in any venture. He must not wait for luck or a miracle to give him a change of location and surroundings better suited to his taste. Out of whatever destiny has bestowed upon him he will make conditions which he desires and out of every day he can make a little bit of heaven.

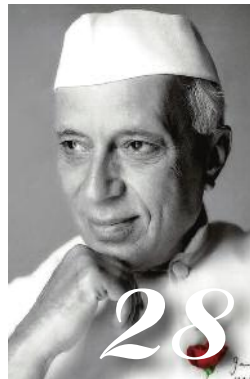
No difficulty can discourage, no obstacle dismay, no trouble dishearten the man who has acquired the art of being alive. For him, difficulties are mere dares of fate, obstacles are mere hurdles to try his skill, troubles are nothing more than bitter tonics to give him strength and he rises higher and looms greater after each encounter with adversity.

When one is alive, he is in touch with every new movement; he is awake to the consciousness of the march of progress and discoveries of science.

***-Surendralal G. Mehta
President, Bharatiya
Vidya Bhavan Worldwide***



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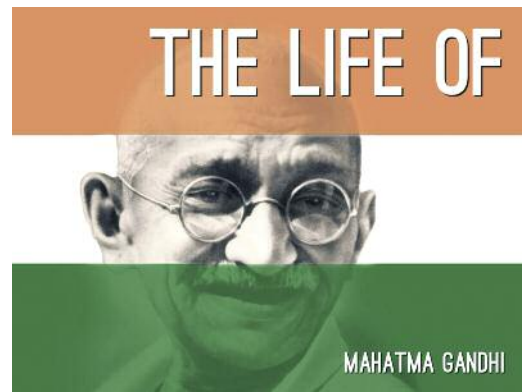
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The brilliance of Gandhi - Humour

When Gandhi was studying law at the University College of London, there was a professor whose last name was Peters. For some reason he felt animosity towards Gandhi and because Gandhi never kowtowed to him, they frequently exchanged "words".

One day, Mr. Peters was having lunch at the dining room of the University and Gandhi came along with his tray and sat next to him. The professor, in his arrogance, said, "Mr Gandhi, you do not understand ... a pig and a bird do not sit together to eat. "

Gandhi replied, "Do not worry, professor, I'll fly away, " and he went and sat at another table.

Mr. Peters, consumed with rage, decided to take

revenge during the ensuing Test, but Gandhi responded brilliantly to all the questions. Trying to best him, Mr. Peters asked him the following question: "Mr Gandhi, if you are walking down the street and find a package, and within it there is a bag of wisdom and another bag with a lot of money which one will you take?"

Without hesitating, Gandhi responded, "The one with the money, of course."

Mr. Peters, smiling, said, "I, in your place, would have taken the wisdom."

"Each one takes what one doesn't have," responded Gandhi indifferently.

Mr. Peters, now hysterical, wrote on the Test sheet the word "idiot" and gave it to Gandhi. Gandhi took the sheet and sat down. A few minutes later, Gandhi went to the professor and said, "Mr. Peters, you signed the sheet, but you did not give me my grade."

-Col Arun Joshi (Veteran)
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For this Month

Lest we forget

Lord Mountbatten, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Dr Rajendra Prasad pleaded with Mahatma Gandhi, as did everybody else in the Congress, to remain in Delhi to join in the celebrations on 15 August 1947, but he politely declined. The Mahatma said his presence was needed among the suffering people of Noakhali.

On arriving in Calcutta, on his way to Noakhali he learnt that the city was once again in flames; there was recurrence of rioting and killing. He was prevailed upon to stay there for sometime and provide his proverbial healing touch. He consented on the condition that Muslims in Noakhali should guarantee the safety of Hindus in that strife-stricken district. Likewise the Hindus in Bihar had to stand as guarantors of the safety of Muslims there. Or else he would not hesitate to sacrifice his life in order to bring this about. When some Hindus told him that his sympathies lay with the Muslims, he responded with tears in his eyes: "how can you ever think like this. I am proud to be a Hindu. I have lived and will die for Hinduism. Every fibre of my being is Hindu. To say that I do not care for Hindus is the worst travesty of truth."

The Mahatma found the fire of hate was raging everywhere and he did not know how long it would take him to extinguish it but he had to extinguish it or it would engulf both India and Pakistan. Anti-social elements had run amuck, they were destroying the very basis of civilization. Under the League Ministry Hindus were earlier massacred and then under the Congress Ministry Muslims were being done to death. The Mahatma beseeched the people of Calcutta to stop, what he called this "hot goondaism" and this senseless race of retaliation.

As the Mahatma went round the affected areas, Muslims who had been living in terror regained their confidence. Hindus responded to his call and promised to follow his advice. Shaheed Suhrawardy joined him on behalf of the League to create an atmosphere of communal harmony; Shyama Prasad Mookerjee lent his support on behalf of Hindu Mahasabha. Meanwhile in Delhi, preparations were made on a grand scale to celebrate the birth of independence.

On 15 August 1947 addressing the Constituent Assembly in its midnight session Nehru said: "On this day our first thoughts go to the architect of this freedom, the Father of our Nation, who embodying the old spirit of India, held aloft the torch of freedom and lighted up the darkness that surrounds us. We have often been unworthy followers of his and have strayed from his message, but not only we, but the succeeding generations, will remember this message and bear the imprint in their hearts of this great son of India, magnificent in his faith and strength, courage and humility. We shall never allow that torch of freedom to be blown out, however high the wind or stormy the tempest."

The Mahatma stayed in the house of his Muslim host in Calcutta on Independence Day, fasting and spinning. There was no joy in his heart though he responded to the thousands of Hindus and Muslims who came for his darshan; it was a moving spectacle of Hindu Muslim fraternity. The next day 16 August hundreds of thousands of Hindus and Muslims attended his prayer meeting. Touched by this the Mahatma said: ".....the delirious happenings remind me of the early days of the Khilafat Movement. The fraternization then burst on the public, as a new experience. Moreover, we had then Khilafat and Swaraj as our twin goals. Today, we have nothing of the kind. We have drunk the poison of mutual hatred, and so this nectar of fraternization tastes all the sweeter and so sweetness should never wear out." He spoke more about Hindu Muslim unity than of the birth of freedom because the new dominion was infested with the agony of partition.

As the process of inter-communal harmonization was being consolidated, news came from Pakistan that Hindus were being killed and driven out of Lahore, Peshawar, Karachi and other cities. This inflamed the crowds in Calcutta and the fragile edifice of unity that the Mahatma had built during his stay began to crumble and collapse. He wrote to Patel on September 1, 1947: "I hear that conflagration has burst out at many places. What was regarded as the 'Calcutta miracle' has proved to be a nine days' wonder."

Meanwhile Nehru asked him to come to Punjab where the situation had gone out of control. The Mahatma replied to Nehru at once, on 2 September 1947: "I would have started for today but for the flare-up in Calcutta. If the fury did not abate, my going to Punjab would be of no avail. I would have no self-confidence." The Mahatma therefore stayed on in Calcutta and decided to fast unto death, hoping that what his "word in person" could not do, "my fast may do. It may touch the hearts of all the warring elements in Punjab if it does in Calcutta."

In less than four days of his fast the attitude of people in Calcutta changed. Leaders of all political parties, religious groups, and social organisations went round the streets and asked Hindus and Muslims to give up their arms, abjure violence and pledge to restore peace. The goondas and their dadas came forward and repented for what they had done. Everyone appealed to the Mahatma to break the fast, but he said that unless mutual trust was restored he would not do so. Finally on the assurance of C Rajagopalachari who had taken over as the Governor of the province, he agreed to concede to their request if they promised him that there would never be a repetition of such a tragedy in the city. And, that they would sincerely strive for genuine change of heart and actively foster communal unity. If they were unable to give such a guarantee, the Mahatma Said he would continue fast.

In the deliberations that followed, a document pledging to work for communal unity was prepared; it was signed by all the prominent citizens; it was endorsed by the governor. The Mahatma said: "I am breaking this fast so that I might be able to do something in Punjab. I have accepted your assurance at its face value. I hope and pray I shall never have to regret it. I would certainly like to live to serve India and humanity, but I do not wish to be duped into prolonging my life."

The transformations among Hindus and Muslims that the Mahatma brought about were indeed amazing. And that too in the face of raging violence in other parts of India and Pakistan! He was happy at the outcome because he believed that it would bring sanity among the people of not only East Bengal, but also Bihar. He proposed to take a trip to Punjab next. The League organ of Calcutta, Morning News, commented that Gandhi was ready to die so that the Muslims could live peacefully. Likewise The Times, London, wrote that what the Mahatma had achieved, several military divisions could not have accomplished. C.R., the Governor, known as Gandhi's conscience keeper, observed, "Gandhiji has achieved many things but there has been nothing, not even independence, which is so truly wonderful, as his victory over evil in Calcutta."

Thus having completed his mission of mercy, the greatest Apostle of Non-Violence, left for Delhi on 7 September, unaware that worse trouble awaited him in the heart of the capital of free India which he had brought into existence, by sheer grit, courage, hard work, suffering and sacrifice even if it was not in the form that he had desired.

Source: *Gandhi and the Break-up of India*, book by Late Dr Rafiq Zakaria, Bhavan's Book University



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Gambhir Watts".

Gambhir Watts OAM
President, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Australia





Religion's Role in Building Peace

by **Daisaku Ikeda**

As a Buddhist, I have engaged in dialogue with leaders and scholars of different religious backgrounds from throughout the world for over four decades. My goal has been to foster heart-to-heart connections among people in order to build a peaceful world.

I know from my experience that despite our differences in faiths, doctrinal interpretations or religious ideologies, we all share a common humanity—the desire for peace, concern over global problems and earnest hope for the future of humankind.



Throughout history, religious conflict has been implicated in wars and violence. Yet as humankind confronts common challenges—global threats of increasing urgency that afflict people everywhere—the role and potential contributions of religions are being reevaluated in a more positive light: it is now acknowledged that religion and spirituality can be powerful, benign socio-cultural forces that motivate people toward inclusiveness, participation and sustainability.

We have entered an era where different religious traditions need to work together, with the United Nations serving as one platform for cooperation. Each religion can strive in its own unique way to awaken in people the goodness that seeks construction and solidarity rather than destruction and division, and also inspire those of other faiths through the experience of working together toward solving global problems. The humanitarian spirit of the world's religions would be enriched through such efforts, further deepening cooperation among them.

In terms of how best to foster cooperation between different religions, I feel that a problem-solving approach is most effective. Different religions can engage in dialogue, discussing specific themes related to such global problems as conflict, environmental destruction, poverty and disaster response. They can clarify what actions



need to be taken and what kind of wisdom and spirituality their tradition has to offer the world, exchanging ideas and exploring specific ways to work together.

Here I am reminded of the following words by former Czech president Václav Havel: “The only meaningful objective for Europe in the next century is to be its ‘best self,’ that is, to revitalize its best intellectual traditions and thereby contribute creatively to a new form of global community of living.”

If “Europe” here is replaced with “each religious tradition,” I feel the role of religion in the world in the 21st century can be more clearly understood.

Alongside the United Nations and its efforts to promote mutual understanding among religions and civilizations through activities such as the Global Forums of the Alliance of Civilizations, there are many admirable institutions working to open paths of interfaith cooperation and dialogue.

Several organizations I have initiated have been active in the shared effort, through dialogue, to reveal the “best self” of each faith and civilization. Basing their work on respect for the rich diversity of the world’s religions and cultures, they are also striving to discover ways in which we can transcend differences and work together to solve global problems.

Currently, discussions are under way in forums associated with the United Nations on how to formulate a global development agenda beyond

2015 as the successor of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that are aimed at alleviating the suffering caused by poverty and hunger.

I urge that full-fledged dialogue and cooperation among religions be initiated in order to eliminate misery from the face of the Earth and create a world of peace and harmonious coexistence. The world’s religions have a vital role to play in achieving these globally-agreed goals for the sake of humanity’s future.

-Daisaku Ikeda is president of the Soka Gakkai International (SGI) and founder of the Institute of Oriental Philosophy, The Toda Institute for Global Peace and Policy Research and the Ikeda Center for Peace, Learning, and Dialogue.

This article is based on an interview given to New Zealand’s Scoop online news service.



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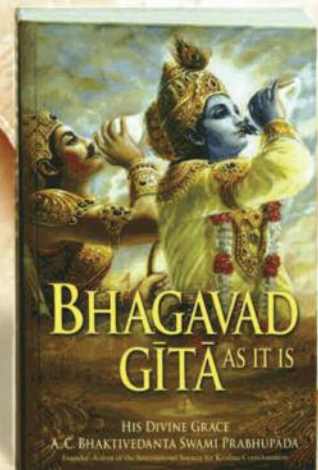
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Mother Teresa



Mother Teresa was the founder of the Order of the Missionaries of Charity, a Roman Catholic congregation of women dedicated to helping the poor.

***"Do not wait for leaders; do it alone,
person to person."***

—Mother Teresa

Mother Teresa - A Message from God (TV-14; 01:13)
After receiving a message from God, Mother Teresa gave her life to the poor.

Synopsis

Baptized on August 27, 1910, in Skopje, Macedonia, Mother Teresa taught in India for 17 years before she experienced her 1946 "call within a call" to devote herself to caring for the sick and poor. Her order established a hospice; centers for the blind, aged, and disabled; and a leper colony. She was summoned to Rome in 1968, and in 1979 received the Nobel Peace Prize for her humanitarian work.

Early Life

Catholic nun and missionary Mother Teresa was born circa August 26, 1910 (her date of birth is disputed), in Skopje, the current capital of the Republic of Macedonia. On August 27, 1910, a date frequently cited as her birthday, she was baptized as Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu. Mother Teresa's parents, Nikola and Drana Bojaxhiu, were of Albanian descent; her father was an entrepreneur who worked as a construction contractor and a trader of medicines and other goods. The Bojaxhius were a devoutly Catholic family, and Nikola Bojaxhiu was deeply involved in the local church as well as in city politics as a vocal proponent of Albanian independence.

In 1919, when Mother Teresa was only 8 years old, her father suddenly fell ill and died. While the cause of his death remains unknown, many have speculated that political enemies poisoned him. In the aftermath of her father's death, Mother Teresa became extraordinarily close to her mother, a pious and compassionate woman who instilled in her daughter a deep commitment to charity.

Although by no means wealthy, Drana Bojaxhiu extended an open invitation to the city's destitute to dine with her family. "My child, never eat a single mouthful unless you are sharing it with others," she counseled her daughter. When Mother Teresa asked who the people eating with them were, her mother uniformly responded, "Some of them are our relations, but all of them are our people."

Religious Calling

Mother Teresa attended a convent-run primary school and then a state-run secondary school. As a girl, Mother Teresa sang in the local Sacred Heart choir and was often asked to sing solos. The congregation made an annual pilgrimage to the chapel of the Madonna of Letnice atop Black Mountain in Skopje, and it was on one such trip at the age of 12 that Mother Teresa first felt a calling to a religious life. Six years later, in 1928, an 18-year-old Agnes Bojaxhiu decided to become a nun and set off for Ireland to join the Loreto Sisters of Dublin. It was there that she took the name Sister Mary Teresa after Saint Thérèse of Lisieux.

A year later, Mother Teresa traveled on to Darjeeling, India for the novitiate period; in May 1931, Mother Teresa made her First Profession of Vows. Afterward she was sent to Calcutta, where she was assigned to teach at Saint Mary's High School for Girls, a school run by the Loreto Sisters and dedicated to teaching girls from the city's poorest Bengali families. Mother Teresa learned to speak both Bengali and Hindi fluently as she taught geography and history and dedicated herself to alleviating the girls' poverty through education.

On May 24, 1937, she took her Final Profession of Vows to a life of poverty, chastity and obedience. As was the custom for Loreto nuns, she took on the title of "mother" upon making her final vows and thus became known as Mother Teresa. Mother Teresa continued to teach at Saint Mary's, and in 1944 she became the school's principal. Through her kindness, generosity and unfailing commitment to her students' education, she sought to lead them to a life of devotion to Christ. "Give me the strength to be ever the light of their lives, so that I may lead them at last to you," she wrote in prayer.

Source: www.biography.com



Essence of Spiritual Life

Sri Ramakrishna has advised: Too much study of the scripture does more harm than good. The important thing is to know the essence of the scriptures.

After that, what is the need of books? One should learn the essence and then dive deep in order to realise God.

Once a Pundit came to meet Sri Ramakrishna. The Pundit reputedly studied the Vedas and other scriptures. He loved to discuss philosophy. Sri Ramakrishna, seated on his couch, gave him counsel through parables.

Sri Ramakrishna (to the pundit): There are many scriptures like the Vedas. But one cannot realise God without austerity and spiritual discipline. God cannot be found in the six systems, the Vedas, or the Tantra.

'But one should learn the contents of the scriptures and then act according to their injunctions. A man lost a letter. He could not remember where he had left it. He began to search for it with a lamp. After two or three people had searched, the letter was at last

found. The message in the letter was: 'Please send us five seers of sandesh and a piece of wearing cloth.' The man read it and then threw the letter away. There was no further need of it; now all he had to do was to buy the five seers of sandesh and the piece of cloth.

'Better than reading is hearing, and better than hearing is seeing. One understands the scriptures better by hearing them from the lips of the guru or of a holy man. Then one doesn't have to think about their non—essential part.

Hanuman said: 'Brother, I don't know much about the phase of the moon or the position of the stars, just I contemplate Rama.'

'But seeing is far better than hearing. Then all doubts disappear. It is true that many things are recorded in the scriptures; but all these are useless without the direct realisation of God, without devotion to His Lotus Feet, without purity of heart. The almanac forecasts the rainfall of the year. But not a drop of water will you get by squeezing the almanac. No not even a drop.



'How long should one reason about the texts of the scriptures? So long as one does not have direct realisation of God. How long does the bee buzz about? As long as it is not sitting on a flower. No sooner does it light on a flower and begin to sip honey than it keeps quiet.' (Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna—Page—475-478). I

From the above narration we find that after knowing the essence of scriptures we must start practicing. What are the essence of scriptures and how to practice them?

The following are the essence of scriptures: —
The goal of human life is the realisation of the Ultimate Reality which alone can give man supreme fulfillment and everlasting peace. This is the essence of all religions.

The Ultimate Reality is one; but it is personal as well as impersonal, and is indicated by different names (such as God, Ishvar, etc.) in different religions.

The Ultimate Reality can be realised through various paths taught in world religions. All religions are true in so far as they lead to the same ultimate Goal.

Purity of mind is an essential condition for attainment of the Ultimate Reality; real purity is freedom from lust and greed.

Through spiritual practices one can overcome his evil tendencies, and divine grace can redeem even the worst sinner. Therefore one should not brood over the past mistakes, but should develop a positive outlook on life by depending on God.

God realisation is possible for all. The householders need not renounce the world; they should pray sincerely, practise discrimination between the Eternal and the temporal and remain unattached. God listens to sincere prayer. Intense longing (vyakulata) is the secret of success in spiritual life.

God dwells in all people but the manifestation of this inner Divinity varies from person to person. In

saintly people there is greater manifestation of God.

Women are special manifestations of Divine Mother of the Universe, and so are to be treated with respect.

Since God dwells in all people, helping the needy should be done not out of compassion (which is an attitude of condescension) but as humble service to God.

Egoism, caused by ignorance, is the root-cause of all suffering.

Life is an expression of the spontaneous creativity (Lila) of God. Pleasure and pain, success and failure, etc are to be borne with patience, and one should resign oneself to God's will under all circumstances.

How to practice the essence of scripture as mentioned above?

It is not too difficult to attain the essence of scripture. A combination of various noble qualities, i.e., faith, commitment, hard work, courage, self-confidence and love is required to be practiced. By doing the right things and following the message of Sri Ramakrishna, all of us can climb the ladder of spiritual life as illustrated in this article.

Conclusion: - Ramakrishna experienced the truth of all religions, inspiring seekers of every creed.

Ramakrishna is India's greatest example Of God - consciousness and mystical ecstasy in recent history. He became known to the world not merely as a saint but as a divine incarnation and a "supremely realised self."

His message has inspired millions of devotees for more than a century—and now his teachings are made accessible to many more.

-Swami Sudarshananda
Bhavan's Journal
July 15 2014



Evolution from Mineral World to Man

Evolution seems to be the plan of Nature, the phenomenal universe, known in Vedanta as Prakriti, constituted of the five insentient elements—earth, water, fire, air and akasha and the three gums –sattva, rajas and tamas, which seem to evolve into sentient beings at different levels from the mineral world to man and beyond.

In the course of this evolutionary process, the vegetable kingdom seems to have been the first one to evolve. Sense of touch is the only instrument available to beings in this kingdom to contact the outside world.

With this solitary sense, countless variety of species in the vegetable kingdom such as grass, creepers, shrubs, plants, and trees of different species, including those of gigantic size, covering both fruit-bearing and shelter-bearing, live a perfect life without wanting anything from the outside world.

Animal kingdom comes next. The earthworm is

the specie to evolve first in this kingdom. It has only two senses, the sense of touch and of taste. Ants come next and have only three senses- the sense of touch, taste and smell. With these three senses of communication, ants prove themselves truly marvellous.

With the sense of smell, they trace and locate places where food is available. One ant follows another with military precision, utilising the sense of touch. Ants exhibit keen instinct for selection of food.

Keep two heaps of sugar side by side, one brown and the other white, they will go to the first, because it is more nourishing.

Another wonder of ants' world is a perfect community life, worthy of emulation. Ants toil for the welfare of their community, and not individual well-being. When ants burrow a hole for living, they exhibit engineering feats and a great degree of architectural skills in workmanship. The



manner in which they carry earth and pile it up, man comes nowhere near.

All moving creatures complete their evolution with the development of the five senses: sense of touch, taste, smell, sight and of hearing.

Among the species with five senses, the bee excels in leading a perfect social life. It maintains its purity by living in its hive and landing only on fresh flowers for honey and nowhere else. 'Man should be as active as the ant and as clean as the bee', is an old saying valid for ever.

The origin and presence of the mind, with five senses was first noticed in the moving species in the animal kingdom. And the presence of the mind is displayed by the living species at all levels in their built-in habits of avoiding enemies and resorting to allies, safety being the chief concern. Man is no exception.

Senses are mere instruments in the hands of the mind. If the mind retires as in sleep, the senses become defunct. For example, a man goes to sleep with eyes open. Another man makes faces before him abusing and insulting him. The sleeping man is not affected at all. Yet, another man praises and pays adoration to him.

The man in sleep is not disturbed by the praises and censures, because of the absence of the mind.

Thus the praises and censures do not affect him at all. These instances prove that senses are merely instruments used by the mind.

The mind has its dispositions both good and bad. In Mahabharata, Pandavas and Kauravas were royal cousins. Pandavas were good and the Kauravas enmical and jealous of their cousins. Both received education and training from the Same Master, Dronacharya who wanted to test the mental calibre of the two groups. He directed Yudhisthira, to go out in the world and find a bad man. Simultaneously, he directed Duryodhana, to go out and find a good man.

The cousins went out on their respective missions. Yudhisthira could not find a single bad man for he found even the seemingly bad man had merits. Returning to the Master he submitted that he could not find a bad man anywhere.

Duryodhana, found every other individual he contacted had one defect or the other. He reported to the Master that there was no good man anywhere in the world.

Both the cousins belonged to one and the same royal chain, educated by the same Master, and investigated the same world. Yet, one could not find any bad man while the other did not come across a Single good men.



Each saw in the world outside what is within himself. The mind that one owns serves only as a spectacle. A man with a green spectacle sees the world as green. A red spectacle sees the world as red. Duryodhana had a corrugated mind. Couldn't therefore find a single good man.

But Yudhisthira was different. He was known as a Ajathashatru, one who had no enemies, an embodiment of virtue; a man of clean mind. All people seemed good to him.

Mind is thus a powerful instrument in the hands of man for turning himself to be good or bad. Duryodhana was of a strong mind, but his disposition could not reconcile even with his own cousins. On the other hand, Yudhisthira was ever considerate, ready to reconcile at any cost with his rival cousins. This only goes to prove that mind can make or mar man in his life.

According to Vedanta, the prakriti, Nature or the phenomenal universe, is constituted of two opposing forces, they are: light and darkness rising and falling, heat and cold and so on. At the

sentient level, these very forces become the cause of birth and death, health and disease, sanity and insanity, good and bad, intelligence and ignorance, attraction and aversion, favourable and unfavourable, happiness and misery and so on. However, no force can be rewarded as good or as evil.

Again, these forces taken together are held in equilibrium in nature by some unknown power which Vedanta designates as Dharmatma or simply as Dharma. It is one without the second, imminent and immanent, all pervasive and all-inclusive; it transcends both time and space. Hindus hold the view that whatever retards this purpose is adharma.

Among the Pandavas and Kauravas, the former were considered as the embodiment of Dharma. In all situations and under all conditions, they stood for and by Dharma, while the Kauravas, were tardy in putting Dharma into practice.

Yudhisthira saw only good everywhere, while Duryodhana saw nothing but evil. These are the



two extreme types of human traits one can find on earth world over at any point of time.

And mankind can be put between these two extreme types; some tend towards the latter. This inclination in disposition is an index to know that the mind can sway mankind. Disciplining and holding the mind in equilibrium is, therefore, the foremost task before man.

To the extent man controls his mind; he becomes good and great in every respect. But he who is carried away by the whims and fancies or the vagaries of the mind, becomes evil and perishes.

The world has seen many a prominent person playing his role for good or for evil. Good and evil are two mighty forces. And both require strength to handle. Strength is life, weakness death.

Swami Vivekananda always upheld strength. He exhorted men to hold on to strength. Even when you sin, sin like a man, not like a coward. It was the message of his life. The world has seen mighty characters like Mahaveera, Buddha and Mahatma

Gandhi. The same world has also given birth to notorious characters like Ravana, Shakuni, Hitler and so on.

The eternal message of Indian philosophy is Dharma thrives in the midst of all trials and tribulations, while Adharma perishes though seemingly prosperous initially.

It is possible for a man, and for man alone, to elevate himself by attuning—with discrimination, devotion, dedication and discipline—to some unknown power in Nature, known as Brahman at the macrocosmic level and as the Atman at the microcosmic level. Nature and nurture are the factors which have an important bearing in this regard.

Of all the instruments, available to man, his own mind is the best and the mightiest instrument, which can guide man to follow the right path.

A change in the disposition of the mind metamorphoses into a corresponding change in the world outside, as in the two cases of



Yadhisthira and Duryadhana.

Mind can be nurtured for good early in life. As the crooked or bent stem of a tender plant can be made straight before it grows and becomes a tree, so also the propensities and vagaries of the mind in a child can all be eliminated and its mind made healthy and wholesome. Nurture is the means to it.

First and foremost, the child should be made to live a regulated life. Secondly, the aim of man should be attainment of perfection and not sense indulgence. Sense pleasure seems to be one of immediate fulfilment in life. It is also cause of all problems. Allowing the senses to have their way is to wander in wildness, whereas their control leads to character building.

A nation's worth is measured by the degree of sense control it exercises. Hence, all the activities of the child should be directed from selfishness towards selflessness. The foremost thing a child is offered ought to be food for the mind, though food for the body is equally important.

Wholesome food for the mind of the entire humanity is considered in the two Indian epics—Ramayana and Mahabharata. There is succour in them for man at all stages of evolution.

From childhood to sainthood all have their moral and spiritual food contained in these two epics.

The scheme in them is fascinating from the beginning to the end. And the theme can be summed up in the following four words: 'Satyam, Vada, Dharmam Chara.'

The spiritual treasures acquired by sages all through the ages are contained in these two statements. These two epics are standard text books of the nation of its culture and accomplishments.

Advising child to speak truth is not just the right way of teaching it. All codes should be imbibed by the growing child.

The heroes and the heroines of the two epics are models to mankind in different walks of life. Opposite to them are the villains in these two treasure houses of right living.

A teacher with average capacity and ability can make students take keen interest in their studies of these absorbing books.

Unconsciously, the student becomes the votary of the sterling characters and disdainers of bad characters. And this is the beginning of students evolving on right lines. Mind imbibes what it is fond of and abstains from what it dislikes. Through the study of these two great epics, India has produced sterling characters. This is truly national education producing men and women of divine type.



The functioning of mind is well represented to the common man through the symbol of Manasarovaram Lake. Mansarovaram is about forty miles to the south of Mount Kailas in the Western Tibet.

This lake is spread over 56 miles in circumference. It looks more like an ocean than a lake. It is fed by thawing snow all around it. The river Indus has its source on the north-west corner of this lake.

Similarly, the mighty river, Brahmaputra has its source on its south-east corner. Because of the depth of the lake it looks greenish in colour.

Mount Kailas is situated to the south of Manasarovaram and Mount Mandatha to the west. A visitor described the setting of Manasarovaram as a sapphire in between diamonds. A more apt and poetic description than this cannot be found anywhere. The snow-white sandbed at the bottom of the lake can be seen with naked eyes because of the purity of its waters.

Manasarovaram is viewed as sacred by both the Hindus and Buddhists. Because of its purity, they say it represents the mind of the ancient sages, reflecting calmness and serenity. Till 9 o'clock in the morning, the lake is still. No rift is found in it anywhere. Therefore Mount Kailas is reflected lucidly in it. Parallel to the purity of the water in this lake is the purity of the minds of the sages

and saints.

Therefore, truth is reflected in the minds of the holy men. After 9 in the morning, the wind sets in and creates waves. As a result, the scene on the surface of the lake changes; neither the sand bed below nor the reflection of the Mount Kailas can be seen in the lake.

The minds of the worldly people are represented by this scene. In other words, the worldly people are full of earthly desires. The divinity enshrined in their heart is, therefore, clouded.

This is the difference between holy men and worldly people. The former are free from desires. Hence, their minds are as clear as the crystal pure waters of Manasarovaram. As the pure and waveless sheet of water of the Manasarovaram reflects Mount Kailas and reveals the clean sand – bed below, so also the holy men's heart reveals the divinity enshrined within. After the realisation of this truth, when a sage directs his gaze outside, he sees the divinity alone permeating the universe everywhere.

Whereas the worldly man, engrossed in base desires and his mind putrefied, sees worldliness everywhere. The wavy water of the Manasarovaram after 9 in the morning represents the way of the worldly man. A more graphic definition of the difference between a saint and a worldly man cannot be found anywhere else.



The ordinary man has his mind engaged ceaselessly. It leads him to activities of all kinds. These activities may be brought under two headings: faith and reason. Faith is the way of the common man, given only to a few in societies to reason cogently. A majority is prompted by faith, faith based On tradition, environment, circumstances and such other factors.

Both faith and reason have their origin in the mind, but their approach to problems is poles apart. Faith does not for evidence.

Reason is public, faith is private and personal. Science is public, whereas religion is private and personal. Yet, some narrow-minded religionists complain that science is making inroads into religion.

This means truth is making inroads into religion. But mankind cannot live in compartments as belonging to this faith or that.

This aspect of life is religion and the other is science. Division of mankind on any ground has no place in life.

Science is enquiring into truth and reason is a mighty weapon in its hand. It is here, enquiry into philosophy helps. In other words, enquiry into

truth is philosophy; generalised science can never be separated.

When a religionist is afraid of science, it means that he is afraid of truth. Anyone alien to truth is merely phantom or imagination. No religion should therefore, make bold and become scientists in an imaginary world.

The very purpose of religion is to guide and enable man to evolve into divinity. And that is possible only by living an exemplary life based on truth.

Philosophy applied to life becomes religion. Ideal situation is that all religions should submit themselves to one religion based on truth. A follower of truth can never be a fanatic, whereas the same cannot be said about the man of faith following any one of the organised religions.

-M. S. Rao
Bhavan's Journal
July 15, 2014



Exploring the Path Towards a Nuclear-free World

By Daisaku Ikeda

TOKYO, Mar 29 2014 (IPS) - This past February, the Second Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons was held in Nayarit, Mexico, as a follow-up to the first such conference held last year in Oslo, Norway. The conclusion reached by this conference, on the basis of scientific research, was that “no State or international organisation has the capacity to address or provide the short and long term humanitarian assistance and protection needed in case of a nuclear weapon explosion.”

As this makes clear, almost 70 years after the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, humanity remains defenceless in the face of the catastrophic effects that any use of nuclear weapons would inevitably produce.

Since May 2012, a succession of four joint statements warning of the dire humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons have been issued. These statements have drawn support

from a growing number of states; the Nayarit conference was attended by the representatives of 146 countries.

In summing up the outcome of the conference, the Chair stressed the need for a legal framework outlawing these weapons, whose very existence is contrary to human dignity, stating that the time has come to initiate a diplomatic process to realise this goal. It is highly significant that three-quarters of the member states of the United Nations have expressed their shared desire for a world without nuclear weapons in this way.

Regrettably, the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, the nuclear-weapon states recognised under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), did not attend this meeting. What is needed most at this juncture is to find a common language shared by the countries signing these joint statements and the





nuclear-weapon states.

The movement to focus on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons has emerged against the backdrop of grassroots efforts by global civil society calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons. Crucially, this has included the survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, who have long raised their voices in the cry that no one must ever again experience the horror of nuclear war.

On the other hand, the experience of being in possession of the “nuclear button” that would launch a devastating strike has steadily impressed on several generations of political leaders in the nuclear-weapon states the reality that nuclear weapons are unlike other armaments and cannot be considered militarily useful weapons. This has served as a restraint against their use.

In this sense, the two sides share a sentiment that can bridge the gulf between them – the desire never to witness or experience the catastrophic humanitarian effects of nuclear weapons. This can serve as the basis for a common language

with which to explore the path towards a world without nuclear weapons.

I have repeatedly called for a nuclear abolition summit to be held in Hiroshima and Nagasaki next year in 2015, the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings of those cities. I hope that representatives of the nuclear-weapon states, the countries that have signed the Joint Statement on the Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons, as well as representatives of global civil society and, above all, youthful citizens from throughout the world, will gather in a world youth summit for nuclear abolition to adopt a declaration affirming their commitment to end dependence on nuclear weapons and bring the era of nuclear weapons to a close.

In this connection, I would like to offer some concrete proposals.

The first is for a nuclear weapons non-use agreement. One means of achieving this would be to place the catastrophic humanitarian effects of nuclear weapons use at the centre of the deliberations for the 2015 NPT Review

Conference. Such an agreement would advance the implementation of Article VI of the NPT, under which the nuclear-weapon states have committed to pursuing nuclear disarmament in good faith.

Regions such as Northeast Asia and the Middle East, which are not currently covered by nuclear-weapon-free zones, could take advantage of a non-use agreement to declare themselves “nuclear weapon non-use zones,” as a preliminary step to becoming nuclear-weapon-free. It is my strong hope that Japan – which signed the most recent iteration of the joint statement on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons even while remaining under the nuclear umbrella of the United States – will reawaken to its responsibility as a country that has experienced atomic weapons attack. Japan should play a leading role in the establishment of such a non-use agreement and non-use zones.

In parallel with such efforts within the existing NPT regime, I would also call upon the international community to fully utilise the process now developing around the successive joint statements to broadly enlist international public opinion and catalyse negotiations for the complete prohibition of nuclear weapons.

This could take the form of a treaty expressing the commitment, made in light of the humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons, to the future relinquishment of reliance on these weapons as a means of achieving security, coupled with separate protocols defining concrete prohibition and verification

regimes. Such an approach would mean that even if the entry into force of the separate protocols took time, the treaty would express the clear will of the international community that nuclear weapons have no place in our world.

This coming April 11-12, the Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament Initiative will convene in Hiroshima, attended by the foreign ministers of 12 states. From April 28, the NPT Review Conference preparatory committee will meet in New York. These are opportunities for global civil society to arouse international public opinion and to accelerate progress towards the elimination of nuclear weapons.

The work of building a world without nuclear weapons signifies more than just the elimination of these horrific weapons. Rather, it is a process by which the people themselves, through their own efforts, take on the challenge of realising a new era of peace and creative coexistence. This is the necessary precondition for a sustainable global society, a world in which all people – above all, the members of future generations – can live in the full enjoyment of their inherent dignity as human beings.

-Daisaku Ikeda is a Japanese Buddhist philosopher and peace-builder and president of the Soka Gakkai International (SGI) grassroots Buddhist movement (www.sgi.org). The full text of Ikeda's 2014 Peace Proposal can be viewed at <http://www.sgi.org/sgi-president/proposals/peace/peace-proposal-2014.html>.



Veer Savarkar

We yield to none in our love, admiration and respect for the Buddha-the Dharma-the Sangha. They are all ours. Their glories are ours and ours their failures.

-Vinayak Damodar Savarkar

Veer Savarkar occupies a unique place in the history of Indian freedom struggle. Veer Savarkar was also a great orator, prolific writer, historian, poet, philosopher and social worker. He was an extraordinary Hindu scholar. He coined Indian words for telephone, photography, the parliament, among others.

Early Life

Vinayak Damodar Savarkar was born on May 28, 1883 into a family of jagirdars (landlords) in the village of Bhagpur near Nasik. Vinayak was one of four children others being, Ganesh (Babarao), Mainabai and Narayan, born to Damodarpant Savarkar and Radhabai. Being descendents of a line of Sanskrit scholars, the Savarkars inculcated the love of learning into their children. Vinayak and Babarao were sent to the Shivaji School in Nasik. When Vinayak was nine years old, his mother died of cholera. Damodarpant himself looked after his children thereafter. He organized a gang of kids,



Vanarsena when he was just eleven.

Mitra Mela

Vinayak's father died of plague in 1899. The burden of the family fell on Babarao's shoulders. Vinayak's patriotic spirit found an outlet through an organization called the Mitra Mela that he formed. Vinayak inducted young patriotic men like himself into the Mela. He encouraged the members of the Mela to strive for "absolute political independence for India" by whatever means necessary. In the event of an armed revolt the young crusaders toughened themselves through physical training. The Mitra Mela served the city of Nasik in many ways, especially during the plague when the group carried victims for cremation.

In March 1901, Vinayak was married to Yamunabai, daughter of Ramchandra Triambak Chiplunkar, who agreed to help with Vinayak's university education. After his matriculation examination, Vinayak enrolled in the Fergusson College in Poona in 1902.

The Revolutionary

*One Country, One God
One Caste, One Mind
Brothers all of us
Without Difference
Without Doubt.*

In Pune, Savarkar founded the "Abhinav Bharat Society". He was also involved in the Swadeshi movement and later joined Tilak's Swaraj Party. His instigating patriotic speeches and activities incensed the British Government. As a result the British Government withdrew his BA Degree.

In June 1906, Veer Savarkar, left for London to become Barrister. However, once in London, he united and inflamed the Indian students in England against British rule in India. He founded the Free India Society. The Society celebrated important dates on the Indian calendar including festivals, freedom movement landmarks, and was dedicated to furthering discussion about Indian freedom. He believed and advocated the use of arms to free India from the British and created a network of Indians in England, equipped with weapons.

In 1908, brought out an authentic informative researched work on The Great Indian Revolt, which the British termed as "Sepoy Mutiny" of 1857. The book was called "The Indian War of Independence 1857". The British government immediately enforced a ban on the publication in both Britain and India. Later, it was published by Madame Bhikaiji Cama in Holland, and was smuggled into India to reach revolutionaries working across the country against British rule.

In 1909, Madanlal Dhingra, a keen follower of Savarkar shot Sir Wyllie after a failed assassination attempt on the then Viceroy, Lord Curzon. Savarkar conspicuously did not condemn the act. When the then British Collector of Nasik, A.M.T. Jackson was shot by a youth, Veer Savarkar finally fell under the net of the British authorities. He was implicated in the murder citing his connections with India House. Savarkar was arrested in London on March 13, 1910 and sent to India.

Kalapani

After a formal trial, Savarkar was charged with serious offences of illegal transportation of weapons, provocative speeches and sedition and was sentenced to 50 years' of jail and deported to the Kalapani (Blackwaters) at Andaman cellular jail.

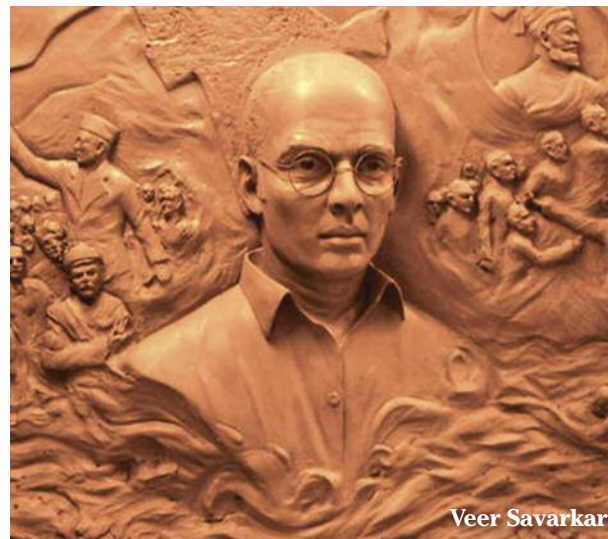
Savarkar arrived at the Andamans prison on July 4, 1911. Life for the prisoners was very harsh. Savarkar's day began at 5 a.m. chopping trees with a heavy wooden mallet and then he would be yoked to the oil mill. If prisoners talked or broke queue at mealtime, their once a year letter writing privilege was revoked. Savarkar withdrew within himself, quietly and mechanically doing the tasks presented to him. He was successful in getting permission to start a jail library. With great effort and patience he taught the illiterate convicts to read and write.

In 1920, Vithalbhai Patel demanded the release of the Savarkar brothers in the Central Legislative Assembly. Tilak and Gandhiji also appealed for Savarkar's freedom. On May 2, 1921, the Savarkar brothers were brought back to India on the S.S. Maharaja.

Savarkar remained imprisoned in Ratnagiri Jail and then in Yeravada Jail until January 6, 1924 when he was freed under the condition that he would not leave Ratnagiri district and abstain from political activity for the next five years. While in Ratnagiri Jail, Savarkar wrote "Hindutva" which was smuggled out and published under the pen-name "Maharatta." On his release, Savarkar founded the Ratnagiri Hindu Sabha on January 23, 1924 which aimed to preserve India's ancient culture and work for social welfare.

Social Service

Through the Sabha, Savarkar worked hard to protect minority rights. During the celebration of Hindu festivals, Savarkar visited Muslim and Christian homes to promote goodwill. He encouraged intercaste marriage and assisted Dr. Ambedkar in the liberation of the untouchables. He appealed for a wider use of Hindi as the mother



tongue and suggested reforms to the Devanagiri script to facilitate printing. While in Ratnagiri he wrote the "Hindu Padpadashashi" and "My Transportation for Life" and a collection of poems, plays and novels.

He toured the nation widely and delivered the simple message that followers of Vedism, Jainism, Buddhism and Sikhism were all Hindus. At declaration of war by Britain on Germany and the arbitrary inclusion of India in the war, Savarkar said that Britain's claim of safeguarding human freedom was simply meaningless.

Final Days

*Oh Motherland,
Sacrifice for you is like life!
Living without you is death!!*

As Savarkar aged, he saw his grim prophecies coming true. China invaded India in 1962 and Pakistan attacked India in 1965. When the Indian Army entered Lahore, Savarkar rejoiced saying that the "best way to win a war was to carry it into the enemy's land." "Veer" Savarkar died on February 27, 1966.

**Source: www.iloveindia.com,
www.swamisamarth.com**



Living with Contentment

Jesus Christ has said, “endure cheerfully the trials of life and thus we will convert them into a ladder leading to living with contentment”.

“The world is the Lord’s creation, He created it for His own play. We are mere pawns. Wherever He keeps us and in whatever way He does so, we have to abide by it contentedly”.

“We suffer as a result of our own actions; it is unfair to blame anybody for it. We have to surrender ourselves completely to the Lord with faith and devotion in Him, serve others to the best of our capacity, and never be a source of sorrow to anybody,” says Holy Mother Sri Sri Sarada Devi.

In the above lofty saying we get clues about how to live a peaceful and contented life in the world. If we realise that the world belongs to the Lord, many of our problems are solved. We hug the world thinking that it is ours and we are born to enjoy here, we are mistaken.

The Eternal Father has created the entire world. His plan is to dignify men with participation in his own divine life.

God has created this world for his own play. Each man is an actor and must learn to play his own part as well as he can. No two of us have the same part to play.

If we think that the entire creation is God’s play, we have no sorrow and we all live happily. We will feel

for others and wish to help them.

Wherever He keeps us and whatever way He does it, we have to abide by it contentedly: God is like the mother cat. The mother cat sometimes keeps its kittens on a sofa-set and sometimes on bare ground. The kittens have no option. They simply cry, mew and mew, and call their mother.

If we remain in the world like the kitten and call our Divine Mother for protection, She will certainly protect us and we will have peace of mind.

We are born in this world according to the results of our past actions. Our present actions will give birth to our future life. Hence it is unreasonable to blame others when we suffer.

A beautiful song in Bengali rendered into English here gives a clear picture of how we suffer of our own actions:-

*“O Mother, I have no one else to blame:
Alas! I sink in the well these very hands have dug.
With the six passions for my spade,
I dug a pit in the sacred land of earth;
And now the dark water of death gushes forth!
How can I save myself, O my Redeemer?
Surely I have been my own enemy;
How can I now ward off this dark water of death?
Behold, the waters rise to my chest!
How can I save myself?
O Mother, save me!*



*Thou art my only Refuge;
with Thy protecting glance
Take me across to the other shore of the world.
We have to surrender ourselves completely to the
Lord with faith and devotion in Him"*

-Sri Krishna has said in the Bhagavad Gita:
"Renounce all dharmas and take refuge in Me
alone. I shall liberate you from all sins; grieve not."

It's a state of complete self-surrender. It is like
lounging and taking rest after the day's hard toil—
free from care and grief. Undefinable Bliss
emanates from it.

How to serve others the best? Swami Vivekananda
has the tip-off. He says:- "Look upon every man,
woman and every one as God. You cannot help
anyone, you can only serve: serve the children of
the Lord, serve the Lord Himself, if you have the
privilege. If the Lord grants that, you can help any
of His children, blessed you are; do not think too
much of yourselves. Blessed you are that that
privilege was given to you when others had it not.
Do it only as worship. I should see God in the poor,
and it is my salvation that I go and worship them.
The poor and the miserable are for our salvation,
so that we may serve the Lord, coming in the shape
of the lunatic, coming in the shape of the diseased,
the leper and the sinner!"

"Bold are my words; and let me repeat that it is the
greatest privilege in our life that we are allowed to
serve the Lord in all these shapes. Give up the idea
that by ruling over others you can do any good to
them. But you can do just as much as you can in
the case of the plant; you can supply the growing

seed with the
materials for making
up of its body,
bringing to it the earth,
the water, the air, that it
wants. It will take all that it
wants by its own nature, it
will assimilate and grow by its
own nature."

If we want never to be a source of sorrow to
anybody, practice the following habits:

- a) Learn to renounce your will in many things;
- b) Practice interior mortification and true humility.
- c) Remember that we have come to the world to
serve, not govern.
- d) Judge not others rashly that you be not judged
in the same manner.
- e) Respect and love ought to be extended to those
who think or act differently;
- f) Don't ever esteem yourself better than others.
- g) It is great wisdom not to be rash in our doings;
nor to persist obstinately in our own opinion.

In order to live a contented life, learn to be a real
child of the Lord, no matter what happens, and
pray to Him to give unwavering faith in Him and in
ourselves. We must make the Lord our all in all.
Then nothing will affect us. We will be safe at all
times, wherever we are, if we maintain contact with
the divine consciousness in us.

-Swami Sudarshananda

Source: Bhavan's Journal, June 30, 2013





Jawaharlal Nehru, gave this following speech as India's first Prime Minister to the Constituent Assembly in New Delhi at midnight on August 14, 1947. Though this speech is full of ideals and embellishments to inspire a nation, about to make a new beginning, it is historic and can be recognized as the first voice of Independent India.

‘Awake to freedom’ “Long years ago we made a tryst with destiny, and now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge, not wholly or in full measure, but very substantially.

At the stroke of midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom. A moment comes which comes but rarely in history, when we step out from the old to the new, then an age ends, and when the soul of a nation, long suppressed, finds utterance. It is fitting that at this solemn moment we take the pledge of dedication to India and her people and to the still larger cause of humanity.

At the dawn of history India started on her unending quest, and trackless centuries are filled with her striving and the grandeur of her successes and her failures. Through good and ill fortune alike she has never lost sight of that quest or forgotten the ideals which gave her strength. We end today a period of ill fortune and India discovers herself again.

The achievement we celebrate today is but a step, an opening of opportunity, to the greater triumphs and achievements that await us. Are we brave enough and wise enough to grasp this opportunity

and accept the challenge of the future?

Freedom and power bring responsibility. That responsibility rests upon this assembly, a sovereign body representing the sovereign people of India. Before the birth of freedom we have endured all the pains of labour and our hearts are heavy with the memory of this sorrow. Some of those pains continue even now.

Nevertheless, the past is over and it is the future that beckons to us now.

That future is not one of ease or resting but of incessant striving so that we might fulfill the pledges we have so often taken and the one we shall take today. The service of India means the service of the millions who suffer. It means the ending of poverty and ignorance and disease and inequality of opportunity. The ambition of the greatest man of our generation has been to wipe every tear from every eye. That may be beyond us but so long as there are tears and suffering, so long our work will not be over.

And so we have to labor and to work, and work hard, to give reality to our dreams. Those dreams



are for India, but they are also for the world, for all the nations and peoples are too closely knit together today for any one of them to imagine that it can live apart. Peace has been said to be indivisible, so is freedom, so is prosperity now, and so also is disaster in this one world that can no longer be split into isolated fragments.

To the people of India whose representatives we are,

we make appeal to join us with faith and confidence in this great adventure. This is no time for petty and destructive criticism, no time for ill-will or blaming others. We have to build the noble mansion of free India where all her children may dwell."

- Speech by Jawaharlal Nehru

Source: www.theholidayspot.com

East Asia should build Resilience through Disaster-relief Cooperation

by Daisaku Ikeda

With the third anniversary of the Great East Japan Earthquake upon us, I would like to offer my most sincere prayers for the peaceful repose of the victims of the earthquake and tsunami. The catastrophe instantly took away from so many people their loved ones and their homes. Still so many are forced to live as evacuees. We must continue to work for the full recovery of the affected areas.

In addition to this catastrophe, recent years have seen increasing incidence of serious destruction from extreme weather events. In 2013 alone, Typhoon Haiyan caused severe damage in the Philippines and Vietnam, and heavy rain brought flooding in Central Europe and India. There have been unprecedented cold spells and heavy snowfalls this year in many parts of the world.

Today at least 110 countries around the world consider the effects of climate change such as extreme weather to be a “serious national security issue.” This represents an important change as, in the past, many governments viewed climate change as just another environmental issue and accorded it a lower priority compared to economic growth.

I would like to propose the establishment of

regional cooperative mechanisms focused on reducing damage from extreme weather and disasters, strengthening resilience in regions such as Asia and Africa. These would function alongside global measures developed under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Resilience is a term originally derived from physics, describing the elasticity or ability of a material to return to its original form after having been subjected to an external stress. By analogy, resilience has come to be used in a wide range of fields to express the capacity of societies to recover from severe shocks, such as environmental destruction or economic crisis.

In the case of natural disasters, improving resilience means enhancing the entire spectrum of capacities — from efforts to prevent and mitigate damage to measures that aid the afflicted and support the often long and laborious process of recovery.

There are three aspects to the response to extreme weather events and other disasters: disaster preparedness, disaster relief and post-disaster recovery. It is not uncommon for immediate relief assistance to be provided by other countries, but







international cooperation in the other two areas still tends to be the exception.

A system of cooperation for responding to extreme weather and other disasters could effectively be built on relations among neighboring countries because, unlike relief efforts immediately following a disaster, preparedness and recovery require sustained cooperation. Such cooperation is facilitated by geographic proximity, as is the sharing of lessons and knowledge on preparedness among countries exposed to similar threats.

I believe that immeasurable value could be brought to an entire region through cooperation regarding extreme weather and disasters among neighboring countries — the possibility of transforming their understanding of and approach to security.

Above all, the unpredictable nature of extreme

weather and natural disasters and the sense of vulnerability they provoke can open the door to empathy and solidarity across national borders.

Furthermore, measures to enhance security in this way would not lead to what has been called the “security dilemma,” a vicious cycle in which the steps that one state takes to heighten security are perceived by other states as an increased threat, causing them to respond with similar measures, only leading to further mistrust and tension. The knowledge, technology and know-how that facilitates cooperation in the area of disaster relief is such that its value to all parties is enhanced through sharing. This is in contrast to the secrecy that typically surrounds military-based technologies and information.

I urge that the pioneering initiative for such regional cooperation be taken in Asia, a region





severely impacted by disasters. A successful model here will inspire collaborative work to strengthen resilience and recovery assistance in other regions. A foundation for this already exists: The ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), whose members include the ASEAN countries as well as China, Japan, North Korea and South Korea among others.

Making disaster relief one of its security priorities, ARF has in place a framework for regularly discussing better ways of cooperation. ARF has conducted three disaster relief exercises to date, consisting of civil-military coordinated drills involving medical, sanitation and water supply teams from various countries.

I would like to propose an Asia recovery resilience agreement, as a framework drawing on the experience of ARF.

Another important avenue for promoting disaster preparedness, an integral aspect of resilience, is face-to-face exchanges and cooperation among local government bodies in various countries through sister-city agreements.

I urge that Japan, China and South Korea take the initiative in mutually strengthening resilience through such relationships. Currently there are 354 sister-city agreements between Japan and China, 151 between Japan and South Korea and 149 between China and South Korea.

Building upon this foundation, ties of friendship and trust could be made even stronger through collaborative efforts to strengthen resilience, including disaster prevention and mitigation.

Members of the younger generation could take the lead in this. Sister-city exchanges and cooperation





would then evolve into collective action connecting cities across national borders, eventually creating spaces of peaceful coexistence throughout the region.

If we are incapable of making sincere efforts to cultivate friendly relations with our neighbors, how can we presume to speak of contributing to global peace?

The spirit of mutual aid demonstrated in times of disaster should be the basis of day-to-day relations among neighboring countries. I strongly urge that a Japan-China-South Korea summit be held at the earliest opportunity to initiate dialogue toward this kind of cooperation. Ideally, this should include

cooperation on urgent environmental problems.

The 3rd World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction to be held in Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture, in March 2015 should serve as an impetus for further exploration of the modalities of concretizing such cooperation.

By taking up this challenge, we have the opportunity to generate new waves of value creation — not only in Asia, but throughout the world.

Daisaku Ikeda is president of Soka Gakkai International and founder of the Toda Institute for Global Peace and Policy Research. His 2014 peace proposal can be read at www.sgi.org.



The Spiritual Process to Build a Nation is Ashwamedha

The word Yagna, which is described by scriptures as *bhuvanasya nabhih*—the core nucleus of the universe, actually means—best altruistic deeds or selfless actions. The entire universe sustains on this all-pervasive principle of ‘selfless actions performed for the benefit of others’. So Yagna is the foundational principle of the Universe.

Scriptures describe creation of universe in an allegoric form. A stalk of lotus emanated from the navel of Lord Vishnu. On its tip bloomed a lotus. The Lord of creation, Brahma, appeared in that lotus and created the universe.

What is this nucleus from which the universe came into being? Scriptures say: “Yagno Vai Vishnuh” (Vishnu is nothing but Yagna itself) and so Yagna becomes “*Bhuvanasya nabhi*”: the divine navel.

The stalk of the lotus is the first altruistic action taken in the universe and blooming of lotus signifies further development and acceptance of selfless actions as the founding principle. All the beneficent, creative powers emerging as a result of selfless actions was given the name—Brahma.

Then, in order to maintain balance and to



*With Ashwa as the symbol of mobility, valour and strength and the ‘medha’ as the symbol of supreme wisdom and intelligence, the natural meaning of Ashwamedha is—
“combination of valour and strength and illumined power of intellect”*



sustain further development of this new creation, it was felt imperative that the discipline of Yagna should be strictly followed and untiring altruistic efforts must be sustained uninterruptedly. This command was strictly followed, as Sun, Moon, air, fire, water, earth—all the physical entities—started nourishing, protecting and developing this creation (the universe) by following the discipline of Yagna and carrying out selfless actions. Seas, clouds, mountains, rivers, plants, trees, etc all adopted selfless deeds as their fundamental principle. Animals, birds, worms, insects, etc also started living in harmony with nature, in accordance with the discipline of Yagna.

The most evolved creature, man, adopted the divine doctrine too and held it in great reverence. He instituted organized societies and began to live and share with others his love, respect, understanding and cooperation. Divine blessings showered over the humanity in the form of Satyug (golden age) as a result of man’s sustained altruistic actions, and Satyug stayed with humanity for a long time.

With the passage of time, when humanity started deviating from the core principle of altruism, several rituals of Yagna were developed in order to train people and instill into their lives the disciplines of Yagna. Multiple forms of ritualistic Yagna were created and conducted from time to time to help the misled people and disordered societies to understand and revert to the founding principles of creation. Examples of some of these rituals are:

- i) Dev Yagna—to develop divine tendencies,
- ii) Nra-Yagna—to teach respect and affection towards the guests and other human beings,
- iii) Bhut-Yagna, Bali-vaishva Yagna—to nurture innumerable living beings on the earth.

Several other Yagnas were created like Gomedha, Ajamedha. Etc. These were spiritual experiments prescribed to protect and increase the produce from useful cattle. Later on, the word “medha” was begun to be interpreted incorrectly as sacrifice or killing animals. Truly, the word ‘medha’ is a synonym of yajna.

Ancient scriptures also describe some more very interesting and grand Yagnas which were designed for the collective benefit of the whole humanity. Some of these are:

- i) Bajpeya yajna for furthering benevolent tendencies in the society,
- ii) Rajsuya yajna for establishing political discipline and finally
- iii) Ashwamedha yajna for creating a strong united, strong and progressive nation. Ashwamedha is the most exalted among these Yagnas and has been aptly called the King of Yagnas. Ashwamedha is not just an ordinary ritualistic Yagna, it is a profound spiritual procedure.

The Concept of Ashwamedha Yagna

The common meaning of Ashwa is taken as horse and this is not incorrect in the ordinary usage. But, in the spiritual context, Ashwa means that which is fast

The entire universe sustains on this all-pervasive principle of 'selfless actions performed for the benefit of others'. So Yagna is the foundational principle of the Universe. Sun, Moon, air, fire, water, earth—all the physical entities—started nourishing, protecting and developing this creation (the universe) by following the discipline of Yagna and carrying out selfless actions

paced. The term Ashwa has been used for the qualities like fickleness, activeness, swiftness which are also commonly found in horses. In fact, scriptures at different places, refer to Lord Indra as Ashwa, Sun God as Ashwa, sacrificial fire as Ashwa and so on.

And what is medha? The word medha is synonym of Yagna, as described earlier. Medha means slaughter too but this meaning is completely out-of-context in spiritual discussion. In fact, religious texts call hatred, killing, barbarity etc. as "Ayagniya" (i.e. completely against the true spirit of Yagna). A more contextually appropriate meaning of medha is highly evolved discretionary wisdom.

With Ashwa as the symbol of mobility, valour and strength and the 'medha' as the symbol of supreme wisdom and intelligence, the natural meaning of Ashwamedha is—"combination of valour and strength and illumined power of intellect". Ashwa is the symbol of muscle power and medha is the symbol of mental strength and their combination makes a great, sacred deed of Yagna. It is the combination of illumined thinking power and dedicated selfless endeavours that may create an ideal society and nation. This is the reason, why the making of a nation has been called Ashwamedha.

The most important objectives of large scale Ashwamedha Yagnas is to awaken the dormant genius of the masses. It is the genius of man which makes him different from other living beings. It is on its basis that he, as a scientist, has explored the secrets of nature. It is the miracle performed by the human genius which has enabled him to propagate several theories of philosophy, to pile up huge volumes of literature, to form the society and the methods of its governance and to transform this earth into such an elegant culture and civilization.

In spite of all this, that is, despite a huge potential

store of genius filled within the human consciousness, it does not get a chance to come out and show itself due to the pressure of evil tendencies embedded in subconscious layers of our psyches. Normally, wood floats on water. But if a huge stone is tied to it, it cannot float and sinks in water. In spite of being adorned with excellent qualities, a human being does not remain in a position to demonstrate his real identity once he ties a rock of wickedness on his head. The distortions in our society today are only due to evil tendencies ingrained in peoples' minds.

To fight and eliminate these, and to simultaneously work on re-creating the golden era, is possible only by the awakened geniuses—learned, refined and intelligent persons. At the hour of need, such persons come forward and row the boat of the culture- society, safely past the troubled waters. The effort that is needed to awaken such geniuses not only in the society or nation but also on a global scale cannot be done by worldly or physical means. The desired results can be accomplished only through a well-planned spiritual process conceptualized and executed in the subtle world. Ashwamedha Yagna is exactly that process of establishing a new world order.

-Based on writings of Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya and extracted from Hindi Akhand Jyoti Magazine (Nov 1992)

-Kamlesh Chaudhary, an IT professional involved with All World Gayatri Parivar and other social and spiritual organisations, contributed towards getting Hindi started in schools in Australia.



The Dynamism of Feedback Mechanism



The term Feedback broadly means any information regarding the result of a process or a work or an experiment or an enquiry, or an opinion or an observation or a report or any other aspects of this nature.

A feedback can be about service offered, extended, performance rendered, events organised and coordinated individually or collectively, for instance a surgeon conducts a serious operation or a team of surgeons carrying out a complicated surgery.

Feedback mechanism is a common practice and it is a useful tool used universally. It is as old as man's quest for improvement.

Feedback system is in operation in all walks of life, in all dimensions of business and service. Some are direct and some indirect. Feedback is an easy source for the obtainment of authentic information on the subject matter.

The dynamism of feedback mechanism makes it a defining, refining and rejuvenating methodology.

An important aspect about a feedback is that it should be ordinarily understandable, it is relevant and implementable.

Too much criticism of anything is not a feedback in the strict sense of the term. Positive feedback is

more helpful than negative feedback. Positive feedback encourages ongoing improvement while severely negative feedback is a piece of pure discouragement.

Types of feedback:—There are three types such as (1) Positive, (2) Negative and (3) a combination of positive and negative aspects.

Also feedback is available in three ways, that is, (1) by asking for a feedback, (2) without asking for a feedback: there is no formal request or compulsion to provide a feedback yet it comes and (3) the self-feedback.

Feedbacks can be sent to the concerned person directly or it can be sent to a third party, for instance, "Letters to the Editor" is a feedback on certain matters that have appeared in a daily newspaper or in a regular magazine or it can be on reported events that compel persons or institutions or associations to present its action, reaction and pro-action for the information of the public at large.

Effects of feedback:- A feedback information helps introspection, that is, the intended receiver can rate the performance, delete what is not required, add what is required and effectively improve the subject matter under the feedback scanner.

There can be unwanted inputs which can be



removed and wanted new inputs can be included after a careful understanding of the situation.

Feedback, hence, should weigh more on positive aspects. There is self—feedback which every one experiences in terms of a personal evaluation, for instance during the course of a lecture class, feedback instantaneously comes from the listeners in the form of questions, clarifications, doubts, opinions, differences and arguments.

This is a good feedback method because it happens on the spot, perhaps without much malicious thinking or prompting. A teacher or trainer should give freedom to the students to intended to feed and to back up express their thoughts.

When a feedback comes, one has to go through it sincerely, accept what is useful and rationally reject what is irrelevant. There are some feedbacks which are available before the actual event which probably forecast the possible results such as public opinion polls before an election.

The important understanding about a feedback is that whatever information, positive or negative, should be considered as far as possible in order to do justice to the data or information or material available. Feedbacks are intended to feed and to back up with some intellectual food for thought and action.

Positive feedbacks are comforters and negative feedbacks are irritants, still they have to be considered on merit because it may enable structural modification. Criticism kills enthusiasm hence criticism is not relished in general.

If a person seeks feedback, it is for his or her betterment, if an institution seeks a feedback it is for the betterment of the institution. In general,

feedback feeds forward and enables refinement.

Commercial banks, commercial establishments get feedbacks from customers, consumers, clients and try to improve upon its services and products on an ongoing basis.

Uniqueness of feedbacks in matters connected with armed forces: defence services deal Armed services concentrate exclusively on national safety and security matters and it fights against external enemies. Therefore, the urgency in taking the right decision and ensuing action are of utmost priority.

In this hi—tech age, sophisticated armaments play a vital role but adroitness, ingenuity and skill in deploying them matter most.

Two aspects govern military intelligence and action:-

- 1) Strategy— It is the science and art of military command as applied to the overall planning and conducting of large scale combat operations,
- 2) Tactics- means the technique and the application of securing the objectives set by strategy, specifically the art of deploying and directing troops, ships, and aircrafts in efficient manoeuvres against the enemies.

Thus strategy and tactics go hand in hand, yet decisively it is a battle of wits.

-Dr. C. T. George

Bhavan's Journal
July 15, 2014



Schools: Navigating The Quality-Equity Dynamic

Australia currently has an unprecedented dynamic where an increasing number of people are choosing private education for their children, driven by parental perception that private schools are better. This goes against identified international best practice, strips funding and quality out of the public sector and triggers increasing inequality. Australia now has a higher percentage of children in private education than any OECD country, and a staggering socioeconomic and educational divide emerging. By Year 9, students in the bottom 15% socioeconomic group are three years behind those in the top 15%.

PerCapita's report 'Who's afraid of a public school', explores the increasingly mainstream perception that private schooling is better, reveals contradiction in our personal decision making and presents us with a social dilemma. Parents increasingly believe private education is better; but that perception is being created by a decline in confidence, and confidence is being eroded largely by peer opinion. The report reveals that parents are paying high, often stress-inducing, fees while also admitting that "... in the end private school is no guarantee" of career and life success.

There's a general belief that public school is okay for primary school (justified for financial reasons as the best option) but not good enough for high school. Conversely, there's a belief that education received before the age of 7 years is the most important to long term learning outcomes.

When the representative parent sample was asked more specifically why they chose private education, the reasons were not necessarily related to actual teaching quality. Forty-six percent said they chose private schools for the facilities, forty-nine percent said for level of discipline and forty percent said as a

status symbol. Extra-curricular activities were also a reason for people with high educational attainment.

A big influence on parents' decision to go private is peer opinion and, perhaps surprisingly, the higher the parents' education level, the more peer opinion counts. So we have a situation of seemingly irrational but widely held beliefs driving collective decisions that are weakening the overall system.

These dynamics and dilemmas are palpable where I live – a high socio-economic inner city area with plentiful schools, both private and public, the latter of high standard. Popular opinion in the community is that private is better but most parents send their kids to public schools up until Year 3 or Year 5. This has grown to such an extent that student populations in many of the public schools halve after Year 2 and certainly by Year 5. This of course strips resources out of Year 3-6 classes, fuelling a downward spiral. Resources drop, perceived quality drops, parent confidence drops; and so the exodus continues to private schools.

This has gone on to such a degree in the area that there are now not enough public high schools to support the population. Indeed, there are a whole bunch of parents who are priced out of private education and there's now a schooling crisis the government is being forced to address – inadequate public education options in inner city Sydney.

Sitting somewhere in amongst this whole maelstrom, having fallen prey to the single most popular topic of angst-ridden conversation amongst mothers since I became one – 'what school would I be sending my child to?' – I did some research.

Having been educated in the public system but



niggled now by peer opinion that I'd virtually be neglecting my child if we stayed in the local public school, I visited several public and private schools in my area, spoke to many educators and education experts. At the end of this process, I couldn't see where the real, long term value actually was for the private school fees.

Yes, I got a lot of nice morning teas, was shown the facilities designed by world-leading architects and enjoyed some lovely views. Expensive glossy brochures still arrive in the mail regularly showing photos of alumni having a ball playing cricket. From time to time we get letters from my husband's alumni school requesting donations for the school's rowing sheds (alongside the mail from World Vision – always a hard choice)! But we weren't convinced that any of this would make enough of a difference to meeting my child's needs, nor necessarily equip them with the skills needed to meet the mounting challenges the globe and my children's generation will eventually face. Plus, feedback from parents with kids in private schools indicated that the drive for fundraising is no less than in our local public school – despite the significantly greater funding they already receive.

Meanwhile, I engaged more with our local public school – attending P&C meetings, teacher presentations, school vision building forums and helping in the classroom. Now, I meet with the school when there are individual needs to be addressed. I've learnt that when you get involved, you influence the quality of your child's public education.

Every school is a reflection of the community it serves. The best performing schools in my area are

without doubt the ones with the greatest parental engagement. And in my experience, changing my behaviour and conversations with my peers from one of frustration and negativity to one of engagement and proactivity, helps change perceptions, and mood, in the parent cohort.

My husband and I may be a personal case study for the quality-equity dynamic I believe needs to be maintained. I came through the public education system in a middle class area that at the time had one of the state's best schools, while my husband was educated at an elite private school in a wealthy area. Yet we've both ended up in exactly the same place in our career opportunities and life. Not because of our socioeconomic origins, but because of equal access to quality education, employment opportunities and working hard for where we wanted to go.

As a consumer strategist with experience of consumer psychology, a defining issue for our education seems to be galvanising parent confidence through the collective conversations being had – including in the media and government. We see every kind of market rise and crash based on consumer confidence. The question is, are we going to let our education system fall prey when we have the influence to change it?

Julie Phillis is a consumer marketing strategist, communications consultant, wanna-be social innovator, mother of two and recovering survivor of the First World social phenomenon of school-choice anxiety.

Source: Julie Phillis
Ethics Quarterly
22 July 2014

NONVIOLENCE MONTH

2 October - 1 November 2014

It will be an Australia-wide event in collaboration with the major universities in every major City - Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Brisbane, Perth, Hobart, Darwin.

Activities including educational lectures/workshops, talking to prison inmates, Police personnel, some musical and sports activities.

We seek your support / active participation preferably in the following manner:

Mark any of your proposed activities

during the month of October as part of the Nonviolence Month

Hold a lecture series on educating the concept of nonviolence and its implementation in day to day life in any university / institution in Australia

Dedicate any literary / sports activities at any of the universities / institutions to promotion of the cause of Nonviolence

Introduction to any of your high profile peace partners in the manner suitable/ appropriate to you.



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History, Fairs and Festivals

History

The history of India is shrouded in antiquity. India is one of the cradles of civilization with a history dating back more than 9,000 years. Indian history begins with the birth of the Indus Valley Civilization and the coming of the Aryans. We can summarize its vast and extensive history as below.

Maurya's Empire

Came to power in 321 BC. The empire reached its peak under Emperor Ashoka who converted to Buddhism in 262 BC. Ashokan edicts and pillars can be seen in Delhi, Gujarat, Orissa, Sarnath in Uttar Pradesh and at Sanchi in Madhya Pradesh. In 319 AD, Chandragupta II founded the Gupta Empire. The arts flourished during this period, with some of the finest work being done at Ajanta, Ellora, Sanchi and Sarnath.

The Mughal Era

In India lasted from 1526 to 1858. The Mughal dynasty was established by able Muslim rulers who came from the present day Uzbekistan. The Mughal rule in India saw the country being united as one single unit and being administered under one single powerful ruler. During the Mughal period, art and architecture flourished and many beautiful monuments were constructed. The rulers were skillful warriors and admirers of art as well. Some of the wonderful monuments built during the Mughal reign are Taj Mahal, Fatehpur Sikri, Fort in Agra and Red Fort and Humayun's Tomb in Delhi.

British Empire

It was in the 17th century that the Europeans came to India. This coincided with the disintegration of the Mughal Empire, paving the way for regional states. The British established its colony in 1757 in east of India (Bengalen) after a war with the French. They expanded their influence thereafter and controlled most of present day Indian Pakistan by 1857. A rebellious outbreak in India in 1857 led to the transfer of all powers from the East India Company to the Crown in England. In 1858, the Mogul rule finally breathed its last after which the Empire created British India and styled the Empire of India as well. Although Britain ruled most of India but it also had local treaties with the feudal local rulers. The first steps towards self-governance were taken by late 1800s by the British where they appointed Indian councilors to acts as advisories to the British Viceroy and aid in establishment of provincial councils with members in India.

Independence

The anti British struggle became truly a mass movement with the arrival of Mahatma Gandhi (1869 - 1948). It was followed by numerous movements against the British rule. With the passage of time and stubbornness of the Indians the British had come to realize that the day was not far off when they will have to quit India. Successive campaigns had the effect of driving the British out of India in 1947. In the years since independence India has made huge progress and coped with great problems, and has developed its industry and its agriculture, and has maintained a system of government which makes it the largest



democracy in the world.

Fairs and Festivals

India is worldly known as a land vibrant celebration; one can see the culture and life of India during the celebrations of various fair and festivals, celebrated with high sprit in each and every town in India. By and large the flow of festivals continues through out the year in India. There are noble cause and meaningful identity behind each fair and festival, based upon rituals, traditions, legends, monsoon, history, while many express devotion to the deities of different religions. There are religious fair, historical fair, long life marriage based festivals, animal worship fair, cattle fairs, monsoon fair, changing season fair, all festivals denote vivacity, colour, high sprit, dedications, ebullience, peace, power, humanity messages, appetizing food, sports activities, artistic performance, prayers and rituals. Obviously, when it comes to tourism, fair and festivals are on the priority among the tourists to coincide the trip to witness amazing festivals of India.

The major Celebration in India include Holi, Id, Christmas, Diwali, Pushkar Mela, Ganapati, Navaratri, Kumbh Mela, Republic day, Pongal, Onam, Surajkund Mela, Goa Carnival, Snake Boat Race, Desert Festival many more, and these fair and festivals reveals diverse regions, religions and communities. During these celebrations of the fair and festivals, each of them reflects the life style and vigour of the people. Most of the celebrations are based on rituals of prayers, exchanging goodwill, decorating houses, wearing new clothes, Jewellery,

Pongal



music, singing, and dance and feasting.

All Indian fair and festivals have lots of diversity according to the culture, life style, language, religion of each states and region, like Durga Puja (Navaratri) is major festivals of West Bengal, Ganapati in Maharashtra, also in the western and eastern parts of India, Pongal in Tamilnadu, Onam in Kerala, Goa Carnival, Christmas and New Year in Goa, car Festival of Puri, Pushkar fair in Rajasthan, Snake boat fair in Kerala, Holi in North India, Kumbh Mela in Haridwar and Varanasi, republic day in Delhi, Diwali is the festivals which is celebrated with almost same sprit all over India.

If someone wants to see the deep roots of the culture, belief, life style, living, food, art, traditions of India, the fair and festivals are the window to view the true colour of India.

Pongal

Pongal is one of the most wonderful and harvest festival of Tamilnadu. India being an agriculture country, where 70% of population of India live in villages and depends on agriculture. Therefore most the big events of fair and festivals are related to cultivation. The festival alike Pongal are celebrated in all over India with different name, identity and rituals.

Makar Sankranti

Makar Sankranti is a Hindu festival. It is celebrated



throughout India as a harvest festival when farmers bring home their harvest. It marks the beginning of the sun's journey from Dakshinayana to northern hemisphere (the Uttarayan) when it enters the sign of Makar (the Capricorn).

Diwali

Diwali is one of most pulsating and greatest festival among the all the festivals of India, Diwali is celebrated with great enthusiasm all over India, this festival comes after 20 days of Dusshera festival on Amavasya (15th day of dark fortnight). India is known as melting pot of races and religions.

Holi

Also, known as Festival of Colors, Holi is the most anticipated festivals on the Hindu calendar. 'Holi' falls on the full moon, in the month of Phalgun, which spans the end of February and the beginning of March. Holi celebration begins with lighting up of bonfire on the Holi eve.

Dussehra

Dussehra also known as Vijaya Dasami is celebrated as a victory of Ram over Ravana. On this day in Satya Yug, Ram (the eighth incarnation of Lord Vishnu), killed the ten headed king of Lanka, Ravana who had abducted Rama's wife, Sita. Dussehra is the last day of Navratri; it falls on the 10th day of the waxing moon during the Hindu month.

Tyagaraja Festival

The Tyagaraja festival is celebrated in the memory of Tyagaraja. Tyagaraja, a South Indian composer and saint was born in 1767. He has composed a number of Telugu songs in praise of Lord Rama. Many young poets and musicians are inspired by this man's amazing work. Every year, South Indian musicians assemble at Thiruvaiyaru- 13 kms from Tanjore, to sing in his praise. People, young and old, sing in perfect harmony. The melody is such that one cannot remain untouched by its sheer devotion



Shivaratri

and divine resonance.

Gangasagar Mela

Gangasagar Mela is the largest and the most important fair celebrated in West Bengal. This fair is held where a nexus is formed by Ganga and Bay of Bengal. Hence the name Gangasagar Mela. This festival is a major attraction for millions of pilgrims from all over India. It is said that a dip in the Ganga purifies their 'self' and thus 'punya' can be. A special 'puja' is performed which is offered to the Sun God as a thanksgiving for good harvest. It is also believed that the girls who take the holy dip get handsome grooms and the boys get beautiful brides.

Vasanth Panchmi

The ceremonial welcomes spring when people, colorfully attired, especially in bright shades of yellow, dance, sing and make merry. In West Bengal, 'Saraswati' - the goddess of learning is worshipped. The festival is celebrated with great fervor in the university town of Santiniketan.

Shivaratri

All over the country, Shivratri is observed as the



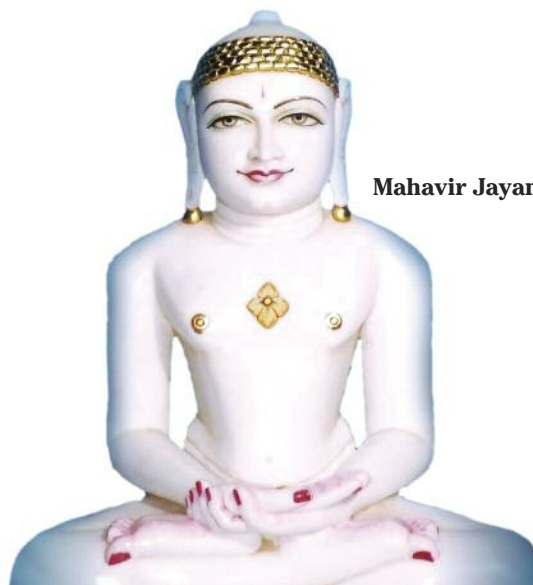
night, when Lord Shiva danced the 'Tandav' - his cosmic dance. Fasts and prayers mark the day and devotees throng the temples. The major Shaivite temples at Varanasi, Kalahasti (Andhra Pradesh) and Chidambaram (Tamil Nadu) are noted for their special celebrations.

Holi

Holi is one of the most exuberant Hindu festival that brings the message of the onset of spring. It is the festival of colors and is celebrated by throwing colored water and powder on each other. Huge bonfires are lit on the eve of Holi as its symbolic representation. The festival of Holi is being celebrated since centuries with the same zeal and zest.

Gangaur

The most important local festival in Rajasthan, Gangaur celebrations last for eighteen days. It is dedicated to Gauri, a manifestation of goddess Parvati. The festival is celebrated by girls and married women throughout Rajasthan. The images of Gauri are ornamented and offerings are made. This is also an auspicious day for young people to select their life partners. Colorful processions with the town band playing, horses and elaborate palanquins make it a fascinating spectacle.



Mahavir Jayanti

Teppam

Teppam is widely celebrated every year in Tamil Nadu from mid-January to mid-February during the full moon month which in Tamil is known as Thai. Fantastically dressed and bejeweled images of the goddess Meenakshi and her consort undaresvara are floated on rafts. All along the shore, the devotees chant hymns as a bevy of bands beat drums in tempo with their chants.

Desert Festival

The desert festival celebrated in the golden city of Jaisalmer has an aura of its own. The festival becomes lively with legions of puppeteers, acrobats, and folk dancers add splashes of color. Camel races are of great significance and camel polo is a big attraction. The turban-tying competitions and the best-dressed Rajput contests add to this three day long festival.

Nagaur Fair

Nagaur bustles with life during its annual cattle fair which is one of the largest in the country. Exciting games and camel races are part of the festivities. Owners of cattles from all over Rajasthan come and camp around the outskirts of Nagaur while they buy and sell animals. This fair is also famous for the

various sports events that are organized in it, Tug-of-war, camel races and cockfights. At nightfall, folk music and songs bring out a magnificent musical touch to the quiet ambience of the desert.

Mahavir Jayanti

Mahasivratri marks the festival of Mahavira, the founder of Jainism. It commemorates the birth of Mahavira. It is mainly celebrated by Jains with great zeal and enthusiasm. They visit sacred sites and worship Teerthankaras on this day. The festival is celebrated on a large scale in Gujarat and Rajasthan.

Ram Navami

Ramnavmi celebrates the birth of Rama, a human incarnation of Lord Vishnu. Ayodhya and Pondicherry, the places which are said to have witnessed the events of Ramayana, are the main centers for this festival. Temples are decorated and prayers are offered. Chariot processions of Ram, Seeta and Lakshman are taken out from the temples with great zest.

Good Friday

This Christian festival marks the memory of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Just as it is celebrated around the world, Good Friday is observed in India, too, in April every year. All Christians attend Mass held in the churches on this day. Following Good Friday comes Easter Sunday, which is also celebrated with great enthusiasm and joy.

Easter

Easter commemorates the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It represents the victory of life over death. Easter is a celebration of Christ's

resurrection from the dead.

Vishu

Vishu is the New Year's Day for the Keralites. The New Year is supposed to bring better knowledge and understanding between all humans. The festival is celebrated with much joyous and happy minds and forgetting all the differences.

Nau Roz

Nau Roz is Kashmir's New Year's Day. On this day, there is a general festivity and rejoicing throughout the state.

Goru Bihu

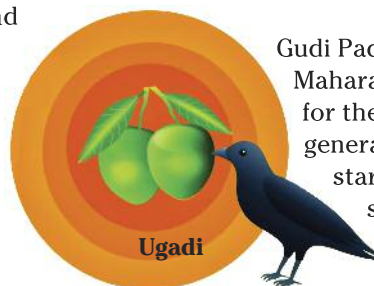
The Goru Bihu, the cattle festival is celebrated on the Hindu New Year's Day that is April or May. On this day, the cattle are washed and decorated. They are smeared with turmeric and are treated to Gur (Jaggery) and Brinjals.

Naba Barsha

This festival is the New Year's Day of the Bengalis. It welcomes the New year with early morning processions, songs and dance. Beautiful designs called Alpana are made on the floor by the house-wife.

Gudi Padva

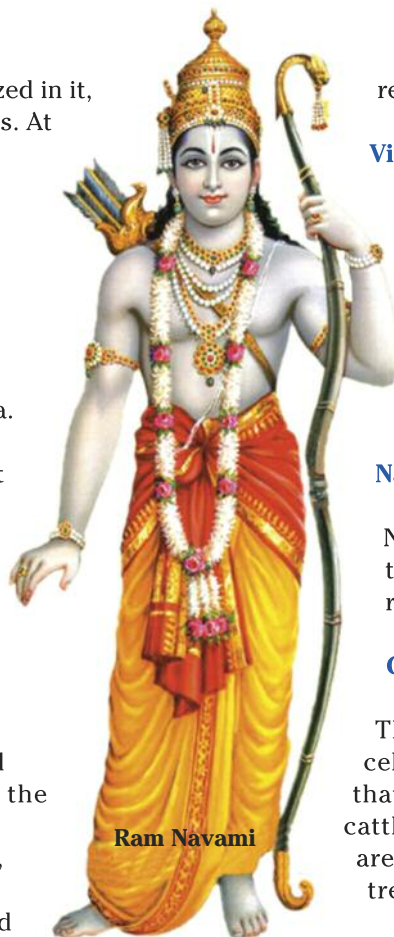
Gudi Padva is widely celebrated in Maharashtra. The day is very auspicious for the people of Maharashtra. It is generally believed that any venture started on this day gives nothing but success.



Ugadi

Ugadi

Ugadi marks the beginning of a new Hindu lunar



Ram Navami

Buddha Purnima



calendar with a change in the moon's orbit. It is believed that Lord Brahma started creation on this day. Ugadi is the Telugu New Year's Day. On this day mantras are chanted and predictions made for the New Year.

Puthandu

It is celebrated as the Tamil New Year's Day. At Tiruvadamardur near Kumbakonam a big car festival is held.

Cheti Chand

This festival reflects the tradition and culture of the Sindhis. It is celebrated as the birthday of Asht Dev. He is believed to be the community God of the Sindhis. His birthday falls on the second tithi (occasion) of Chaitra (the first month of the year according to the Hindu calendar). This day is considered to be very auspicious and is rejoiced with much pomp and splendor.

Buddha Purnima

Buddha Purnima, the birth anniversary of Lord Buddha, is celebrated by Buddhists all over India. But it is very popular in Sarnath and Bodhgaya. The Buddhists offer prayers in their temples on this day. The Buddha was born on a full moon day in the month of Vaisakh in 563 B.C. He achieved enlightenment as well as Nirvana on the same date.

Id-UI-Fitr

Id-ul-Fitr or Ramzan Id marks the end of Ramzan, the month during which the Muslims fast everyday. Ramzan means the 'festival of breaking the fast'. Fitr is derived from the word 'fatar' meaning 'breaking'. Ramzan Id is celebrated on a day when the new moon appears. Prayers are offered in mosques and Idgahs and elaborate festivities are held. The festival is celebrated by the Muslims with great fanfare.

Baisakhi

Held on first 'Baisakh'- the 13th April - Baisakhi is one of Himachal's most important festival. Rooted in the rural agrarian tradition, it bids a final farewell to winter. The Sikhs celebrate this as a collective birthday, filling the atmosphere with gaiety, music, dancing and good cheer. This festival is an opportunity in villages to enjoy with sheer abandon because they know that a season of hard work follows soon after which is the time for harvesting corn and other grains.

Karaga Naba

The dramatic festival of Karaga begins from the Dharmaraja temple in Bangalore. A devotee is chosen and a Karaga or a clay pot is placed on his head. The pot represents Shakti, the mother-goddess of archaic strength. The devotee has to

Baisakhi



Jagannath Rath Yatra



balance the pot as he has a staff and a sword that occupy his hands.

Meenakshi Lalaynam (Chitra Festival)

This 10 day festival takes place at the Meenakshi Temple in Madurai, to celebrate the mythical marriage between Siva and Meenakshi. The Meenakshi temple is one of the most spectacular excessive displays of architecture on earth. The temple has nine towering gopurams and thousands of pillars, covered from top to bottom with some 30 million colorful carvings and gypsum images of gods, demons and animals.

Dhungri Forest Festival

The Dhungri Forest festival is celebrated at the Hadimba or Dhungiri temple in Manali. This four story wooden temple is located in the middle of a forest called the Dhungiri Van Vihar. The Goddess is worshipped by the local women, who arrive in their colorful dresses to perform the ritual dance before her in order to appease her. Legend states that the king who commissioned the temple was so highly satisfied with the results that he cut off the craftsman's right hand to prevent him from duplicating it elsewhere.

Id-UI-Azha Or Id-UI-Zuha (Bakri Id)

Bakrid is celebrated with ritualistic fervor

particularly in Andhara Pradesh. Bakrid is an important festival of Muslims falling in the last month of Islamic Calendar. The significance of the festival is the commemoration of the ordeals of Prophet Ibrahim. On this day prayers are held and goats are sacrificed.

Rath Yatra

This spectacular chariot festival is held at the famous Jagannath Temple at Puri. Images of Lord Jagannath - the Lord of the Universe, his sister Subhadra and brother Balbhadra are taken out in procession in three immense chariots. The procession or Rath Yatra draws huge crowds from all over the country.

Mela Hemis Gompa

A big fair is held at Hemis Gompa about 50 kilometers from Leh, to celebrate the birthday of Padmasambhava, the founder of Lamaism. The ritual dances by masked dancers are the main attraction, as are the main attraction, as are the local handicrafts.

Teej

This Rajasthani festival is celebrated by the women, on the third day of the moonlit fortnight of Shravan, in memory of Goddess Parvati's departure to her husband's home. Besides Rajasthan this festival is also celebrated in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. In the morning Puja is performed. Later, in the evening Young ladies and girls dressed up in lehengas and chunaris to perform dandia dances.

Bonalu

The Bonalu festival is a major welcome for the people of the Telangana region. This festival is an old tradition and is celebrated with undiminished ebullience and religious ardency. This one-month long festival witnesses musical treats and ritualistic worship. The word "Bonalu" has been derived from "Bhojanalu" meaning food, which is offered to the Goddess. The prayers are offered to the village



deities Yellamma, Mahankali, Maisamma, Pochamma, Gundamma. It is also an annual thanksgiving by the people to the Goddess for fulfillment of their vows.

Raksha Bandhan

Raksha Bhandan is celebrated on the full-moon day in the month of Sravana (July-August). The festival of Raksha Bandhan symbolizes love, affection and the feeling of brotherhood. On this day, sisters tie an amulet, the Rakhi, around the right wrist of their brothers praying for their long life and happiness. Raksha means protection, and in some places in medieval India, where women felt unsafe, they tied Rakhi round the wrists of men they could count upon, regarding them as brothers. The tradition of tying a thread or "rakhi" around the wrist to convey different feelings has been coming down through the ages since the Vedic times.

Naga Panchami

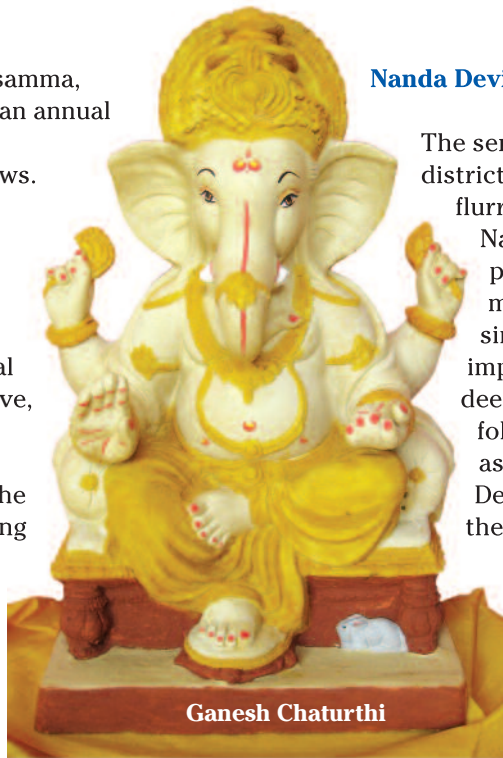
Nag Panchami is observed on the 5th day of the bright half of Shravan (July-August). On this day nag, cobras and snakes are worshipped with milk, sweets, flowers, lamps and even sacrifice. The image of Nag deities made of silver; stone, wood are first bathed with water and milk, and then worshipped with the reciting of the mantras.

Jhapan (Manasa) Festival

This festival is dedicated to Goddesses Manasa, the daughter of Lord Shiva. She is believed to be the divine leader of the fertility cult of snake worship. More popularly, it is celebrated as a festival of snakes. The biggest attraction of this festival is the deadly cobra.



Raksha Bandhan



Ganesh Chaturthi

Nanda Devi Raj Jat

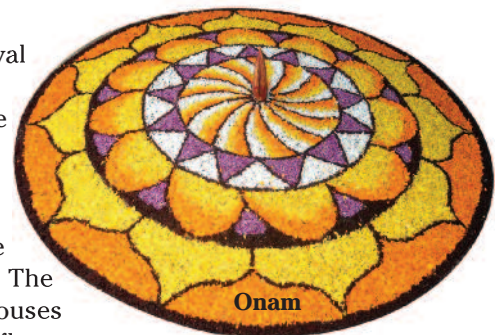
The serene mountains of the Chamoli district of Garhwal reverberates with a flurry of festive activity during the Nanda Devi Raj Jat Yatra, a royal pilgrimage through the precipitous mountains, that has been in vogue since time immemorial. It is an important religious event mired in deep rooted religious tradition, folklore and mythology. The Yatra is associated with the legend of Nanda Devi, a Goddess held in reverence by the local inhabitants of the region.

Ganesh Chaturthi

This day is dedicated to the Lord Ganesha, the elephant-headed god of all good beginnings and success. Held annually, this festival is a ten day long event. The images of Lord Ganesha are installed and worshipped and on the last day these are taken in processions to be immersed in flowing water. The seafront at Mumbai, packed with people, is a spectacular sight.

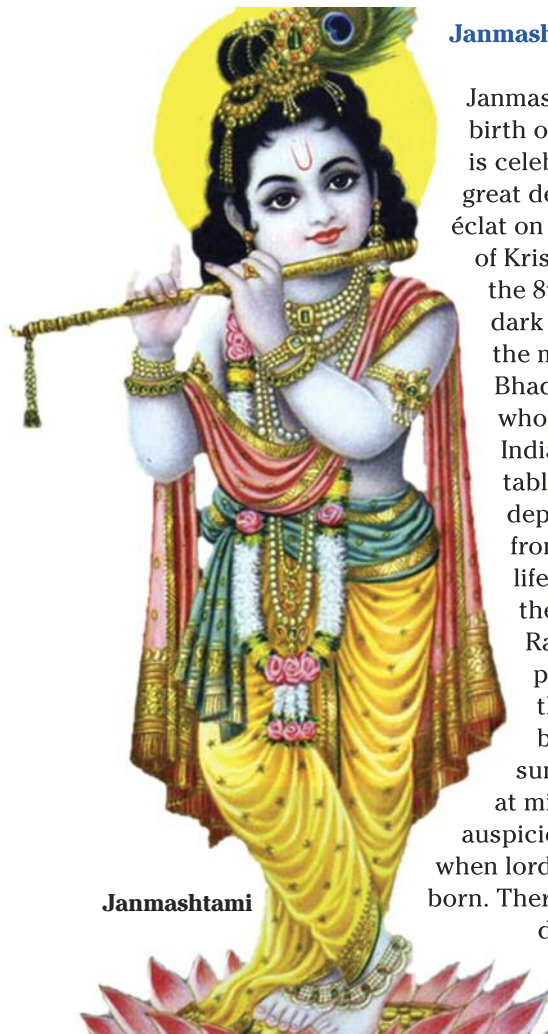
Onam

Kerala's most important festival is celebrated in the honor of the ancient asura king Mahabali. The occasion also heralds the harvest season. The decorating of houses with carpets of flowers, a sumptuous lunch and songs in praise of the golden reign of Mahabali, mark the ten day long festivities. A major attraction of the Onam celebrations is the famed snake boat races along the backwaters at Champakulam, Aranmula and Kottayam.



Onam





Janmashtami

Janmashtami

Janmashtami, the birth of lord Krishna is celebrated with great devotion and éclat on the Ashtami of Krishna Paksh or the 8th day of the dark fortnight in the month of Bhadon, in the whole of north India. Raslila, a tableaux depicting scenes from Krishna's life especially the love for Radha, is performed. In the evening, bhajans are sung, which end at midnight, the auspicious moment when lord Krishna was born. Thereafter, arti is done, prasad distributed and flowers showered on the idol.

Muharram

Muharram is the opening month of the Hijra year. The 10th day of this month (May) is honored by the Muslims of Kerala. Muharram marks the martyrdom of Imam Hussain, grandson of Prophet Mohammed. Taziyas which are bamboo and paper replicas of the martyr's tomb, adorned with mica are carried throughout the streets of the city. The tragedy is expressed by mourners by beating their breasts and grieving over the murder of the Imam accompanied by drum beats. Fasting is an important ritual of this day.



Dussehra

Batkama

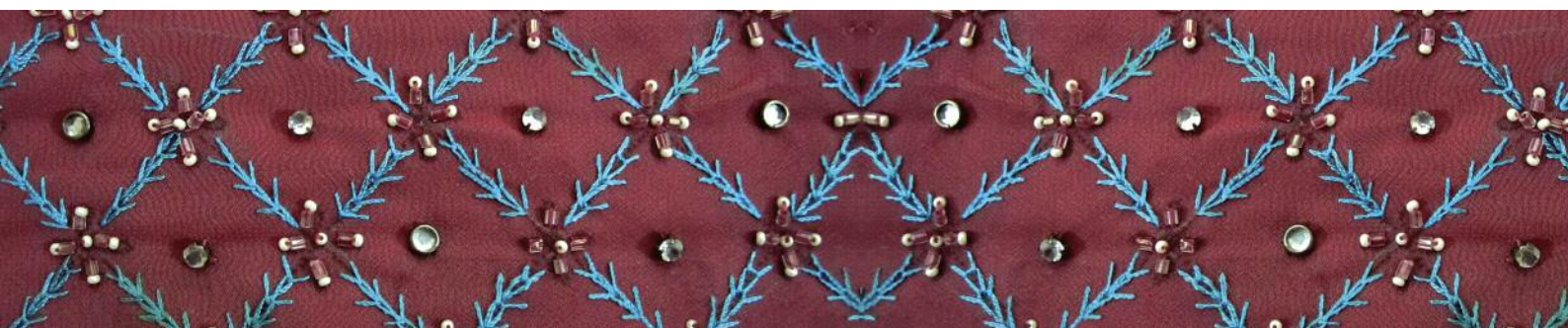
The festival of Batkama in Andhra Pradesh is the most aesthetic occasion. It is basically, a festival of flowers. Celebrated for about a month, The festival commences from the Ganesh Chaturthi and ends on the Dussehra Festival. Flowers are arranged on a square wooden plank or a square bamboo frame with the size of frames in a conical shape to form an apex on top. This little floral mountain represents and is worshipped as Goddess Batkama.

Dussehra

Dussehra or Vijay Dashmi is a very popular Hindu festival, celebrated with éclat throughout the country. It is observed on the tenth day of the bright half of Ashvin (September-October). It is a ten-day celebration, commemorating the victory of Lord Rama over the demon king, Ravana. 'Ramlila' which is based on the epic story of Ramayana, is staged at various places in most of the cities and towns in northern India. During this performance the Ramayana is constantly recited accompanied by music. It presents a fine blending of music, dance, mime, and poetry before an enthusiastic and religious audience sharing every event of the story with the actors.

Id-E-Milad (Barah Wafat)

During this festival sermons are delivered in



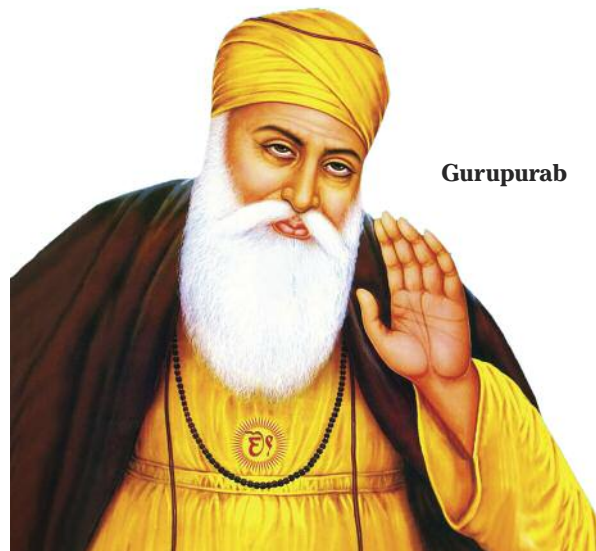
mosques by learned men, focusing on the life and noble deeds of the Prophet who was born on the twelfth day of Rabi-ul-Awwal, the third month of the Muslim year. The word 'barah' stands for the twelve days of the Prophet's sickness. In some parts of the country, a ceremony known as 'sandal' rite is performed over the symbolic footprints of the Prophet engraved in stone.

Diwali

Diwali, the festival of lights, falls on 'Amavasya', the darkest night of 'Kartika'. It symbolizes the victory of good over evil and the lifting of the spiritual darkness that envelops the soul. The festival commemorates Lord Rama's return to his kingdom, Adyodhya after completing his 14 years of exile. The word Deepawali which means rows of lighted diyas (earthen lamps), brings a glow to the humblest home or the grandest houses. Sweets and gifts are exchanged between families and friends amidst the bursting of crackers. Doors are left open on Diwali for Goddess Laxmi. The festive occasion also marks the beginning of the Hindu New Year. Lord Ganesha who is the symbol of auspiciousness



Diwali



Gurupurab

and wisdom worshipped along with Goddess Laxmi on this day.

Gurupurab

Gurupurab or Guru Nanak Jayanti is the birth anniversary of Guru Nanak who founded the Sikh faith. For two days and nights preceding the festival the Granth Saheb (Scriptures) is read. On the day of the festival, the Granth Saheb is taken out in a grand procession. The celebrations at Amritsar are the most impressive. Prayer meeting and processions are carried out particularly in Punjab. Sikh conduct 'langer' {distribution of food} in the Gurudwaras.

Pushkar Fair

This lovely and gigantic fair falls on the last day (Full Moon Day) of the Hindu month of Kartik (Oct – Nov) near the sacred lake of Pushkar. This beautiful lake surrounded by bathing ghats, has its religious significance, rooted in a myth. The fair is primarily dedicated to Lord Brahma, the creator and one of the holy trinity. The colorfully dressed people enhance the exuberant mood of the fair. The fair is the biggest camel market. Thousands of pilgrims gather here, to take a dip in the holy lake. Puppet shows are the other major crowd pullers.



Nagula Chavithi

Nagula Chavithi is celebrated on the fourth day after Deepavali, which falls on a New Moon day. On this day serpents are worshipped with great devotion and religious fervor. On this day women and children observe fast and worship snake god. Dressed in their festive best, they offer milk at the snake hills. On this day there is a great demand for snake hills. Some complete the ritual at home placing a picture or idol of a snake. Nagula Chavithi is celebrated twice a year during the months of Karthika and Sravanam. 'Nagula' means of the snakes and 'Chavithi' is the fourth day after every New Moon or Full Moon day.

Navratri

This celebration in honor of the goddess, the mother of the world, begins on the first day of Ashvin, and goes on for nine days. The goddess is the personification of Power, or "Shakti". She is known by many names: "Kali", "Laxmi", "Sarasvati", "Chandi-ka", "Durga", "Bhavani", "Ambika", "Ashtabhuja" (eight hands). Her main task is to punish the wicked. She is engaged in war, and weapons are in her hands. She sits on a lion. Her weapons are the "shul" (pike), "chakra" (wheel), "parshu" (axe) and "talvar" (sword). Kali is known as "Mahisha-surmardini", the slayer of the demon Mahishasur. The fight against the demon begins on



Navratri



Kumbh Mela

the first day until he is defeated on the ninth day.

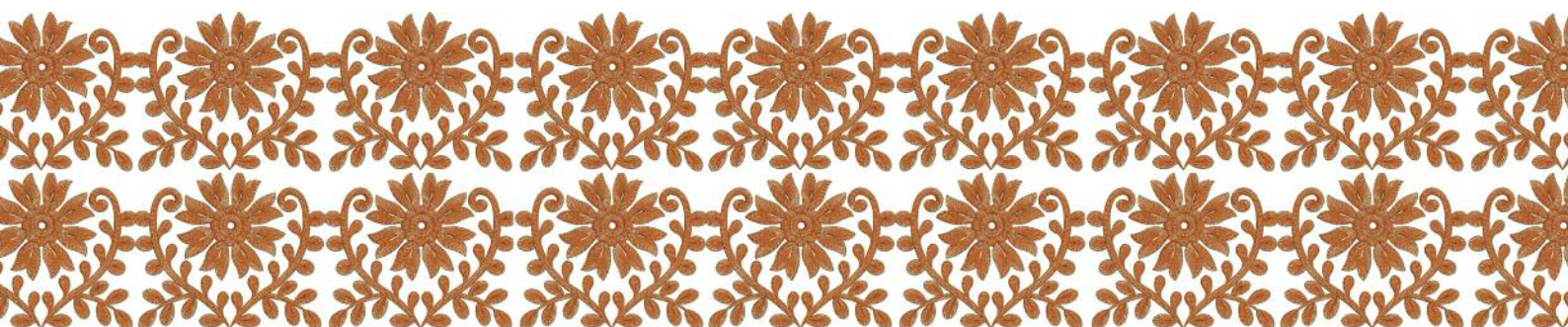
Vaikunth Ekadashi

There are in all 24 Ekadashis observed by Hindus during the year. Vaikunth Ekadashi is observed in November and is celebrated in the honor of Goddess Ekadashi. People fast and pray to the goddess. In Maharashtra, pilgrims march in a procession, singing bhajans or devotional songs and assemble at the Vithal Temple in Pandharpur.

Kumbh Mela

The Kumbh Mela is considered to be one of the most important religious events in India. The origin of the festival lie in the ancient belief in the conflict between the gods and the demons over the possession of the "Amrit Kumbh", a pitcher filled with nectar.

This fair is celebrated in 4 places – Haridwar, Allahabad, Nasik and Ujjain. People, from all over the world, come to participate in this momentous event, drawn by their curiosity about the exotic traditions and the religious mysticism of India. A large number of sadhus gather on the banks of the Ganges to take a dip in the holy river and people bath at the 'Har ke Pauri' Ghat at Haridwar on this auspicious occasion. The noise baffles all description, the shout and cries of ash-smearing sadhus come mingled with the neighing of horses, the trumpeting of elephants, the grunts of camels,



the bellowing of bulls, and as if these are not enough, there are gongs and drums beating, trumpets blaring, conchshells blowing and bells ringing.

Sonepur Livestock Fair

The Sonepur Fair is held on Karthik Purnima (the full moon day) in the month of November in Sonepur (Bihar), on the banks of river Ganga. It lasts for a fortnight and the cattle are decorated for the occasion. It is Asia's largest cattle fair where anything can be bought right from elephants to camels, buffaloes, goats and all sorts of four-legged creatures. The fair becomes a virtual explosion of colors, music, dances, magic shows, cattle, merchants and handicrafts as people from all over the world congregate to participate in this huge

event. It has all the fun and hue of a popular fair, which has religious connotations as well and is enjoyed with a lot of jest and fanfare by all.

Christmas

Christmas is celebrated in India with great fervor. All the major Indian cities wear a festive look. Shops and bazaars are decorated for the occasion and offer attractive bargains. Carol singing, get-togethers and the exchanging of gifts enhance the Christmas spirit. Christmas parties launch off celebrations for the New Year, thus retaining the festive mood for at least a week.

Source: www.india-tourism.net

Christmas



Rahiman Sahib: One of the Makers of Kerala

Muhammad Abdur Rahiman popularly known as Abdur Rahiman Sahib was a freedom fighter and leader of the Indian National Congress, one among the few Malayalees who carved a niche in the national freedom movement. He was the leader of Muslims in Kerala, opposed to the Two—Nation Theory of the Muslim League. He was an excellent orator and a source of strength to freedom fighters.

Following the Moplah Revolt of 1921, Abdur Rahiman worked towards establishing peace in the riot—hit areas, but was arrested by the British authorities and sentenced, to two years Imprisonment in October 1921. During the Salt Satyagraha in 1930, he was brutally lathi charged by the police for breaking the Salt law on Calicut beach and sentenced to nine months rigorous imprisonment and lodged in the Karmur Central Jail.

An admirer of Subhas Chandra Bose, Abdur Rahiman associated himself with the Forward Block. When World War II broke out, he was arrested and

put in jail as a detainee from 1940 to 1945. After release, he returned to Calicut and involved himself actively in the activities, of the Indian National Congress.

Abdur Rahiman started Al- Ameen, a Malayalam daily published from Kozhikode during 1929-1939 and was its editor and publisher. The Daily was started with the aim of strengthening the freedom movement and fostering nationalism among the Muslim community of Malabar. However, conservatives in the community opposed his progressive views and conspired with the colonial authorities to disrupt its publication repeatedly.

In 1930 the government confiscated the press and in 1939 the daily was closed down due to the repressive measures of the British authorities. After independence, AlAmeen was re launched by Moidu Maulavi, a close associate of Abdur Rahiman and it continued for a long time.



Abdur Rahiman was born at Azhikode, Kodungallur in 1898, in the erstwhile Cochin State. He had his primary education from Veniyambadi and secondary education from Calicut. He continued his collegiate education from Madras and Aligarh universities. However, he discontinued his studies at the Aligarh University in order to participate in the Non Cooperation and Khilafat movements, in Malabar.

He was a member of Calicut Municipal Council from 1931 to 1934 and the Malabar District Board of the Madras Presidency from 1932. In 1937 he became the President of the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) and a member of the All India Congress Committee (AICC) in 1939. Along with E.M.S. Narnpoothiripad, he pioneered for the growth of the Left group while still part of Pradesh Congress.

Abdur Rahiman's last political activity was to convene meetings and create awareness among Muslims against the partition of India.

For this, he suffered at the hands of the Muslim League Party in Malabar. This fighter lived only for fifty years and the end came on November 23, 1945 at Pottashery village near Chennamangallur just after addressing a public meeting at Kodyathur.

The Kerala government has taken over Abdur Rahiman's Kodurrgalore and it has been converted into a 'Museum of Freedom Struggle' to celebrate

the sacrifices and achievements of the unsung heroes of Freedom Movement.

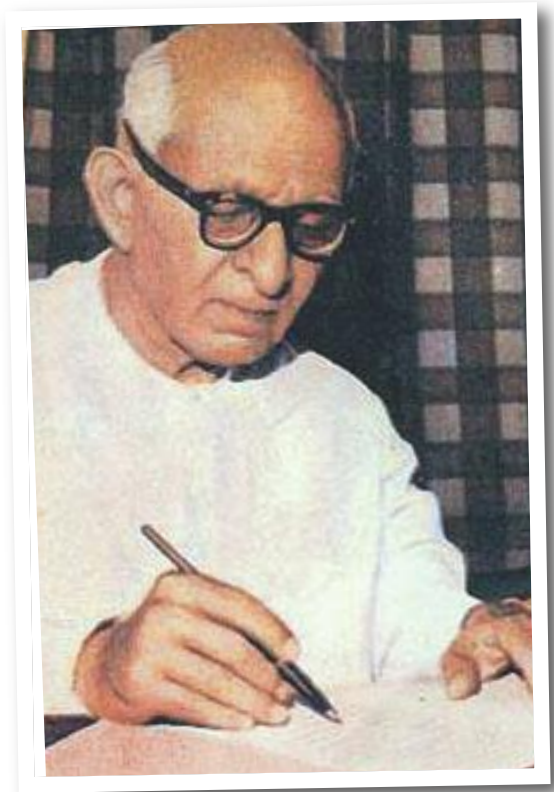
In 1998, the Department of Posts and Telegraphy, issued a commemorative stamp in his honour. The Muhammed Abdur Rahiman Memorial Orphanage College and the Indianness Muhammed Abdur Rahiman Sahib Academy, Kozhikode have been named after him. Akkitham Achutan Namboodiri has written a poem titled Maranamillatha Manushyan in memory of Abdur Rahiman which focuses on religious amity and the need to imbibe his spirit.

In 2011, a Malayalam film titled Veeraputhran based on N.P. Mohammed's book titled Mr Muhammed Abdur Rahiman Oru Novel was released which was directed by P. K. Kunju house at Eriad village near Muhammed. The film is based on the life and achievement of Muhammed Abdul Rahiman which covers the period in Malabar history starting with the arrival of Abdur Rahiman in Kerala at the age of 23, after discontinuing his education in Aligarh, up to his death. The film highlights Abdur Rahiman's contribution to the freedom movement and major events in Kerala history such as Moplah Revolt, Pookkottur Battle and the Salt Satyagraha are recreated in the film.

-V. N. Gopalakrishnan

Bhavan's Journal
July 15, 2014





Kulapativani

Vyas

The greatness of Sri Krishna, however, is not in teaching but in the richest and the most beautiful life, the life that he himself lived, the Life Triumphant.

With him stands Dvaipayana Vyas, the first of prophets, the prime architect of Aryan Culture. He is God and God is he, according to a well-known hymn. He is Brahma but without four faces; Vishnu but with two hands; Shambhu but without the third eye.

Vyas descended from a long line of distinguished Aryan sages. His great-grandfather, Vasishtha, was an early seer of great renown. He led the Tritsu army against Vishwamitra in the Battle of the Ten Kings recorded in the Rigveda. The Vasishthas were also authors of a part of that Veda. Vasistha's son was Shakti, his son was Parasara, the father of Vyas.

He was, therefore, an heir to the noblest traditions of early Aryan culture.

Bhavan's Journal, July 15, 2014

The Test of Bhavan's Right to Exist

The test of Bhavan's right to exist is whether those who work for it in different spheres and in different places and those who study in its many institutions can develop a sense of mission as would enable them to translate the fundamental values, even in a small measure, into their individual life.

Creative vitality of a culture consists in this: whether the 'best' among those who belong to it, however small their number, find self-fulfilment by living up to the fundamental values of our ageless culture.

It must be realized that the history of the world is a story of men who had faith in themselves and in their mission. When an age does not produce men of such faith, its culture is on its way to extinction. The real strength of the Bhavan, therefore, would lie not so much in the number of its buildings or institutions it conducts, nor in the volume of its assets and budgets, nor even in its growing publication, culture and educational activities. It would lie in the character, humility, selflessness and dedicated work of its devoted workers, honorary and stipendiary. They alone can release the regenerative influences, bringing into play the invisible pressure which alone can transform human nature.





*From the pages of Bhavan's
Journal, July 19, 1964*

Union with God

When I see people very anxious to know what sort of prayer they practice, covering their faces and afraid to move or think, lest they should lose any slight tenderness and devotion they feel, I know how little they understand how to obtain union -with God, since they think it consists in such things. -Our Lord expects works from us. If you see a sick sister whom- you can relieve, treat her with compassion; if she is in pain, feel for it as if it were your own, and when there is need, fast so that she may eat. This is the true union of our will with the will of God. If someone else is well spoken of, be more pleased than if it were yourself this is easy enough, for if you were humble it would vex you to be praised. It is a great good to rejoice in your sister's virtues being known and to feel as sorry for the fault you see in her as if it were yours, hiding it from others.

-St. Theresa

Asutosh Gurudev Tagore

Men are always rare in all countries through whom the aspiration of their people can hope to find its fulfilment, who have the thundering voice to say that what is needed shall be done; and Asutosh had that magic voice of assurance. He had the courage to dream because he had the power to fight and the confidence to win, —his will itself was the path to the goal. The complex personality of Asutosh Mookerjee had its various channels of expression. It is not in my power to deal in detail with his many gifts which found scope in so many different fields of achievement.

My admiration was attracted to him where he revealed the freedom of mind needed for work of creation. He had not the dull patience and

submissive efficiency that is content to keep oiled and working the clockwork of an organisation; he despised to try and win merit by diligently turning the official prayer-wheel through an eternity of perfect monotony. He could dream of the miracle of introducing a living heart behind the steel framework made in the doll factory of bureaucracy, though this could only be done through a revolution upsetting the respectability of rigid routine and incurring thereby the displeasure of the high priest of the Machine-idol.

Parentage of Vali-Sugriva

Although Sri Rama had been so familiar with Vali and Sugriva, with the latter as one of his most devoted supporters, he knew little of their parentage except that their father's name had been Riksharajas. Curious to know there about their patents, Sri Rama once asked the revered Sage Agastya when the latter happened to visit his court. The sage replied that the great Narada Muni had told him the story of Vali and Sugriva when Narada Muni had visited him in his tapovan. Brahma was once performing yoga and a few tears flowed from his eyes. The Creator of the universe brushed them away and they fell, a great monkey was born and named Riksharajas and told him. "Go," he said, "to the forest covering this great mountain where the gods dwell and live on the fruits and roots which grow so abundantly there and have such superlative taste. Have an anxiety and, trusting in me, you will find a prosperous future". With deep reverence the monkey replied, "Willingly do I obey you, O Lord, and I shall live always thinking of you with reverence and confidence." Thus did Riksharajas live a happy and contented life on Mount Meru and evening he would visit him the choicest fruits and honey and flowers, which he placed humble worship at Brahma's feet.
(Ramayana – Uttarakanda)

◀ ◀ ◀ *Flashback*



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