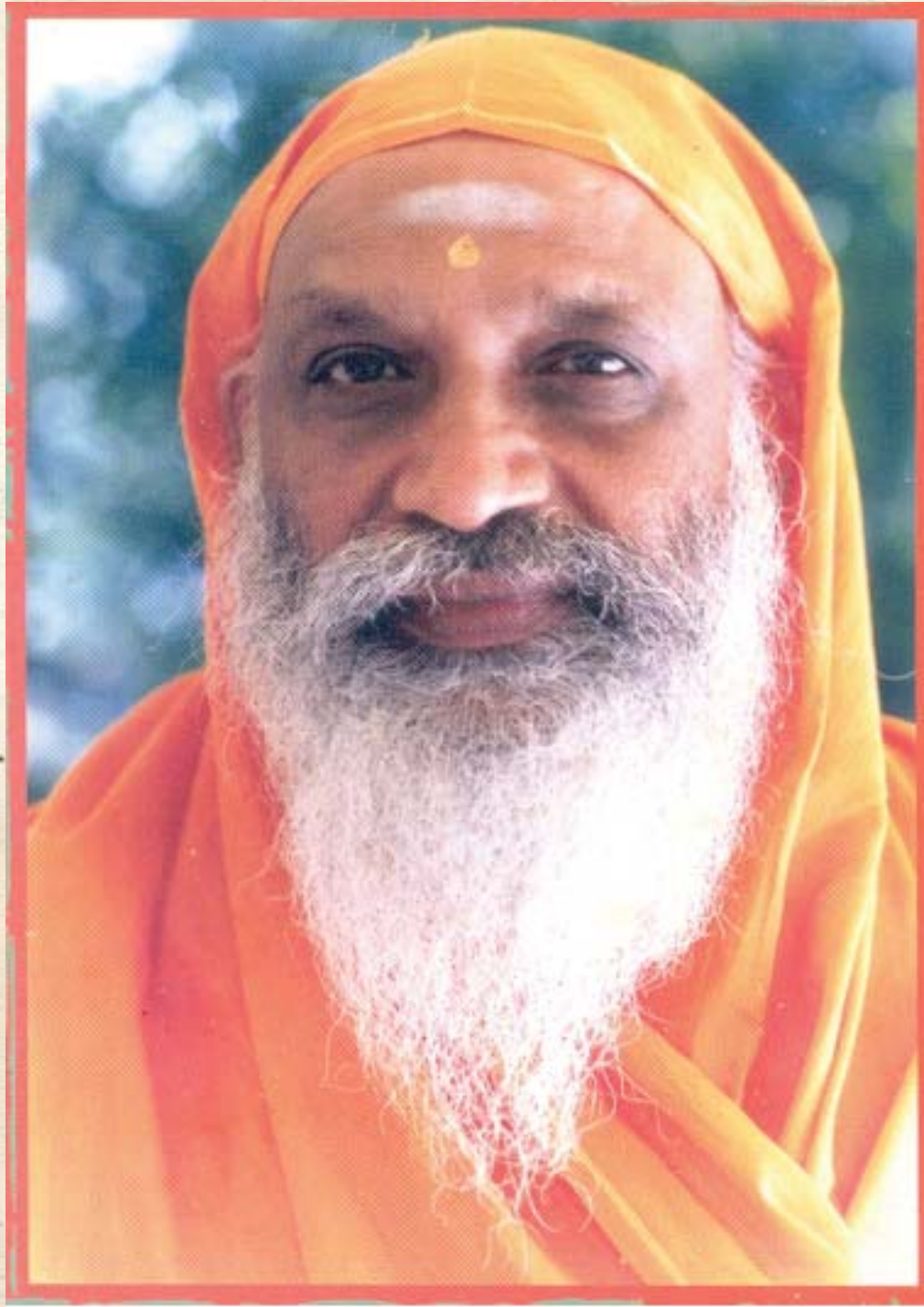




Arsha Vidya Newsletter

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*Arsha Vidya
Newsletter*

In fearless voice may
we proclaim

The Rishi's message
from all house-tops

And bring the men
of different claim

To a fold of Love
where oneness lasts!



Muṇḍakopaniṣad Mantra 3



यस्याग्निहोत्रमदर्शमपौर्णमासम्
अचातुर्मास्यमनाग्रयणमतिथिवर्जितं च ।
अहुतमवैश्वदेवमविधिना हुतम्
आसप्तमांस्तस्य लोकान् हिनस्ति ॥ १ । २ । ३
yasyāgnihotramadarśamapaurṇamāsam
acāturmāsyamanāgrayaṇamatithivarjitaṃ ca ।
ahutamavaiśvadevamavidhinā hutam
āsaptamāmstasya lokān hinasti ॥ 1|2|3

yasya – for the one who performs agnihotra; agnihotram – the agnihotra ritual; adarśam – not accompanied by darśa ritual; apaurṇamāsam – not accompanied by paurṇamāsa ritual; acāturmāsyam – without cāturmāsyam ritual; anāgrayaṇam – without āgrayaṇa ritual; atithivarjitaṃ – without worship of guests; avaiśvadevam – without vaiśvadeva ritual; ahutam – not (done) daily; avidhinā hutam – offered without following the stipulations; tasya – for that person; āsaptamām lokān – all the seven worlds; hinasti – destroys.

For the one who performs the agnihotra that is devoid of darśa and paurṇamāsa rituals, without sya ritual, without āgrayaṇa ritual, without worship of atithis, not accompanied by worship of a viśvedevās and not offering oblations in the stipulated manner – for that person the agnihotra ritual destroys all the seven worlds (he does not get the result of the ritual)'

Yasy āgnihotram adarśam apaurṇamāsam: agnihotra that is not accompanied by darśa and paurṇamāsa rituals. An agnihotrin¹ is expected to perform darśa and paurṇamāsa rituals also. Darśa is the karma that is performed on the new moon day and is associated with agnihotra. Agnihotra which is unaccompanied by darśa ritual, is adarśa. Darśa is to be followed by another ritual that is to be done on the full moon day. That is known as paurṇamāsa. Agnihotra which is not accompanied by paurṇamāsa ritual is apaurṇamāsa. Darśa and paurṇamāsa are one ritual really. Only an agnihotrin performs

¹ The one who performs the agnihotra daily is called agnihotrin

these rituals. The one who is not an agniotrin cannot perform darśa and paurṇamāsa. **If mere agnihotra is done daily and properly, it has its own results. But accompanied by darśa paurṇamāsa it has a better result. This is the contention of the śāstra.**

Acāturmāsyam: agnihotra not accompanied by cāturmāsyā. Cāturmāsyā karma is performed every fourth month and completed through the year. If this particular ritual is not performed, that agnihotra is called acāturmāsyā.

Anāgrayaṇam : agnihotra not accompanied by āgrayaṇa ritual. Āgrayaṇa ritual is done as the autumn begins, and also during spring. In both these seasons we get new grains. With the new grains one cooks the food and that is offered unto the fire. One can simply perform the agnihotra ritual without the above accompanying rituals. But one should definitely follow a few things mentioned below.

Atithi varjitaṃ : agnihotra not accompanied by worship of guests.² Atithi pūjā refers to entertaining an athithi, a guest, everyday. An athithi is one who comes without prior information. Before one takes one's midday meal, one should come out and look for anyone who is looking for an invitation for bhikṣā. This used to be the daily practice in India. If some one comes, the person should be properly received and given food. This is called atithi pūjā. Atithi varjita means an agnihotra without atithi pūjā.

Ahutam : agnihotra not done daily. One has to do the agnihotra ritual daily. If it is done irregularly, then it is called ahutam. One has got to do it without omissions. Otherwise, all that one has done becomes a waste. If it is not possible at all to perform the ritual on a particular day or days, there are methods for making up the omission. There are prāyaścitta karmās, rituals of atonement. Prāyaścitta karmās cannot be used as an alternative. When one is in a situation where one cannot do it at all, only then can one have that as an option. Ahutam means not done daily solely due to indifference.

Avaiśvadevam : an agnihotra not accompanied by the viśvedevā ritual. This ritual also has to be done every day. In this ritual, the viśve devās, a particular group of deities, ten in number are offered food. This is to be done every day before eating.. There is certain anna śuddhi, purification of food etc., involved in this ritual. If it is not done, that agnihotra is called avaiśva devam.

² अतिथि पूजनं च अहन्यहन्यक्रियमाणं यस्य । - मुण्डक भाष्यम्

Avidhinā hutam : agnihotra done without following the rules. There are vidhis, stipulations in doing agnihotra. One has to follow all the steps. One has to do the ritual without omitting any step; otherwise the karma becomes avidhinā hutam, that which is offered without following the stipulations.

That agnihotrin who performs agnihotra properly and does all the rituals mentioned here, can get any one of the seven lokas³. – bhūḥ, bhuvah, suvah, mahaḥ, janaḥ, tapaḥ and satyam. But if it is not accompanied by all these things, one cannot get any one of them. What happens to that agnihotra?

Āsaptamān lokān hinasti : it destroys all the seven worlds. Here the śruti depicts, through a hyperbole, the results of improperly performed karmas. The statement here is that such karmas destroy all the seven worlds, which means that the person does not get the result of the agnihotra ritual. What he gets is only the āyāsa, tiresome effort, in performing the ritual.⁴ With sun blazing outside when one performs this ritual sitting by the side of the fire, that is great effort. He has to fan the fire every now and then to get it to produce the flames. The smoke produces tears. That is the only result he gets. What denies the result is not adarśa or apaurṇamāsa rituals, but atithi varjitam, avaiśvadevam, ahutam, avidhinā hutam. So, an agnihotrin also must perform daily pañcamahāyajñānās, the five great sacrifices⁵. One of them is atithi pūjā. These daily rituals must be there in one's life; then only is agnihotra effective.

One meaning of himsa is that all the seven lokas including brahma-loka⁶ are denied for this person. Śaṅkara gives another meaning also. If a person does agnihotra of the above type, he will not get any piṇḍodaka, oblations of rice-balls and water.⁷

For seven generations there will not be any person to perform śrāddaha, a ritual performed at the death anniversary of one's parents.

Therefore, karmas like agnihotra should be performed properly. The daily life must be proper, śrāddaha must be there and the rituals should be done in time. This is the nature of karma. It is continued in the next mantra.

To be continued..

³ These are the svargas – heavens, said to be successively higher than the previous ones in terms of quality of enjoyment.

⁴ तस्य कर्तुः लोकान् हिनस्ति हिन्स्तीव आयास-मात्र-फलत्वात् ॥ ते लोकाः एवेम्भूतेन अग्निहोत्रादि कर्मणा तु अप्राप्यत्वाद् हिंस्यन्ते इव । आयासमात्रम् त्वव्यभिचारीत्यतो हिनस्ति इत्युच्यते - मुण्डक भाष्यम्

⁵ अध्यापनं ब्रह्मयज्ञः पितृयज्ञस्तु तर्पणम् । होमो दैवो बलिभौतो नृपयज्ञोऽतिथिपूजनम् ॥ मनुस्मृतिः ३ ॥७० ॥७१

⁶ आसप्तमान् सप्तम् सहितान् । मुण्डक भाष्यम्

⁷ पिण्ड दानाद्यनुग्रहेण वा सम्बध्यमानाः पितृ पितामह प्रपितामहाः पुत्र पौत्र प्रपौत्राः स्वात्मोपकारकाः सप्त लोका उक्त प्रकारेण अग्निहोत्रादिना न भवन्ति इति हिंस्यते इत्युच्यते - मुण्डक भाष्यम्

Śrī Rudram

Anuvāka 4

नमः॑ क्षत्त॑भ्यस्संग्र॑हि॒द्वि॒तु॑भ्यश्च॒ वो नमः॑ । ११ ॥
namaḥ॑ kṣatṛb̥hyaṣaṅgrāhi̇ṭṛb̥hyaśca vo namaḥ॑ | 11 |

namaḥ – salutation; kṣatṛb̥hyaḥ – to the charioteers (who train the charioteers), saṅgrahīṭṛb̥hyaḥ to those who wield the reins; ca –and vaḥ – to you; namaḥ – salutation.

Salutation to you in the form of charioteers (who train the charioteers) and those who wield the reins.

Namaḥ kṣatṛb̥hyaḥ – Salutation to the one who is in the form of charioteers who are śikṣakās, who teach people how to do sārathya, charioteering. The Lord is the one who is in the form of trainers of charioteering, the guru. He is also saṅgrahīṭṛ, one who is holding the reins, the charioteer, the disciple. My salutation to the Lord wo is both of them.

नमस्त॑क्ष॒भ्यो रथ॑कारेभ्यश्च॒ वो नमः॑ । १२ ॥
nāmastakṣab̥hyo rathakāreb̥hyaśca vo namaḥ॑ | 12 |

namaḥ – salutation; takṣab̥hyaḥ – to the carpenters; rathakāreb̥hyaḥ – to the chariot makers; ca – and; vaḥ – to you; namaḥ – salutation.

Salutation to you in the form of carpenters and chariot-makers.

Namaḥ takṣab̥hyaḥ – Salutation to the one who is a carpenters. Rathakārah is an architect who has a plan and design for the chariot. Takṣaḥ puts things together and creates a chariot in keeping with the design. It is like a computer operator and the designer of the hardware and software. These are all to be included now. Any knowledge has to be revealed in the language that the recipients know. The language of the ṛṣis being Sanskrit, what is revealed is in Sanskrit. The ṛṣis did not have the knowledge of computers. Bhagavān is not restricted to the knowledge of the ṛṣis and so we include the computer knowledge too.

Kṛṣṇā says in the tenth chapter of the Bhagavad Gītā that any glory, vibhūti is me. In this section, the Lord says everything is me, whether there is vibhūti or whether they are ordinary carpenters of the expert rathakārs, both are me.

नमः॑ कु॒ला॒लेभ्यः॑ क॒र्मारे॑भ्यश्च॒ वो नमः॑ ॥ १३ ॥
nāmaḥ॑ kulāleb̥hyaḥ karmāreb̥hyaśca vo namaḥ॑ || 13 ||

namaḥ – salutation; kulāleb̥hyaḥ – to the potmakers; karmāreb̥hyaḥ – to the blacksmiths; ca= and; vaḥ – to you; namaḥ – salutation.

Salutation to you in the form of pot-makers and blacksmiths.

Kulāla is a pot-maker, a maker of any earthenware, such as a vase and so on. Karmāra is a blacksmith. Any metal work is done by karmāras. In this section of sarvātmatva, nobody is left out.

नमः पुञ्जिष्टेभ्यो निषादेभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ १४ ॥

namāḥ puñjīṣṭebhyaḥ niṣādebhyaśca vo namaḥ || 14 ||

namaḥ – salutation; puñjīṣṭebhyaḥ – to those who are bird-catchers; niṣādebhyaḥ – to the fishermen; ca and vaḥ – to you; namaḥ – salutation.

Salutation to you who are in the form of bird-catchers and fishermen.

Puñjīṣṭas are people who set traps and catch different types of birds. They then sell or eat them. Niṣādas are people who earn their livelihood by catching fish for their food and also for selling. These days even devotees do poultry and leather business. But the Lord includes them all.

नम इषुकृद्भ्यो धन्वकृद्भ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ १५ ॥

namā iṣukṛdbhyo dhanvākṛdbhyaśca vo namaḥ || 15 ||

namaḥ – salutation; iṣukṛdbhyaḥ – to those who make arrows; dhanvakṛdbhyaḥ – to those who make bows’ ca – and; vaḥ – to you; namaḥ – salutation.

Salutation to you in the form of those who make arrows and bows.

Iṣukṛts are those who make arrows. Dhanvakṛts are those who make the bows. The Lord is both.

नमो मृगयुभ्यश्चनिभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ १६ ॥

namo mṛgayubhyaśṣvanibhyaśca vo namaḥ || 16 ||

namaḥ – salutation; mṛgayubhyaḥ – to those who hunt animals; śvanibhyaḥ – to those who lead the dogs while hunting; ca –and; vaḥ – to you; namaḥ – salutation.

Salutation to you in the form of those who hunt animals and who take the dogs out on leash while hunting.

Mṛgayus¹ are hunters who hunt deer and other animals in the forest for food and to make a living. Chinese medicines have a lot of substances derived from animal body parts. The word mṛga can mean either deer in particular or animals in general. People with dogs hunt and those without dogs also hunt.

नमः श्वभ्यः श्वपतिभ्यश्च वो नमः ॥ १७ ॥

nāmāḥ śvabhyaḥ śvāpatibhyaśca vo namaḥ || 17 ||

Salutations to you the one who is in the form of dogs and dog owners.

The Lord is the very dogs themselves. And he is śvapatis, those who own dogs and train them.

“To be continued....”

¹ The derivation of the word ‘mṛgayu’: mṛgam yāttiti mṛgayug – one who goes after (hunts) an animal.

Guru Purnima at AVG



Guru Purnima was celebrated at Arsha Vidya Gurukulam, Anaikatti on July 22, 2013. Adi Guru, Dakshinamurti Swami was worshipped in the early morning at the temple.

Guru puja was done at the lecture hall which was jam packed with Swamis, students and devotees. 108 names of the Guru, signifying the greatness of the Guru, were chanted. Pada puja was done to Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswati.

Pujya Swamiji delivered his anugraha bhasanam. He said: "Guru Purnima is Guru's Day. It is Vyasa's birthday.

Material knowledge is always partial. Only that partial knowledge with ignorance and confusion is handed over by the

Teachers. That knowledge keeps changing in course of time.

But Brahma Jnana is different. It never changes. You are poornam Brahman is the knowledge. There is a teaching tradition to hand over this knowledge 100%. This is kept alive because of its content. Bharat's gift to humanity is poornatvam.

Veda Vyasa collected and edited the four Vedas including the Upanishads. He highlighted the vision in his own words and works in Bhagavad Gita and Puranas. In Brahma Sutra he analysed the whole methodology of handling over the Brahma Jnana. Later Adi Sankara and other Acharyas created a foolproof method of communication without entropy.



Guru indicates an institution. Only that institution is praised. It is not the person that is praised. It is the sampradya of teaching methodology that is worshipped. In the traditional mutts, they invoke their Guru parampara in pots of water. Puja is done. After Guru Purnima, rainy season starts. Sadhus to uphold their vow of non-violence do not travel for 2 months during this period of chatur masya vrata to avoid himsa to small creatures.

I lived in Chennai with a nephew Akshayan. I used to go for a walk with Akshayan in the evenings. He was not seen for 4 days. He said that he attended a lecture on Mundakopanishad by Swami Chinmayananda. I also started attending the lectures with him. In the lecture, the verses

sounded familiar. I never thought of anything else after that.

I helped Gurudev edit books. I did lot of seva. I had energy, inspiration and dedication. That seva kept me going. Guru seva never fails. Grace led me to Swami Pranavananda. He taught me that Sastra is the pramana. That hit me like a bolt. All my ideas got reshuffled in my mind. I understood that it is a vision handed over. Later I studied from Swami Tarananda Giri.”

Pujya Swamiji released two books titled, Astadhyayisutrapathah: of Panini with anuvrtti, vartika and paribhasa and Dhatukosah- A book of root verbs based on dhatupatta of Panini. The books were authored by Brahmacharini Medha Michika, a Japanese student, studying in the current long term course. He advised the Students to emulate the Japanese students. He appreciated the dedication in Japanese culture.

A Swami from Bhuj, Gujarat printed a souvenir on the occasion of Guru Purnima. Pujya Swamiji also released that souvenir.

Report by N. Avinashilingam

Four Days of Celebrating Education: SDET's Annual Convention and Convocation

Guru Purnima at AVG



For four days, the village of Manjakkudi celebrated education, culture and Vedanta, marking an important milestone in the history of the organization that has completely transformed it.

For the ninth year in succession, Swami Dayananda Educational Trust (SDET) hosted a three-day show of theatre, music and dance, bringing Indian culture to the doorsteps of Manjakkudi. The celebration, held from July 4 to July 6, also commemorated the 10th anniversary of SDET.

The three-day convention was topped by the 9th annual convocation of Swami Dayananda College of Arts and Science on July 7.

Ms. Sheela Balaji, the secretary and Managing trustee of SDET welcomed the gathering and walked them through the development/progress of SDET over the decade. She detailed how the college, from a situation of having classrooms without electricity now boasts of facilities on par with any college in the country, including the well-equipped science and computer laboratories, and a state-of-the-art auditorium. Ms. Balaji fondly remembered the contributions of Late Sri G. Ramachandran, the former correspondent of SDET, and paid a silent tribute to his memory. An audio-visual presentation on the history of SDET was also screened.

On the occasion, Pujya Swamiji released the souvenir commemorating the 10th anniversary of SDET. Copies of the souvenir were presented to the distinguished guests and sannyasis who graced the event with their presence.

Soon after, seven graduates of the seven-year course of the Swami Dayananda Vedapathashala were felicitated by Pujya Swamiji and given a cash prize of Rs. 30,000. One student, Chi. Rakesh Sharma, was presented with a cash gift of Rs. 50,000.

The second day of the convention was an eye opener for the students of the college. They were introduced to the sannyasa parampara first hand, as Ms. Sheela Balaji honoured some of the sannyasis who attended the convention. The sannyasis—Swamini Brahmalinananda, Swamini Brahma prakasananda, Swami Aiswaryananda, Swamini Atmaprajananda, Swami Pranavarthananda, Swamini Svatmabodhananda, and Acharya Navneet—spoke about their experience with Pujya Swamiji, their exposure to Vedantic studies, and finally, adapting Sannyasa as a lifestyle.

On all three days of the convention, Pujya Swamiji addressed the 1,100 second and third year students of the Swami Dayananda College of Arts and Science on various aspects of



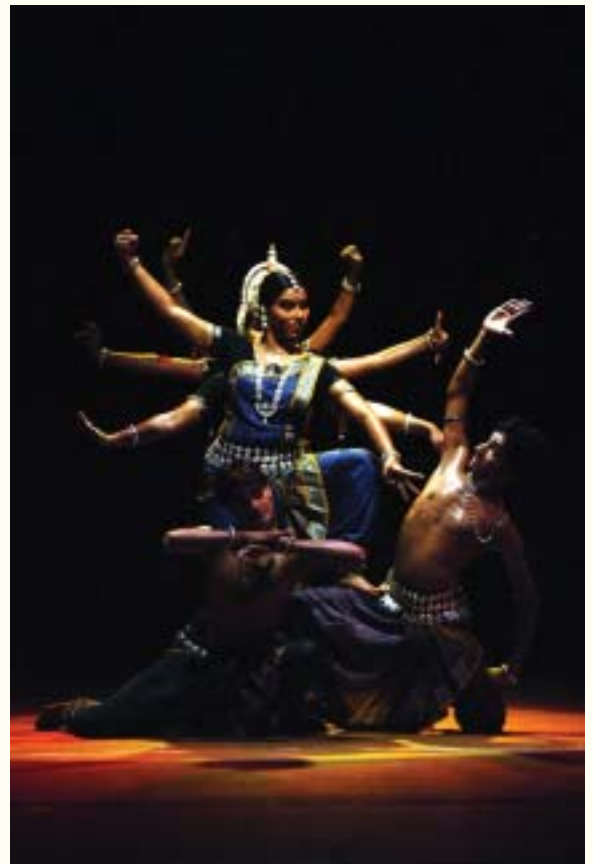
Vedanta. He then clarified some of the insightful questions that the students put forth to him. The first day's discussion was focused on values and attitudes, and understanding all that is Isvara. He touched upon various aspects of Vedanta that affect a student.

Over two days, eminent epigraphist and art historian Dr. K. Balasubramanian gave talks on the temples of Kanchipuram and Tiruvarur, bringing to light little known details about the temples and the societies they served.

The chief guest for the first day, Sri Babaji Rajah Bhonsle, senior prince of Thanjavur, felicitated Pujya Swamiji. The chief guest for the second day of the convention, Dr. N. Kamakoti, Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director, City Union Bank, Kumbakonam and Dr. S. Vaidhyasubramaniam, Dean, Planning and Development, SASTRA University, was the Chief Guest for the third day of the convention. It may be recalled that Dr. S Vaidhyasubramaniam and his family were the first ones to introduce Samashti Bhandara in our Rishikesh Ashram in March 2011.

The evenings were devoted to dance, theatre and music. From all over the country, cultural groups enthralled the people from the village of Manjakkudi with their performances.

The inaugural programme was "Natya", a drama by Koumarane Valavane Group, Indianostrum Theatre, Pondicherry. The drama depicted life in a Kathakali gurukulam, and the way that knowledge and tradition travel through time and space.



On the second evening, there was a vocal recital by Smt. Sudha Raghuraman, supported on the flute by her husband Sri Raghuraman, Sri A.S. Ranganathan on the mridangam, and Madippakkam Sri Murali on the ghatam. Smt. Sudha rendered many of Pujya Swamiji's compositions—Mahadeva Shambho, Vandeham Sharada, etc.

The grand finale of the convention was an enthralling Odissi performance by Srjan Group of Orissa, and the auditorium was packed to capacity with over 1500 people from the village attending the programme. The group, headed by Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra, featured five pieces, including devotional, contemporary, and patriotic pieces, reflecting the vision of Pujya Swamiji.

Following the three-day convention, Sunday, July 7 saw 523 students, including eight university rank holders, take a confident step towards a secure future, as they were conferred degrees at the Ninth Graduation Day of the Swami Dayananda College of Arts and Science, Manjakkudi.

Smt. Sheela Balaji, Secretary of the college welcomed the gathering. Dr. N.R. Vembu, Principal of the college, presented the progress made by the college during the academic year 2012-13. Ms. Geetha Anantharaman, Vice President, Wipro BPO, began her address by reminding the students of the role their parents played in their achieving the milestone of becoming a graduate. "Look towards your parents, wherever they may be, and thank them," she told the students. She impressed upon the new excited graduates the importance of "working hard with full involvement and dedication."

Pujya Swamiji, who presented the degrees to the students and blessed them, explained to them the concept of success. "You can become successful if you are at the right place at the right time. And that is possible through grace," he said. "But the grace we are talking about cannot be planned for. You can only receive grace in two ways: through prayer and by reaching out."



Sri V.A. Raghu, Director-Finance, TVS Educational Society, Chennai, Sri S.M. Rao and Sri Upendra Madhav Kini, industrialists from Dubai and Sri Ram Kini, industrialist from Mumbai felicitated the graduates. Dr. R. Selvanayagam, Member-Syndicate, Bharathidasan University was present and felicitated. Sri.V.Rengarajan, Vice Principal of the college, proposed the vote of thanks, bringing to a fitting end the events of the preceding four days.

Brahma Sutra Class at AVG



The classes held during the months of June 2013 and July 2013 are briefly summarized.

INTRODUCTION:

Upaniṣad is the pramāṇa for śāstra vicāra. Śāṅkara bhāṣya is the sampradāya. The study of śruti prasthāna (upaniṣad) is complemented by the study of Smṛti prasthāna (Bhagavad Gītā) and Nyāya prasthāna (Brahma Sūtra).

Brahma sūtra is a sūtra text of Vedānta written by Veda Vyasa. It consists of four adhyāyas (chapters). Each adhyāya has four pādās (sections). There are 16 pādās. Each pādā is sub-divided into adhikaraṇās (topics). There are 191 adhikaraṇās. There are 555 Sūtras (aphorisms).

The sūtra text should satisfy six conditions. It should be short, without ambiguity, meaningful, have scope to convey additional meaning, without meaningless words and that which could not be dismissed.

Brahma sūtra presents the essence of Upaniṣads in cryptic statements. Śāṅkara bhāṣya analyse the Upaniṣad statements and establishes the correct understanding of the Upaniṣad statements after negating the opposing pūrvapakṣi's views. Śāṅkara bhāṣya is simple and profound. It is prasanna and gambhīra.

ANUBANDHA CATUṢṬAYAM:

The adhikāri is sādhana catuṣṭaya sampannaḥ. Viśaya is Brahman. Prayojana is Mokṣa. Sambandha is reveller (śāstra) and revealed (jīva-brahma aikyam).

CATUSSŪTRI:

In the first four sūtras famously known as Catussūtri, the entire subject matter is discussed. All the later sūtras only elaborate what is discussed in the first four sūtras. Hence the study of first four sūtras would give the complete view of Brahma Sūtra and also the entire vision of Vedās.

TOPICS:

The four adhyāyās discussed are Samanvaya, Avirodha, Sādhana and Phala adhyāyās. samanvaya adhyāyā establishes that Brahman is consistently the central theme of Upaniṣads. Avirodha adhyāyā establishes that there is non contradiction of Brahma vidhyā with Śruti, Smṛti and Yukti. Sādhana adhyāyā explains the preparatory disciplines needed for gaining Brahma Vidhyā. Phala adhyāyā gives mokṣa as the benefit of Brahma Vidhyā.

Each adhikaraṇa has five components. They are Viṣaya or subject matter, Saṁsaya, or doubt, Pūrvapakṣa or view of non-vedāntin, Siddhānta or Vedāntic conclusion to be established after refuting all conflicting views and Saṅgat or connection between previous topic and current topic.

PŪRVA PAKṢI'S VIEWS:

There are six nāstika darśanās which do not accept Vedās as pramāṇa. They are Cāruvāka, Jaina, Sautāntika buddhisam, Vaibhāṣika buddhism, Yogācāra buddhism and mādhyamika buddhism. There are six āstika darśanās which accept Vedās as pramāṇa. They are Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Pūrvā Mīmāṃsa and Uttara Mīmāṃsa. The first four āstika darśanas use Vedās for support and depend more on logic. The last two accept Vedās as exclusive pramāṇa. The defects of the six nastika darśanās and the first four āstika darśanās are pointed out. The limitation of Pūrvā Mīmāṃsa is explained.

ADHYĀSA BHĀṢYA:

Śaṅkara's introduction starts with adhyāsa bhāṣya. Without adhyāsa there is no Vedānta. There is confusion between ātma and anātma. Ātma is mistaken for the jīva. Jīva is mistaken for the ātma. This is super imposition or adhyāsa of the attributes of one thing on another thing. Adhyāsa or error is due to ignorance. The error causes saṁsāra. Snake perception on rope is due to adhyāsa. Mixing up of satyam and mithyā causes adhyāsa. Adhyāsa will go away when ajñānam, the cause of adhyāsa goes away.

Ātma lends consciousness to body, mind and sense complex. But ātma and body

belong to different orders of reality. There is only ādhyāsika sambandha between ātma and body. Āham asmi āham bāmi is satyam. Identification with sthūla śarīra, sukṣma śarīra or kāraṇa śarīra is adhyāsa.

Even after knowing ātmā bādhita, avidyā will continue, like one seeing the blueness of sky.

FIRST SŪTRA: JIJÑĀSĀ ADHIKARAṆAM: ATHĀ'TO BRAHMA JIJÑĀSĀ

The first sūtra means, "Thereafter, therefore, one desires to know Brahman". Ātha śabda is also maṅgala sūcakam. The subject of Jīva Brahma aikyam is not discussed in karma khāṇḍa. As this is a new subject, this has to be discussed now. Only from śāstra we can know that there deha vyatirikta ātmā.

Anubandha catuṣṭaya is established in the first sūtra. There are adhikāris who have the requisite qualification prescribed..

Is Brahman known? If it is already known, then it need not be discussed. If Brahman is not known, how can one have a desire to know Brahman? Due to statements in Veda, which glorify Brahman and due to teaching of elders, there is āpatata jñānam or partial knowledge about Brahman.

The student develops viveka and understands the futility of pursuits of dharma artha and kāma. He understands that mokṣa is the only worthwhile pursuit. After gaining the requisite qualification and understanding the futility of other pursuits, one desires to know Brahman.

Report by N.Avinashilingam

ARSHA VIDYA PITHAM
Swami Dayananda Ashram

is pleased to announce Four Camps by

PUJYA SRI SWAMI DAYANANDA SARASWATI
at Swami Dayananda Ashram, Rishikesh
as per details given below:

CAMP	FROM	TO	TOPIC
CAMP NO. 1 (7 DAYS)	19-02-2014	25-02-2014	Advaita Makaranda
CAMP NO.2 (7 DAYS)	02-03-2014	08-03-2014	Gita Chapter 15
CAMP NO.3 (7 DAYS)	11-03-2014	17-03-2014	Pancadasi Chapter 4 - Dvaita Viveka
CAMP NO.4 (10 DAYS)	20-03-2014	29-03-2014	Yoga Sutras Ch. 2

**Those who are interested in attending are requested to apply
on or before 20 NOVEMBER 2013.**

**Kindly find the online application form at our website:
www.dayananda.org**

Instructions to fill the online form:

- Go to www.dayananda.org or type http://www.dayananda.org/course/register_form.php
- Click on the link Online Application 2014 from our website.
- Fill up the registration form.
- Choose the course you wish to attend for completion of application.

Note:

1. It is important to select one (or two courses maximum) in order for the registration process to be completed successfully. Registration without selecting any course shall be considered void.
2. Overseas Applicants can register for 2 courses (maximum), Indian applicants for one course only.
3. You can also use your previous login username and password to apply at www.dayananda.org/course/login.php
4. Due to large number of applications we can entertain online applications only.
However, we can assist you with your enquiries at dayanandacamps2014@gmail.com
or at +91-135-2430769/2431769 between 08:00 to 12:00 & 15:00 -19:00 Hrs only.
5. All applicants will be given equal opportunity. With your username and password you can check the status of your application online. The status of successful applicants will be displayed as "CONFIRMED".
6. An online taxi reservation facility is also available.

Acharya



Om

**Three-month Residential Course
by
Arsha Vidya Vikas Kendra
Bhubaneswar**

With the permission and blessings of Pujya Sri Swami Dayananda Saraswati, Arsha Vidya Vikas Kendra, Bhubaneswar, announces a short Three-month Residential Course on Vedanta, Sanskrit, Chanting, and Indian Culture (exposure to Temple Architecture, Classical Dance and Music) commencing from October 6th, 2013 (open-ended).

The course will be conducted, by Swamini Atmaprajananda Saraswati, student-disciple of Pujya Sri Swami Dayananda Saraswati.

Brahmacaris/Brahmacarinis familiar with the traditional Gurukula teaching parampara may apply to,

Swamini Atmaprajananda Saraswati
Founder Acarya
Arsha Vidya VikasKendra
A 1/1 Palaspalli
Bhubaneswar – 751 020
ODISHA
atmaprajna@gmail.com

providing requisite details. One may also see the following, for various activities of the centre.

www.arshavidya.net
atmaprajanandasaraswati.blogspot.com
You Tube - Atmaprajananda Saraswati

The Kendra will provide facilities that are possible.



Bharatnatyam Performance by Pavithra Srinivasan



Arsha Kalarangam and Sri Krishna Sweets presented a Bharatnatyam dance performance titled 'PURUSHAARTHA' – 'Pursuit of the Self' by Kumari Pavithra Srinivasan on June 30, 2013 at Kikani School, Coimbatore.

Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswathi lighted a 'moksha deepa' for atma santhi of the departed jivas in the Uttarkand tragedy. Pujya Swamiji said that the Bhagavad Gita Chapter VIII is generally chanted as prayer for the departed jivas. Led by Pujya Swamiji, every one chanted together Gita Chapter VIII.

Pavithra Srinivasan said that Pujya Swamiji inspired her latest production Purushaartha. Pujya Swamiji also gave the title. She had tried to present what ever she had learnt from Pujya Swamiji.

She had earlier successfully produced dance programmes on Panchatantra and Ramayana.

Why is it important to know the Self? What is the glory of the Self? How can one develop a mind of equanimity to understand the Self and revel in the truth that one is Poornam- complete and free





from insecurities and blemish? Purushaartha explores the answers to these questions by drawing upon interesting verses and stories from the Upanishads and brings them to life through the reflective, sensitive canvas of Bharatnatyam. It helps one to understand the ultimate pursuit- Pursuit of the Self- Moksha Purushaartha.

The first dance was on Sankara's Baja Govindam. It glorified the purushaartha of moksha. It dismissed the futile pursuits of dharma, artha and kama.

The second dance was on Kenopanishad. It depicted the arrogance of the Devas after defeating Asuras. The Devas could not know who the effulgent Yaksha was. Agni failed to burn a blade of grass. Vayu failed to lift a blade of grass. Finally Goddess Uma appears and teaches the Devas that they got their strength only from Brahman.

The third dance was on Values mentioned in Bhagavad Gita Chapter XIII. It explained how one should have a prepared mind to pursue self knowledge.

The final dance was on Annamacharya's lyric Brahmam Okkate. The dance presented everything in the creation as Brahman.

Pujya Swamiji congratulated Pavithra and appreciated her performance as Agni, Vayu and Uma.

Report by N.Avinashilingam

Memorial & Independence Day Week-end Retreats at AVG Saylorsburg

The summer season of Vedanta Retreats began at Arsha Vidya Gurukulam in Saylorsburg, Pennsylvania this year with Swami Vidadatmanandaji's annual Memorial Day and Independence Day weekend retreats. This year, Swamiji selected verses from Chapter Two in the Bhagavad Gita on Sankhya Yoga or Yoga of Knowledge. Several returning students attended the retreats as well as many new families who were visiting the Ashram for the first time.

During the Memorial Day Retreat, Swamiji discussed *Karmanyeva Adhikaraste* BG 2.47.

Arjuna suffered because he did not want to fight the battle against his relatives. Arjuna wanted to take the path of renunciation or sanyasa instead of action so that he would not have to fight. He turned to Lord Krishna for help and became his student. Lord Krishna teaches renunciation as a state of mind, one who has a pure mind free of likes, dislikes, and demands rather than a particular lifestyle. Lord Krishna taught Arjuna that he was fit for action or karma and that it was his duty to fight the battle to protect dharma. Lord Krishna teaches Arjuna that karma, or deliberate action, when performed with the right attitude can be a means of inner purification and spiritual practice. In brief, Swamiji first taught us that our actions should conform to dharma. Our actions should be driven by duty rather than our

own likes and dislikes which are driven by the ego. Second, our actions can be an offering to the Lord. Our actions should be dedicated to a higher cause rather than just for the sake of ego gratification. Lastly, our actions should serve others. Transforming ourselves from consumer to contributor leads to inner purification by getting rid of our likes and dislikes. During the retreat, Swamiji taught the students in great detail how karma yoga is used to purify the mind and it is only in this state of mind that we can appreciate our true nature which is whole.

During the Independence Day Retreat, Swamiji discussed *Yogah Karmasu Kausalam* BG 2.50. Swamiji described kausalam as the path of freedom as opposed to akausalam which is the path of bondage. Kausalam is the real skill required for living life. It is this skill that enables one to create well-being and happiness for themselves. Lord Krishna teaches us that happiness is our own true nature. Our extroverted minds make us believe that happiness comes from external objects and situations. Swamiji explained that the right attitude makes our minds turn inward, directed towards the Self so that we can experience our true nature which is happiness. Karma yoga is the attitude towards karma. It entails doing what is right whether it is convenient or not. Our actions must support the values of non-violence, honesty, and helping

others. We must also practise samatva, or sameness of the mind with regards to the results of our karma. Prasada buddhi or graceful acceptance of what appears as either success or failure allows us to welcome everything. The proper attitude gives us immediate happiness. It will help us to overcome reactions of the mind and free us from our likes and dislikes. This will create an objective mind that allows one to inquire into the nature of the Self. It will make us stop and ask "What am I seeking in my life?" It will lead to the discovery that you are already what you are seeking to be. During the retreat, Swamiji provided detailed examples on how we can practise the right attitude or yoga in our daily lives.

Other camp activities included chanting classes by Sri Suddatmaji where students learned to recite Medha Suktam and Durga Suktam. Music classes were conducted by Pandit Mukesh Desai. Concurrent classes for children were taught by several Gurukulam staff and volunteers. During the evenings, Pandit Mukeshji led the group in singing several bhajans. The highlight of every evening was Satsang with Swamiji where he further clarified the teachings for the students as well as answering several general questions. It was a great blessing for all who attended these retreats.

"The gain of pleasure rests upon the convergence of three constantly changing factors, never fully predictable, nor, even under one's control. Moments of pleasure require the availability of the object, availability of the appropriate, effective instrument for enjoying the object, and the presence of the proper frame of mind for enjoyment of the object. Of course, we do have moments of joy from time to time, but being dependent upon the alignment of three changing factors they last but a moment. The objects of enjoyment are limited, bound by time. In the very process of enjoyment some gets expended, and all are subject to change, in the hands of time. The instruments of enjoyment also are time-bound, limited, and not capable of consistent performance. And the mind, being what it is – whimsical, capricious – gets tired of what it once eagerly desired and sought. Thus, trying to maintain a moment of pleasure is like throwing a saddle over three wild horses, sitting astride all three, and being able to successfully guide them in one direction".

.....**Pujya Swamiji**

Pujya Swamiji visit SDSD Library



It was time for great celebration in the SDSD Library (Swami DayanandaSatabhisheka Memorial Digital Library & Research Centre) on the 10th of June, 2013 when H.H.PujyasriSwamiji graced the new premises in Express Chambers, Express Avenue Mall, Royapettah, Chennai. The library was recently shifted to the new premises and it was a matter of great joy and honour for the management, staff and faculty of the Library to receive the blessings of Pujyasri.



Pujyasri arrived in the Library at 11.30am accompanied by Dr.V.Abhiramasundaram



(Hon. Director of SDSD Library & Research Centre), Sri.Kannan (MD Shriram group). Pujyasri first looked around the Library office, the digitized manuscripts, copies of books published by the Library & Research Centre and then spent time with the research assistants, office staff, family members of Sri. Kannan, staff from Shriram Group office who are actively involved in the working of the Library, and few others.

First, Pujyasri conveyed his immense pleasure in the premises being research-friendly and infrastructurally sound to house the Library. He enquired about the activities happening in the Library presently, and insisted on the institution concentrating on the preservation and

propagation of other Indian languages and fields too. He particularly mentioned the need to educate students and researchers about Tirumurai, the Prabandham-s of the Alwars, alongwith the treasure of metaphysical and philosophical aspects embedded in them. Dr. Abhiramasundaram and Dr. Sabaratnam(Archaeologist) took note of Pujyasri's suggestions and discussed means of implementing them, through monthly lectures on the suggested topics by scholars, etc.

After a brief song by Smt. SumithraVasudev, one of the Research Assistants in the library, Pujyasri blessed all present there.

The Annual Arsha Vidya Tirtha, Jaipur spiritual camp at Rishikesh



The Annual Arsha Vidya Tirtha, Jaipur spiritual camp was held at Rishikesh Ashrama from June 2-8, 2013 under the auspices of Swami Brahmaparananda Saraswatiji. About 100 devotees from Jaipur, Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Meerut, Ghaziabad, 20 AVT Jaipur Chhatralayam children, some of their parents, Sandhya Gurukulam caretakers from villages of Rajasthan - Makdadev, Nainbara, Manas, participated. The Ashrama on the bank of Ganges added to the grandeur of the environment.

The day commenced at 5.15 a.m. with Rudrabhishekam in the temple. AVT

children chanted the Rudram rhythmically and in a melodious voice. It was followed by the dhyanam with *Guru Stotram* conducted by Swamiji. The devotees' went into a transcendental mode with this knowledge of meditation. Then wisdom from the Third Adhyayam — Karma Yoga - The Eternal Duties of Human Being—from Srimad Bhagwad Gita and comprehension of Stotrams, which Swamiji elaborated for us in a simplified but explicit manner charged us all up! Afternoons were kept reserved for games and Ganga snanam for all the children. One class in the evening by *Swamiji on Bhaja Govindam*, was again mesmerizing. After the evening aarti in the

temple, the Ganga aarti was Divinely, with Chhatralayam children added to the beauty of it all by the melodious Ganga stotram.

Night Satsang (8.30-10:00 p.m.) saw a fiesta of Bhajans. *Gulab* being our lead singer with Divine melodious voice accompanied by with *Sukhlal* on Dholak and the little ones! Other devotees' also participated freely. It was great to see so much of talent amongst the youngsters. The highlight of the cultural week was — a dramatization by children on *Krishna-Arjuna samvada* from 2nd Adhyaya of *Srimad Bhgawad Gita* which simply was breathtaking. *Pallavi*, MBBS student from Ajmer got huge applause for her beautiful efforts. *Rachnaji*, Rajasthan Coordinator, Sri Swami Vivekananda Kendra was appreciated by Swamiji and devotees' for her beautiful efforts to train our children to be active through games, yoga and skit.

During night satsang, devotees' were also blessed to have *Swami Satprakashananda Saraswati* from Kuala Lumpur. He blessed the children and talked about the uniqueness of human birth! *Swami Sivatananda Saraswati*, Heading a sub-Math of Sringeri in Karnataka. Interestingly in 1990's, he as a Brahmachari, had learnt all chantings from our Swamiji. He appreciated Swamiji for beautiful efforts. *Swamiji from Rishikesh* explained



he importance of staying in Gurukulam.

Swami Shuddhanandaji, was specially felicitated by Swamiji and devotees' for his tireless efforts and dedication for years taking care of Rishikesh Ashrama and serving Pujya Sri Swamiji! Swami Shuddhanandaji, as a token of appreciation and blessings to our Chhatralayam children, gave veshti and angavastram.

There was *Saadhu Bhandara* almost every other day. Devotees' were very contented that by this way they could contribute towards the Ashrama seva.

Swamiji helped devotees' do elaborate pooja of *Ma Ganga* on Saturday. It was very special for all of us to sit together in the Ghat and observe abhishekam (with all dravyams) and alankaram (saree, kumkumam, kaajal, bangles, garland, mehendi etc) to our Divine Mother! Adi Guru Shankaracharya's Ganga Stotram, as also the Anga-pooja and the 108 names were chanted.

In spite of the hectic schedule, Swamiji took out time and arranged for us to visit Vasishtha Guha.

The camp was indeed an enthralling experience with Ganga ki Karuna —with the mesmerizing and serene flowing eternally by the Ghaat of our Ashrama and Karuna ki Ganga flowing from Swamiji in the form of Srimad Bhagawad Gita made the mind absolutely thoughtless. Even the "time-table" sank within no time! It was amazing to see so many young children along with their parents and grandparents



started their vacation in such a holistic atmosphere.

At the insistence of all the devotees' Swamiji decided to hold the next Camp from June 6th, 2014.

14th Anniversary Celebrations of Arsha Vidya Vardhini Trust



Arsha Vidya Vardhini Trust celebrated its 14th anniversary at Sowripalayam, Coimbatore on June 23, 2013.

The celebrations started in the morning with Gaṇapati pūja. Led by Sri swami sudheerananda, the students took part in akhaṇḍa nāma saṅkīrtan of 'Namaḥ Śivāya' mahā mantra. Sri Ramakrishnan and Smt Rajeswari conducted bhajans. Later Vedic prayers were chanted.

Sri Swami Sudheerananda welcomed the students. He thanked Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswathi whose satya saṅkalpa was instrumental in building the Kuteeram.

Arsha Vidya means Brahma vidyā or Ātma Vidyā. For the last 13 years, Bhagavad Gita, Upanishad and other Vedantic texts were taught in the kuteeram.

We search for ānanda in outside objects. But ātma vidyā teaches that I, the subject, is ānanda. For getting ātma jñāna, 99% requirement is puruṣārtha. Only 1% requirement is prārabda.

Sri Swamiji advised the students to take adequate efforts to study Ārṣa Vidyā.

The anniversary celebrations concluded with mahā prasāda.

Report by N. Avinashilingam

Government control of Hindu temples

"Government control of Hindu temples should end and Hindus themselves should be allowed to manage them."-

Swami Dayananda Saraswati.

At a day-long symposium on the subject- "Government Control Of Temples-Constitutional Issues," organized by the Hindu > Dharma Acharya Sabha [HDAS] at New Delhi's prestigious India International Centre on Sunday, July 14th, 2013, eminent > jurists and top legal luminaries made impassioned presentations on the different aspects of the constitutional provisions governing the administration of temples by Government. Kamla Devi Conference Hall, the venue, was packed to its capacity with over one hundred participants including members of legal fraternity, leaders of a number > of Hindu organisations, NGO's, social workers, political personalities and media persons.

Swami Parmatmananda, secretary, HDAS, welcomed the gathering and explained the objectives of the symposium and the role > of Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha, a representative body of heads of different denominations of Hindu society. > Addressing the gathering, Swami said, "The Acharya Sabha has filed a writ petition in the Supreme Court questioning the constitutional validity of the different state acts > controlling temples. The purpose of the symposium is to > bring awareness on the constitutional position and legality of state controlling all aspects of the administration of the Hindu temples."

In his address, Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswati, Convener, HDAS, recalled how,

many rulers and devotees endowed different temples with enormous land and wealth to sustain worship. Swami said, "Each temple had a unique Deity and it is the Deity who owns the property endowed. The Deity in the Chidambaram Siva Temple is Nataraja; in Thiruvavur, the Deity is Thyagaraja; in Mannargudi, it's Lord Vishnu as Rajagopala. Each temple therefore has a unique Deity and set of practices, and they are the repository of our culture.

Now all the wealth is not properly utilized for the worship of the Lord or for propagation of the denomination of the temple." Swami also maintained that Hindus should unite to take back control of Hindu temples from the government. He felt this is the only way the Hindu community can find the > money to propagate the religion and withstand the onslaught of conversion by other religions.

Eminent Supreme Court advocate Aman Lekhi, walked the gathering through evolution of the laws that govern the temple administration. However he concluded his speech by saying, "I would say temples need to be regulated when there is an occasion or a justification for it. If the machinery of the state is there to help us to regulate the temples, that is appropriate. But then we have to use it for our purpose. Because the machinery of the state would be the best machinery available to us for the purpose of managing the

temples. That said, we cannot concede to those who control, the right to take over. However in the guise of control, the temple cannot be consumed and this provision would be there in the act."

Sitting Rajya Sabha member, Ex Governor of Jharkhand, past Chief Justice Punjab and Haryana High Court Rama Jois in his speech explained the concept of dharma and how it was the > font of secular thought. "It is incorrect to term dharma to be a religious concept." It is a universal concept, he asserted. He observed, "Law is punitive and is there in the picture after the offense is committed; dharma is preventive, it prevents offense." He went on to share the Dharmic Administration he drafted for the Karnataka Government. The eminent former justice also stated, "Archakas in temple must have Godly personality which increases the 'bhakti' and faith in temple worship. These human feelings are the basis of temple worship and this is therefore recognized as a basic human right. This devotion to God constitute the very foundation of all the religions. Dharma is a code of righteous conduct and religions are different mode of worship of God by all the believers."

Eminent Supreme Court Advocate Ms. Pinky Anand speaking on constitutional rights argued that provisions in the law for take over of temple by government, approval of funding of religious rituals are all invalid and not tenable. She lamented that though there were several Supreme Court judgements against government, these were not implemented.

Sri K.N. Bhat, eminent Supreme Court Advocate who has practiced for more than 50 years and has the privilege of having represented the Deity, Lord Ram, in the Ram Janambhumi case, sharing his thoughts said, "Legal remedies are fraught with uncertainties. Governments are

attracted to temples only because of their properties and also for what they can take away from the temples." According to him, "Hindus were being treated as second-class citizens. While there are a number of laws and judgements, only a strong society, with a strong government can redress the wrongs." He concluded by saying that control must be there for all religions and not selectively only for the majority community.

Later in the day, Justice Kokje, Sri M. N. Krishnamani and Dr. Subramaniam Swamy addressed the gathering. The predominant assertion was that constitutionally and on the basis of various Supreme Court judgements, take over of > temples was totally illegal.

Sri S. Gurumurthy who could not personally make it to the event, stated his views in a written message, " Making Hindu religious institutions part of the secular state and making the secular state perform religious functions of the Hindus have led to different denominations of the Hindus claiming > to be not Hindus - for example the Arya Samaj, Jains, Lingayats and the like. This will lead to the disintegration of not only the Hindu society but the nation itself. India will ultimately end up as nation of minorities with no majority!"

One of the highlights of the event was a slide show presentation by Temple Worshippers Society [www.templeworshippers.org] which highlighted how the government control of temples in many cases was leading to conversion of Hindu Temples into commercial ventures and political instruments. They highlighted several instances of subversion of law, looting of temple properties, destroying and defiling of temples which were being regulated, managed and controlled by government through its official machinery.



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E-mail: office@arshavidya.in –website: www.arshavidya.in

LAKSHARCHANA

We cordially invite you for the **Laksharchana** to **Lord Medha Dakshinamurthi** at the Gurukulam on the occasion of the **Birthday** of **Pujya Sri Swami Dayananda Saraswati** on Thursday, August 15, 2013 .

We welcome you to participate in the Laksharchana and receive the blessings of **Lord Medha Dakshinamurthi** and **Pujya Sri Swamiji**.

The Programme for the day will be as follows.

Laksharchana	09-30 AM
Maha arati	12-15 PM
Maha Prasadam	12-30 PM

P.S. Please send your puja offering by way of DD for Rs.251/- (for cheques add Rs.50/- as bank charges) to reach us on or before **14.08.2013**. Use the form given below. Please make your Cheque or DD payable to **Sruti Seva Trust**, Coimbatore.

You can be a Sponsor for the day's Puja by Offering Rs.5000/-.

PUJA OFFERING

Enclosed is my Offering for the LAKSHARCHANA on 15-08-2013.

Name (in Block Letters)	Nakshatra	Gotra
1.] Rs.251/-
2.		
3.] Rs.251/-
4.		

My Address (IN BLOCK LETTERS)

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Phone.....Mobile.....Email.....

Cheque/DD No.....Bank.....Date.....

News & Views

California declares October 2013 as Hindu American awareness and app

Fri Jun 28, 2013 1:49 pm (PDT) . Posted by:

“Ravi Narasimhan” ravi_narasimhan_in

*California declares October as month for Hindu awareness *: It was a historic moment for California’s Hindu American community, when the senate floor at the Capitol unanimously passed the resolution on Monday designating *October 2013 as Hindu American awareness and appreciation month.*

The bill was authored by state Senate Majority Leader Ellen M Corbett, who said, “As the senator representing the 10th state senate district, I am honoured to represent constituents from many diverse backgrounds including a significant number of Hindu Americans” She said California is home to a thriving community of over 3,70,000 Hindu Americans that enrich “our state’s diversity and professional assets in fields as diverse as academia, science, technology, business, arts and literature”. She thanked her colleagues for supporting the bill that recognises the contributions of Hindu Americans as well as *designates October 2013 in their honour.*[image: California declares October as month for Hindu awareness]

”It’s great to see that the contribution the Indo-American community is making is now being recognised at the highest levels of the state,” RoKhanna, former deputy assistant secretary at the US department of commerce in the Obama administration and 2014 Congressional candidate from California

district 17 told rediff.com. He said that the Indo-American community was contributing to the economy by creating jobs in California, through entrepreneurship and innovation. According to Khanna, about 105 people along with various interfaith groups were present at the Capitol on Monday. “I am very proud to see that the community believes in religious pluralism. I am running from the 17th Congressional district and I am fortunate to have people of strong faiths from different backgrounds that make our state and country stronger. I am a big believer in religious pluralism and also that people of various faiths should have a voice in public debate.”

“I am a proud American and like an American I think all different faiths should be respected,” he added. Answering a question on why it took so long for the state to recognise the Hindu community, Khanna said it takes a community’s decades of involvement. “It takes a decade to start and to establish a political voice.” ”This is the first time any resolution recognising Hindus has ever been passed in the entire country,” said Samir Kalra, director and senior fellow for human rights, Hindu American Foundation. “It is the beginning of the great movement for Hindu Americans in California” Kalra told rediff.com. ”It was historic, so it feels great.” He said today it’s at the state level and hopes one day it will reach at the national level. Kalra said the Foundation helped draft the bill and the measure would ”recognise and acknowledge the significant contributions made by Californians of Hindu heritage to the state.” Starting October, the HAF will work with the City Hall in California and schools and help them commemorate the event by hosting educational activities and teach and create awareness about Hinduism in general. “The

HAF is doing this for next generation, so that they feel proud about their culture.” <http://www.hinduhumanrights.info/california-declares-october-as-month-for-hindu-awareness/>

Dr. Koenraad Elst on the California Textbook Controversy

BELGIUM, June 29, 2013 (Hindu Human Rights): HPI Note: Following is the introduction to Dr. Elst lengthy and insightful analysis of the 2005-2006 fight over the portrayal of Hinduism in the 6th grade textbooks in use in California schools.

Already the younger generation asks what the California textbook affair was. Now that California has been endowed with a Hindu awareness month (in a resolution co-authored by the Hindu American Foundation, the first one scheduled for this coming October, Hindus are enthusiastic that they will be able to show off their culture. But past experience shows that Hindus are not good at selling Hinduism, both because they misjudge their audience and because they don't know their own tradition very well. The California textbook affair was a painful case in point.

The California textbook controversy

During the cold part of 2005-2006, the Hindu community in the USA lived in expectation of a school history textbook reform in which Hinduism would get a fairer deal and no longer be reduced to hateful stereotypes. All it took was to use the opportunities provided by the system, viz. to propose edits that were

historically and philosophically impeccable and then focus the attention on the dimension of equal treatment in the textbooks for all religions. After all, Christian, Jewish and Muslim lobbies were having a decisive say in the portrayal of their own belief systems, with the irrational or inhumane points whitewashed or kept out of view. Given the fashion of multiculturalism and cultural relativism, it was in the fitness of things that the judgmental Christian account of Hinduism would now be replaced with something more objective, even with a Hindu self-description. But that was not to be.

Two Hindu organizations, the Hindu Education Foundation and the Vedic Foundation, handed in a list of edits they proposed to be made to the extant Hinduism chapter. Some of these alarmed a handful of anti-Hindu pressure groups and a few like-minded academics, among them Michael Witzel and Stanley Wolpert. They pressured the California Board of Education (CBE) to reject the “Hindu communalist” proposals. Though entering the fray as accusers, they were then invited to sit in judgment upon the controversial edits. This led to Hindu protests, and after everyone had his say, the CBE let Witzel and pro-Hindu emeritus professor Shiva Bajpai work out a compromise. Where they did not agree, viz. on most of the really controversial points, the CBE kept the old version, or in other words, it rejected the Hindu alternative. All the anti-Hindu lobbies cried victory. So did the HEF, pleading that 70% of the proposed edits had been accepted. Yes, but those were only the non-controversial points. Wherever an edit had really been debated, the Hindu proposals had been overruled. Briefly, it was a smashing defeat for the Hindu parents.

ARSHA VIDYA UK

FOR SEEKERS OF THE PERENNIAL VEDIC WISDOM



Peter Bonnici, 20 Oct 1949 - 22 June 2013

Peter Bonnici, former Secretary, Arsha Vidya UK, passed away on 22 June at home in London, UK. His sudden and unexpected demise came as a great shock to his family, friends and of course to all at Arsha Vidya UK.

His contribution to Arsha Vidya UK, commitment to Vedanta studies and to his Gurus Pujya Swami Dayanandaji and Swaminiji Atmaprakashanandaji was truly commendable.

He will be greatly missed by all of us. We pray to Ishwara to give strength to Peterji's wife, children and grand-children at this very sad time.

ARSHA VIDYA UK

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