

Message of Peace on 9/11 from Hindu American Seva

Source: www.hinduamericanseva.org

WASHINGTON, DC, September 11, 2010: (Press Release) "As Hindus, we believe in what Mahatma Gandhi repeatedly emphasized, the Vedic statement 'Ahimsa Paramo Dharmah' meaning non-violence is the foremost duty, to the extent that it supersedes all other duties," emphasizes Anju Bhargava today, September 11. She is a key member of Hindu American Seva Charities and also a member of President Obama's Advisory Council on Faith Based and Neighborhood Partnerships.

Explaining the value of ahimsa, Sri Swami Dayananda Saraswati said, "A human being, as any other living organism, has an instinct to survive. Being endowed with free thinking he/she can recognize the same instinct in all living beings; a value is born: ahimsa. Therefore, the Vedas state that not hurting is the primary value. All others, like non-stealing, non-cheating and so on, are derivatives of ahimsa because each one of them would hurt the victim. If people practice, with care, ahimsa, abiding peace and harmony will prevail in the world."

Increasingly, Hindu Americans and people of all faiths are remembering other things that happened on September 11 and also altered the course of history, but for the best.

Mahatma Gandhi's Satyagraha movement started in South Africa on September 11, 1906, the launch of the modern Non-Violent Resistance Movement, which inspired America's Civil Rights movement.

It was on September 11, in 1893, that Swami Vivekananda, the first Hindu saintly leader

to come to America addressed the first World Parliament of Religions in Chicago, saying:

"Brothers and Sisters of America. It fills my heart with joy unspeakable to rise in response to the warm and cordial welcome, which you have given us. I thank you in the name of the most ancient order of monks in the world; I thank you in the name of the mother of religions, and I thank you in the name of millions and millions of Hindu people of all classes and sects."

This year, 9/11 even more significant. Based on the lunar calendar, it happens to be the Hindu holy festival of Ganesh Chaturthi, when Hindu Americans across the world will observe festival through prayers, as a day of the birth and renewed remembrance of Ganesh, the remover of obstacles. For the Hindus, it is a day to take fresh spiritual resolve and pray for inner spiritual strength to attain success in all undertakings. This observance and prayer for the removal of obstacles is especially relevant now as the country faces difficult challenges ahead.

Hindu places of worship and spiritual centers will also invoke these values through prayers and service, such as YogaSeva as a way of healing. And, in honor of the 9/11 Day of Remembrance and Service, Hindus will organize service projects to strengthen their communities and build stronger bonds, and offer prayers for peace. HASC is continuing to partner with Corporation for National and Community Service to organize the Hindu American Call to Service (seva), bringing together members of the dharmic religions (Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain) and collaborating with all faiths.