

"The Kumbabishekam of the temple at the Rishikesh ashram has now been postponed to 6th of April 2004."

Nelson Mandela & the Bhagavad Gita

He knew the full Bhagavad Gita. *The untold story of Nelson Mandela & the Bhagavad Gita :- Maharaja quoted a Gita verse. Half-way thru the verse, Mandela quoted the rest of it. BT Swami was surprised. He asked "You know the Gita?" Mandela said "Try me." Every Gita verse Bhakti Tirtha Maharaja knew, Nelson knew as well. Naturally, BT Swami asked "How is this?"*

Nelson Mandela explained that he was imprisoned on Robbins Island along with some of his fellow leaders of their political party, the ANC. One of them was an Indian-bodied lawyer. The South African government tried to break them by giving them mindless labor and routine. Realizing that they needed to keep their minds actively engaged, the Indian lawyer taught Nelson Mandela Gita verses which they quoted and discussed back and forth to transcend their daily drudgery Nelson Mandela told Bhakti Tirtha Maharaja that learning the Gita helped keep him sane and did much to infuse his view of the world and his strategies for bringing independence and a better future for the South African people.

Inscriptions Confirm 9th Century Tamil Saint Built Temple

INDIA, February 3, 2014 (The Hindu): Legend has it that Manickavasagar, one of the four Saivite savants, constructed the temple at Avudaiyarkoil, known as Thiruperunthurai, in Pudukottai district. Now

the State Archaeology department has stumbled upon inscriptions confirming that Manickavasagar, the Minister of Pandiya King Arimarthana Pandian (862-885 ce), built the sanctum sanctorum and the kanagasabha mandapam.

"His contribution has been recorded in the form of a poem. The inscriptions, found in the Panchakshara mandapam of the temple built in the 16th century, also record that Thiruvachagam was inscribed on the walls," said G. Muthusamy, registering officer of the department in Tiruchi region.

Manickavasagar belonged to the 9th century and was said to have used the money meant for buying horses for the cavalry to construct the temple at Thiruperunthurai, one of the ports of the Pandiya Kingdom, after an encounter with Lord Siva. Manickavasagar penned Thiruvachagam and Thirupalliyezhuchi while camping in this temple and referred to it as Thiruperunthurai.

Hindus Unite to Celebrate Their Country

Source

NADI, FIJI, February 19, 2014 (Fiji Times): The first-ever gathering of Hindus to celebrate their contribution to the country will be held in Nadi in April. The conference will be held on April 12 and 13 at the Tanoa International Hotel.

Organisers of the event — the Vishva Hindu Parishad Fiji or World Hindu Council of Fiji — emphasized that the first Fiji National Hindu Conference was not a religious or philosophical meeting but rather, a community conference.

The theme is "The contribution of the Hindu community in strengthening and building Fiji" and it will cover economic, health, environmental, social and cultural aspects.

The conference will provide a platform for all Hindu organisations, temples and like-minded groups to showcase their contributions to Fijian society in general and Hindu society in particular.

Is Yoga the Secret to Olympic Gold?

Source

UNITED STATES, February 14, 2014 (Huffington Post): Instead of going to Disney World after winning gold in the women's snowboarding slopestyle event, Jamie Anderson said she'll be headed to Wanderlust — a yoga retreat on the North Shore of Oahu — to celebrate.

Anderson credits yoga practice with helping her stay physically and mentally strong, and she's not the only one who feels that way in Sochi. In fact, we discovered so many Olympians-cum-yogis that if the United States Yoga Federation ever succeeds in making yoga asana, or posture yoga, an official Olympic sport, we'll most likely see some cross-sport competitors.

Women athletes aren't the only ones benefiting from yoga. America's coed luge team, for instance, is partnering with Indian rival Shiva Keshavan in order to gain stretching tips. "Yoga is something we have had with the team for a few years now," U.S. coach Mark Grimmette has said, "but Shiva and his wife know yoga well so they have been facilitating those sessions."

For UK Hindus, River Soar Is Their Ganga

Source

LONDON, ENGLAND, February 5, 2014 (Hindustan Times): Officials in the east Midlands city of Leicester have designated a quiet, leafy spot on the River Soar where, instead of travelling to India, members of the city's large community of Indian origin can

scatter ashes of the deceased. The spot, near the National Space Centre, has been identified by the Leicester City Council and the Environment Agency following calls for such a facility locally from the city's Hindu, Jain and Sikh communities.

Residents of Leicester say it is often difficult for people to go to Hardwar or Varanasi to scatter the ashes, due to the cost and travel problems faced by older family members. The spot behind the National Space Centre has a sturdy platform in place, with good level access from a well-made path and handrails leading to the water's edge, Leicester City Council sources told HT. There will be no charge to use the facility.

Five Million Devotees Expected For Basant Panchami Snan Today

SANGAM, INDIA, February 4, 2014 (Times Of India): The Magh mela police, on Monday, reviewed the security arrangements in and around the mela campus ahead of the Basant Panchami snan scheduled on Tuesday. Around 5 million pilgrims and devotees, especially from city areas, are expected to take holy dip on Tuesday. The police further claimed that the majority of the crowd of devotees who would be taking a holy dip on the auspicious day of Basant Panchami would include Kalpwasis and devotees staying in tents as well as seers and saints while the rest of the crowd comprises locals and devotees from neighboring towns who have already flocked to Allahabad for the holy dip. Astrologers say that Vasant Panchami is referred to as Saraswati Puja/ Shree Panchami, or the Basant Festival of Kites which falls on the fifth day of Magha (in early February) month of Hindu calendar. The festival also marks the start of spring and Holi season. On this day Hindus worship Saraswati Devi, the Goddess of knowledge, music, art and culture.

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Nashik Priests Cautious Over Supreme Court Order On Pandharpur Temple

NASHIK, INDIA, January 20, 2014 (Times Of India): The priests in major temples in Nashik are cautious over reacting to the Supreme Court (SC) dismissal of the plea challenging the provisions of the Pandharpur Temples Act, 1973. On Wednesday, the SC dismissed the petition that challenged the constitutional validity of certain provisions

in the Act, which the petitioners claimed had abolished all their hereditary rights and privileges in connection with the temples of Vitthal and Rukmini at Pandharpur.

Devendra Pujari, the priest at Kalaram Mandir, pointed out that affairs of most of the major temples in the district were being handled by trusts, except for performing the pujas of the respective deities. These trusts were headed by a district judge. “It will be difficult to find similarity in the case between the Pandharpur Temple and the Kalaram Temple. Nevertheless, the rights of the priests have to be maintained and they are being honoured in Nashik,” Pujari said.

Pandurang Bodke, trustee of the Kalaram Mandir, said that the public trust registered with the charity commissioner had taken charge of the temple in the 1960s and has been organising all events since. “The trust is responsible for carrying out all activities including maintenance, repairs and events from the public fund. The priests are given 48% of the share of the funds that are collected in donation box,” Bodke said.

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