

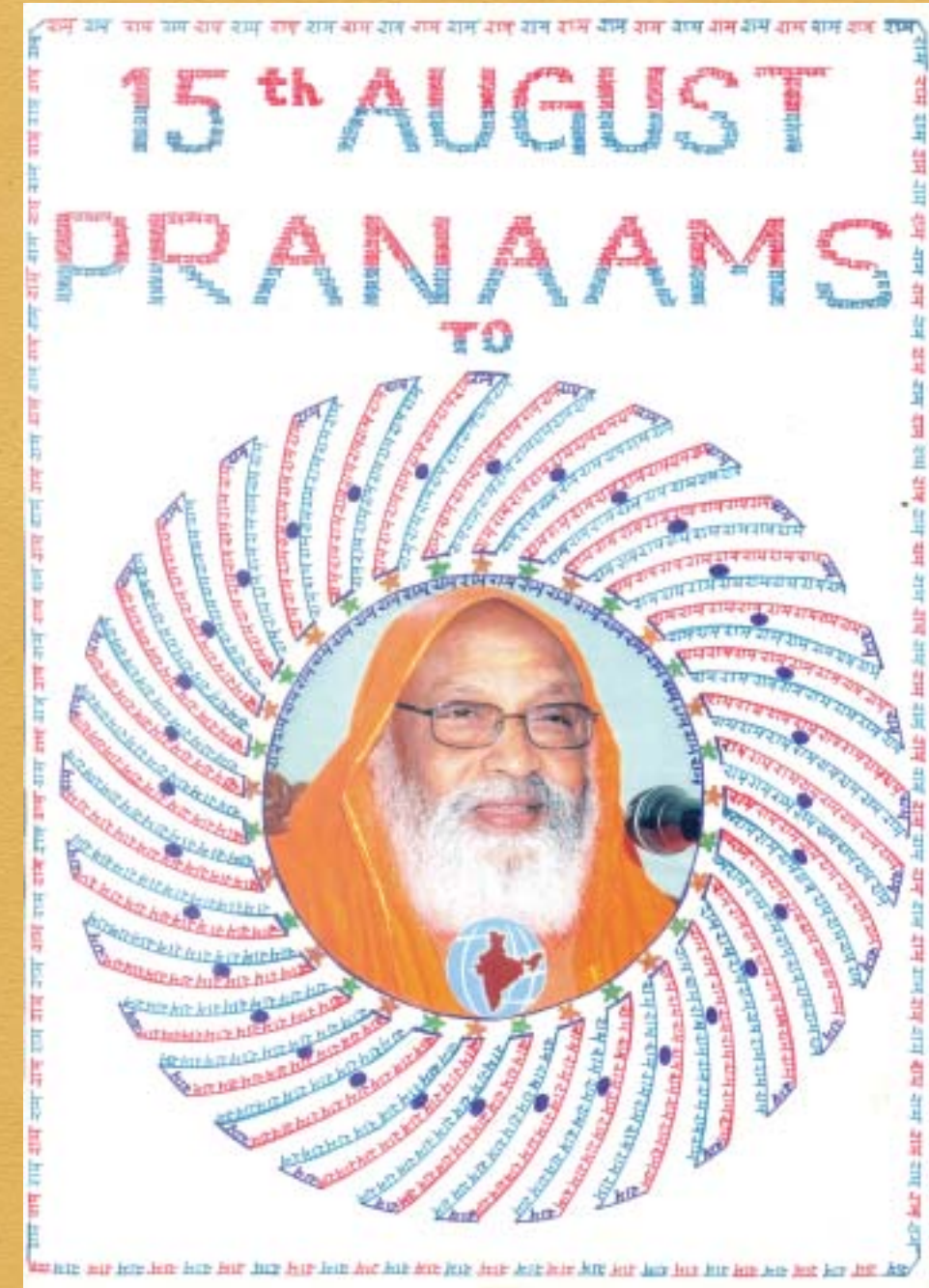
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# Arsha Vidya Newsletter

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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!



## मुण्डकोपनिषद् Muṇḍakopaniṣad



*Mantra 1.2.12 (contd. From last issue)*

Saḥ gurumevābhigacchet : may he go to a teacher. The word 'saḥ' indicates one who has doned the puruṣārtha niścaya, clear ascertainment of what exactly is desired by him or her in life. Every individual desires mokṣa. In order to fulfil that desire, he goes for knowledge. Puruṣārtha is not knowledge really; puruṣārtha is only mokṣa that is gained by the knowledge. So, one who desires to gain the knowledge becomes a jijñāsu. The word 'saḥ' refers to a jijñāsu. He is told to go to a teacher for the purpose of knowing that Brahman.

One who has to<sup>1</sup> go to a teacher. One may have all the disciplines of knowledge necessary for studying the Veda. One may know the language and the methodology of looking at the words of śruti also. So one may think, "I would like to study myself, I do not want a guru". But that does not work. Śaṅkara says anekaḥ vedāntāḥ saṁśayāḥ bahavaḥ. Vedānta vākyāḥ being many, doubts are also many. So one has to approach a teacher. What type of teacher should one approach?

The teacher should be a śrotriya<sup>2</sup>. A śrotriya is one who has studied the Veda and Vedanta, and who knows the sampradāya. One goes to such a person who has understood, and who is well informed about the scriptures. Again, the teacher should be brahmaniṣṭha, one who understands Brahman as non-separate from oneself, and one who has the commitment to know Brahman. But how would one ever know whether he is a brahmaniṣṭha?

There may be many people following many gurus. It is possible for one to select a guru who is a śrotriya. That also is possible only when there is āpatata jñāna, general knowledge of the scriptures. This is what the society can provide. It is like a person who wants to study higher Mathematics going to some one who has a doctorate in Mathematics. Some persons are recognised in the society as qualified to teach higher Mathematics because they have a doctorate. One can go to that person. One does not know whether he or she knows Mathematics or not, but then, the society has recognised the person. We have a means to know this by finding out the name of the university conferring this particular doctorate on this person. We know whether it is simply a doctorate of honour or a doctorate of real recognition. When someone has an accomplishment in a particular discipline, that is known to people, and one can go to him.

<sup>1</sup> शास्त्रज्ञऽपि स्वातन्त्र्येण ब्रह्मान्वेषणं न कुर्यादित्येतद् गुरुमेवेत्यवधारण-फलम् । मुण्डक भाष्यम्

<sup>2</sup> श्रोत्रियश्छन्दोऽधीते पाणिनिसूत्रे च ५ ॥२॥८४फ छन्दः अधीते वेत्ति वा इति श्रोत्रियः । छन्दो वेदः

But here, how does one know if the person is a śrotriya? If the society is gullible, ignorant, it can swallow anything. In such a society, there will be people who venture to teach self-knowledge without being śrotriyas. Teaching is not an ordinary thing. Unless one undergoes a certain education one cannot teach. There is a method of unfolding everything. This method comes down by sampradāya. If the gullibility is not there in the society, someone who is not a śrotriya will stand out. In an assembly of mathematicians, a fake is not going to pass. Similarly, in a society where there are scholars, one cannot pass as śrotriya unless that person is a śrotriya. So, if one is not gullible, one cannot select a śrotriya.

By the word 'śrotriya', what we are going to study is also made clear. It is nothing personally created by the person. He has nothing new to say. He is going to sway only what the śruti says. One may select a teacher and ask him, "Please teach me". The teacher may be a śrotriya, but may not teach. Why should that person teach? The question really is, why should he not teach? There is a reason why he should teach. There is no reason why he should not teach! Now one has to go to a teacher who is willing to teach. We only do salutation to those who do not teach and get blessings from them. So, it is pointed out that one should go to a teacher who is willing to teach.

But how will one choose a brahmaniṣṭha, the one who has clarity about Brahman, one whose commitment is to Brahman? Unless you have the knowledge of Brahman, you cannot know whether the other person has it. There is no other way of finding out who is a brahmaniṣṭha. To understand a brahmaniṣṭha is to be a brahmaniṣṭha. But we can say that the one who does not have commitment to anything else is a brahmaniṣṭha. One may be a śrotriya but he may not have commitment only to Brahman. So, the śrotriya must also be a brahmaniṣṭha. Visibly, the person does not have commitment to anything else. The guru must be like that. Brahmaniṣṭha really speaks of a life of sannyāsa, or a life similar to that of sannyāsa. Nothing other than Brahman is the goal to be accomplished. How a person should approach the teacher is said here now.

Samitpāṇiḥ san: by being the one who has samit in his hand. Samit means the twigs of the aśvattha, peepul tree. One picks up these dry sticks, makes a bundle of them, takes it in hand and goes to the teacher. So samitpāṇiḥ is upahāra pāṇiḥ, one who has a gift in hand.

The word 'samitpāṇiḥ' indicates that the student is one who has the willingness to serve the teacher. He is ready to do suśrūṣā. Suśrūṣā means the desire to listen to the śāstra. But the popular meaning of the word is service to the teacher. Any service is called suśrūṣā. The service to the teacher is part of learning the śāstra. The root meaning is wonderful. The suśrūṣā, desire to listen, is the real intention on the part of the student, in order to gain the knowledge from the teacher. At the same time, the word suśrūṣā means service to the teacher, and that is indicated by the word samitpāṇiḥ. Such a student, who is desirous of gaining this knowledge and is ready to do anything for that purpose, is told that he should select a teacher who is a śrotriya and brahmaniṣṭha.

श्री रुद्रम्  
Śrī Rudram  
ANUVĀKA 10

Mantra 4

मृ॒डा नो रु॒द्रो॒त नो म॒यस्कृ॑धि क्ष॒यद्वी॑राय नमसा विधेम ते । यच्छं॑ च योश्च॑ म॒नुराय॑  
जै पि॒ता तद॑श्यामि॒ तव रु॒द्र प्र॑णीतौ ॥४॥

mṛḍā no rudroṭa no mayaskṛdhi kṣayadvīrāya namasā  
vidhema te| yacchm ca yośca manurāyaje pitā tadāśyāma tava  
rudra praṇītau (4)

mṛḍā – (bless) with happiness; naḥ – us; rudra – O Lord Rudra; uta – further, naḥ – us; mayah – the ultimate happiness; kṛdhi – give; kṣayadvīrāya – to the one who is capable of eliminating the enemies; namasā – with salutation; vidhema – we offer worship; te – to you; yat yacchm ca – that happiness (born of objects); yoḥ ca – the ultimate happiness; manuḥ – manu; āyaje – gained; pitā – our father; tad – that; āśyāma – may we gain; rudra – O Lord Rudra; tava praṇītau – when you were pleased.

O Lord Rudra, bless us with happiness, the ultimate happiness. Offering salutation, we worship you with praises; you, who can eliminate the enemies within. May we gain happiness in the world of possessions as well as the true happiness (born of freedom), which (happiness) Manu, our ancestor, gained when you were pleased.

He rudra mṛḍa – O Lord, bestow happiness on us. It is not that easy to make another person happy. We pray to Bhagavān to help us in our efforts to help others being happy. Naḥ mayah kṛdhi,

grant us the ultimate happiness. Only when the mind is relatively happy, can it gain the ultimate sukha born of freedom. Bless us with those situations that will give us antaḥkaraṇa śuddhi, purity of the mind.

Suppose one has incurred a lot of pāpa, can the Lord grant mokṣa sukha to that person? Yes, the Lord is kṣayadvīra, one who removes pāpa, the inner enemy and grants sukha. When a person feels unfit, then he or she prays to the Lord—he rudra tubhyaṁ namaśā vidhema (paricarāma), we pray to you with complete surrender. You are kṣayadvīrā, give us all forms of sukha and the final mokṣa sukha.

Naḥ pitā manuḥ āyaje - Every kalpa has a manu. Manu is a generic term meaning dharma adharma śāsana kartā, one who sets dharma and adharma. Mānava is a word derived from manu alone. Our manu is Vaivasvata Manu. The one who is muni, a thinker, is also called manu, derived from the root *man*, to think. Or, Manu is my father who had handed over to me the Vedic culture. Manu gained both the viśaya sukha and mokṣa sukha only in the wake of your blessing alone, tava praṇītau.

Asmākaṁ pitā can also to be taken as Brahmaji. He became Brahmaji or Hiraṇyagarbha because of your grace alone. His pūrṇatva includes bhoga and apavarga. Tat sarvam vyaṁ he rudra aśyāma – By your grace, may we gain all that you gave to Manu, Brahmaji. Our ancestors had gained all this because of your grace. O Lord! By your grace let me also gain the saṁsāra sukha and mokṣa sukha.

## Gurukulam in Saylorsburg celebrates its 28th anniversary

*Gurukulam in the morning of 17 August 2014*

*Report by SwamijiVilasanandaSaraswati*



Pujya Sri Swami Dayananda Saraswati has not missed the 28th anniversary of ArshaVidyaGurukulam at Saylorsburg, Pennsylvania USA. His presence was felt as rain fell before the early morning *abhiṣekam* to Sri Dakṣiṇāmūrti and stopped an hour later at the conclusion of the *pūjā*. Later at the culmination of the anniversary celebration, Pujya Swamiji made his surprise entrance by Skype. He saw all the crowd gathered there and spoke to them.

In the morning, the whole ashram sparkled with a happy glow as the more than thousand guests began arriving. Many volunteers bustled here and there joyously preparing the banquet in the kitchen, setting up the stage in the main tent, arranging the books and AIM for Seva stalls in the adjacent tent and the flowers and table settings in the banquet tent.

Never had I seen the gurukulam so beautiful. With PujyaSwamiji in my heart I walked around the whole ashram capturing the beauty of this vortex of spiritual knowledge that reaches out to the entire western hemisphere and beyond. I began with the East side of the Śrī Dakṣiṇāmūrti and ŚrīGaneśa Temple and lecture hall complex and continued past the main entrance, climbing the slope to the north side mound, witnessing the panoramic view of the whole ashram, the white anniversary pavilion, the main parking lot, the activity center for yoga and children's activities, the many guest lodgings and student rooms and wide open spaces with lush green lawns, trees, flowers and shrubs. Descending and rounding the ashram on the main circular road, I turned to the right and entered the wide open scenic beauty of the Shanti Trail, including the panoramic view from the gazebo lookout post, then returned to the southwest side of the ashram main road





and continued back to the Śrī Dakṣiṇāmūrti and Śrī Gaṇeśa Temple complex.

The Hindustani classical music concert with Pandit Mukesh Desai, vocalist, Aditya Narayan Banerjee, tabla, and Jai Gandhi, flute, was just getting underway as the

guests took their seats and filled the hall. Entering the registration tent I enjoyed the many stands with books and DVDs, AIM for Seva displays and Seva store handicraft items for sale.







Taking my seat in the main tent, I continued to enjoy the unparalleled and rapturous music concert.

Following the concert the Swamijis and chief guest were honored. The board members and dignitaries were also recognized and honored. Rangarajan Venkataraman (Raju) and Mrs. Lata Raju coordinated the entire anniversary celebration.

Tejas Gosai had been appointed by PujyaSwamiji to be the Master of Ceremonies. He had come to the Gurukulam as a small boy when his younger brother was one year old. Now an American citizen, he has absorbed his native culture and values by attending the gurukulam's programs for children and youth and continues to partake in the adult programs. Tejas has become a successful

lawyer and radiates joy. He said the gurukulam helps keep your heritage and sanity. He explained that ArshaVidya Gurukulam was established in 1986 and offers Vedanta classes, yoga, astrology and other classical disciplines comprising the Vedic culture and spiritual heritage of India. A gurukulam is a residential center for learning from a guru. Pujya Sri Swami Dayananda Saraswati is a guru without parallel and possesses limitless compassion, Tejas pointed out.

Chief Guest, Mr. Sanjiv Ahuja, Former President of Telcordia [Bellcore] spoke about the great blessings that the gurukulam offers to the world.

Book releases followed the heart-felt address of Mr. Ahuja:  
“Prārthanā atpadī” by Swami Tattvavidanandaji and “Sanskrit was a World Language” by Niranjan Shah

Mr. Terry Coe, who has been a student and teacher at the gurukulam for 25 years read the congratulatory letters from the president of the United States and federal and state officials.

**LETTER FROM PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA** (read by Terry Coe):

I am pleased to join in celebrating your 28th Anniversary.

Throughout our nation’s history, places of worship have brought us together in the spirit of faith and love. Offering space for celebration in times of joy and comfort in times of uncertainty, they help foster a strong sense of community and call on us to meet life’s most sacred responsibility — to give of ourselves in service to others.





Piyush Shah led the Fundraising as apple cider was served to all guests. Piyush spoke genuinely from the heart without any showmanship or pressuring as donations were gathered for meeting the annual operating expenses of the gurukulam.

Swami Tadatmanandaji spoke, followed by Swami Pratyagbodhanandaji's address.

Then came the great unannounced surprise. On the large screen, there appeared an image of Pujya Sri Swami Dayananda Saraswati peering into the scene via Skype. He waved to all the guests and asked if we could see him. After an exchange of greetings between the guests and PujyaSwamiji, Swamiji began by saying, "Our gurukulam is going strong and it will become strong. You are all there and it will become big."

Pujya Swamiji also mentioned the congratulation letter the Gurukulam received from President Obama. There were around 800 to 900 guests in the hall, less than the more than thousand guests who

would attend when PujyaSwamiji came in person, but from here on out the gurukulam can only keep on growing and blessing more and more seekers and sincere students and devotees.

After PujyaSwamiji spoke to the guests by Skype, his pre-recorded anniversary address "Mahimā (Greatness) of Satsaṅga" was shown. This was followed by Sri Swami Veditatmanandaji's address, which continued the topic by offering many examples of

Satsaṅgawith *sat-puruṣas* taken from the poet Tulsidas and from the *BhāgavataPurāṇa*.

Gurukulam manager, Sri Suddhatma Chaitanya, gave the vote of thanks.

Then came the banquet lunch. After lunch the anniversary celebration concluded with a question and answer session led by Sri Swami Veditatmanandaji.

The swamis' addresses are being prepared for uploading to YouTube. Please check for them at:

[www.youtube.com/user/AVGSatsang/videos](http://www.youtube.com/user/AVGSatsang/videos)

"The Greatness of Satsaṅga" by Pujya Sri Swami Dayananda Saraswati is already available there. My transcription of PujyaSwamiji's 28th anniversary talk is as follows

Namaste to everybody. Many of you wait for this anniversary day. There are people who are very regular. They say that they are regularly attending our programs. I ask





them how long they have been coming. They come for every anniversary. They have not missed any anniversary program.

I am missing the program. Due to my health reasons I am not able to come there. Yet I want to speak to you all for a few minutes. They asked me to talk on *satsaṅga*. It is a fascinating topic. *Satām sat-puruṣāṇām saṅgaḥ, satsaṅgaḥ*. *Satsaṅga* is *sat-puruṣāṇāmsaṅgaḥ*. *Sat-puruṣas* are people who have achieved spiritual knowledge and those who are pursuing the spiritual knowledge. Both are *sat-puruṣas*. *Teṣāmsaṅgaḥ* means association with them.

Association is not “hanging out”. Association is being in harmony with their thinking, with their ways of living. That is association. If one has to change, one has to be in harmony with the people who have already changed. There is no other way of changing. You can do this in two ways. One, directly, by coming and sitting, listening to them, understanding them. This is *satsaṅga*. And those who are teaching, whom you listen to, themselves should be in harmony with the *ṛṣis*, with their

thoughts, their teaching. They are the *sat-puruṣas*. And with those *sat-puruṣas* to be in harmony is to go all the way up. They become conduits for the message of the *upaniṣads* to reach you, of the *Gita* to reach you. They are the *sat-puruṣas*.

What brings about a change is the direct connection. You cannot sit in Saylorsburg all the time and enjoy the classes. The direct *satsaṅgis* not possible for various reasons, but you can have indirect *satsaṅg*, in that case.

These are days when you can have an i-pad. You can keep the swamiji in your pocket. Somebody boasted to me, “I have you in my hand.”

So, this is direct listening also, having known the person, it is *satsaṅg*. Reading a book is a *satsaṅg*, because your mind is with the mind of that person when you read. That’s how you change. Nobody changes without the association of the *sat-puruṣas*. *Satsaṅgatvenis-saṅgatvam. Nis-saṅgatvenir-mohatvam. Satsaṅga* brings about a change.

Every one of you comes to this place, has a story to tell of how you changed. Change takes place by association of people either



directly or indirectly, reading, listening. The quote is a verse in *Bhajagovindam*, which is a book of conversion. It's a book of *puruṣārtha* conversion. *Bhajagovindam*, *bhajagovindam*. If you analyze all the verses, it's all *puruṣārtha*. *Ārtham, kāmam...* It is all *puruṣārtha*. *Ārthamanāartham, bhavayaletyam*. *Puruṣārtha* means, what is aspired by every *puruṣa*, *puruṣaiḥarthate*, not *puruṣeṇarthate*. *Sarvaiḥpuruṣaiḥ arthyate iti puruṣārthah*.

What is aspired by every person, *puruṣa* means not male, every person. *Puruṣaiḥsarvaiḥarthateitipuruṣārthah*. These are commonly pursued, like wealth. Wealth-seeking is for security, gain, power etc. Then *kāma*, pleasures. It's not one person, everyone seeks pleasure. These are *puruṣārthas*. People all go after them. The book addresses them and it tells the limitations of these pursuits and then says to seek the people who can teach you. Seek *satsaṅg*.

*Satsaṅg* brings about the change. Then the *satsaṅgatvam* will come. *Satsaṅgatvenis-saṅgatvam*.

When you are interested in this, then you disassociate yourself from that which you were avidly seeking. *Satsaṅgatvenis-saṅgatvam*. *Nis-saṅgatvenir-mohatvam*. Previously there was some value, priorities for all of them. And the value is *moha*, is due to exaggerated perception, wrong perception. *Moha* goes away because of association of *sat puruṣas*. False values, false priorities go away. When you are interested in one thing, then that is your priority. Somebody calls you for *satsaṅg*, you would say, "I have no time," because, there is no interest, there is no priority. Then, if you get interested in *satsaṅg*, if somebody calls you for a show, you will say, "I have no

time, I have to go to *satsaṅg*." You have time only for what you have interest in.

This is how you change. You heave yourself to another level of perception, another level of thinking, another way of living. Priorities change because interests change. Interests change because understanding has changed, my understanding about the *puruṣārthas*. What is it that I am looking for? I am looking for a way of life in which I seek a better happiness, more security, and this more happiness and security is but sense. Centered on yourself, centered on I, there is security, there is joy, all by *satsaṅg*, due to *satsaṅg*.

That is what the teaching is. There is a sense of incompleteness on the part of everybody. What one seeks is this completeness. In terms of security, in terms of fullness, one seeks that security and happiness.

The perception of oneself is I am insecure; I am incomplete. There is something missing in me. The teaching is, yes, there is something missing. Knowledge of your self is what is missing. You are what you want to be. Every time you are happy, you are yourself. Every time you are at peace, you are at your self. If for a few moments I am at peace with myself because of some situational changes, then you can be at peace with yourself for good, with the world for good.

Similarly, that I am seeking happiness becomes a silly thing. Happiness is not an object to seek. You are happiness. You are peace. Thank you all. Have a good anniversary.

## Gita Classes of Pujya Swamiji held during July 2014



A summary of the Vedanta classes held during July - 2014, is presented below:

### CHAPTER XVI - TOPIC OF DESCRIPTION OF BECOMING AND UNBECOMING DISPOSITIONS:

This chapter deals with daivī sampat and āsurī sampat. First three verses covers daivī sampat

A person possessing daivī sampat is endowed with: fearlessness, purity of mind, steadiness, capacity to reach out, mastery

over sense organs (self- restraint), devotion to Īśvara (performing various rituals), study of one's own Veda on a regular basis, austerity, alignment of thought, word and deeds, straightforwardness, non-violence, truthfulness, resolution of anger, renunciation, calmness, absence of tendency to criticize others, compassion, absence of longing, gentleness, modesty, brilliance, capacity to forget and forgive, endurance, no thought of hurting, not having ego.

A person having āsurī sampat will have many dispositions which are mainly opposite of those sampat: A few





The Lord answered this question by explaining what is śraddhā. He told that śraddhā is three fold: sāttvika, rājasika and tāmasika. One should give up tāmasika **activities**, grow out of rājasika **activities** and finally go for sāttvika activities.

**Three fold worship:** Sāttvika people worship Devatas. Rājasika people worship yakṣās. Tāmasika people worship ghosts.

**Three fold food:** Food

that increases longevity, mental clarity, strength, health and happiness are liked by sāttvika people. Food that is bitter, sour, salty, hot, pungent and dry and that give pain, sorrow and ill-health are liked by rājasika people. Food that is old, inadequately cooked, kept overnight or impure are liked by tāmasika people.

**Three fold ritual:** Ritual performed as per the śāstra for purifying the mind is known as sāttvika ritual. Ritual performed for worldly results or for gaining recognition is rājasika ritual. Ritual performed contrary to śāstra without distribution of food, not giving dakṣiṇā to priest, and without śraddhā is tāmasika ritual.

**Three fold tapas:** Worship of devās, priests and guru (teacher), purity, straightforwardness, self-discipline, and ahimsa are called tapas (discipline) of physical body. Speech that does not create anxieties, which is true, pleasing and beneficial is called tapas (discipline) of speech. Mental cheerfulness, gentleness,

dispositions are mentioned below: adharma, pride, arrogance, anger, harshness, untruthfulness, desire, passion, cruelty, pretention, delusion, etc. They suffer pain here and later have to suffer in Naraka also.

A spiritual seeker needs to live a mindful, alert life by consciously giving up the āsurī sampat and deliberately cultivating daivī sampat till this wealth manifests spontaneously. Person endowed with daivī sampat can gain ātma jñāna.

Śāstra is the means of knowledge to know what is to be done and what is not to be done

## CHAPTER XVII – TOPIC OF THE DESCRIPTION OF THE THREE TYPES OF ŚRADDHĀ:

This chapter starts with a question of Arjuna to know the fate of the person who does puja with immense śraddhā but without following śāstra.

silence, mastery over the mind and purity of thought is called tapas (discipline) of the mind.

**Three fold dānam:** Dānam when given has to be done as a duty. It has to be given without expecting to get anything in return, in proper place, at proper time, and to a worthy recipient is considered sāttvika dānam. Dānam that is given expecting something in return or for puṇya is rājasika. Dānam given improperly at the wrong place and time, and to unworthy recipients and with contempt is tāmasika dānam.

## CHAPTER XVIII – TOPIC OF FREEDOM AND RENUNCIATION:

The eighteenth chapter started again with a question from Arjuna, to know the difference between tyāga and sannyāsa.

**Three-fold tyāgas:** Renunciation due to some fascination or romanticism about sannyāsa is tāmasika. Renunciation to do a job due to fear of bodily strain and hence avoidance of doing what is to be done, is known as rājasika. Renunciation of attachment towards result of karma is sāttvika.

A karma yogi maintains equanimity irrespective of whether the result is desirable, undesirable or a mixture of these two. Ātma is neither the doer nor the enjoyer, but due to identification with the body and mind, one does a mistake and identifies himself to be a doer and enjoyer. The identification with body will go only by gaining ātma jñāna.

**Three-fold knowledge:** The knowledge by which one sees changeless, undivided ātma is sāttvika. The knowledge by which one sees the apparent difference among varied beings as real is rājasika. The knowledge

by which one sees the body alone as ātma is tāmasika.

**Three-fold action:** The action done with the attitude of karma yoga is sāttvika. The action done for personal gain is rājasika. The action born out of delusion is tāmasika.

**Three-fold karta:** Sātvik doer is a karma yogi with enthusiasm, cheerfulness and fortitude. Rājasik doer is under the spell of likes and dislikes and is subject to elation and depression. Tāmasik doer is immature, lazy and procrastinates.

**Three-fold buddhi:** Sātvik intellect is the one that knows what to do and what not to do and knows the cause of bondage and the path to freedom. Rājasik intellect wrongly understands what is to be done and not to be done under the spell of likes and dislikes. Tāmasik intellect mistakes adharma as dharma.

**Three-fold resolve:** Sātvik resolve is to maintain and engage all sense organs in the spiritual path. Rājasik resolve is to pursue worldly pursuits mainly dharma, artha and kama. Tāmasik resolve is not thinking properly, not giving up excess sleep, fear, sorrow, sadness and intoxication.

**Three-fold happiness:** Sātvik happiness is that which looks like poison in the beginning but is like nectar in the end. Rājasik happiness is that which is like nectar in the beginning and is like poison in the end. Tāmasik happiness is that which is born out of sleep, laziness and indifference.

**Karma Yoga Attitude:** The duties of the four varṇās are prescribed by the śāstra, based on one's own nature. One should stay with one's own karma and contribute to the society with the attitude of performing his

karma as an offering (pūjā) to Īśvara. This attitude of karma yoga will help one to gain the mental purity necessary to pursue ātma jñāna.

**Dharma Vyādha:** In Mahabharata, the story of Dharma Vyādha is presented as a duty bound person. He is a butcher by profession, but due to his commitment to svadharma and piṭṛ seva, gains fullness. He was jivan mukta. He taught a Brahmana what Brahmana dharma is.

**Summary of Gita teaching:** One does his svadharma with the attitude of karma yoga. He neutralizes his likes and dislikes. He cultivates compassion. He wins over anger. He frees himself from a sense of possession. He frees himself from ego.

He learns the śāstra from a Guru. He knows himself to be a non-doer of action even while performing action. He contemplates on the teaching that he, himself is the meaning of the word satisfaction, not bound by time and is the very meaning of pūrṇatvam (fullness). He always stays with the knowledge that he is Brahman.

His mind is abiding in the Lord. The Lord promises that such a devotee will reach Him. Giving up the karmas, when one takes refuge in the Lord, he will be released from all karmas and he will not grieve. He will gain mokṣa.

Arjuna declared that his moha (delusion) had gone and he was no more deluded as he had regained his clarity in understanding. He was ready to act as per Lord's instructions. The Lord replied that Arjuna may do whatever he wanted.

The Lord said that the one who after gaining knowledge of Bhagavad Gita,

teaches Bhagavad Gita to others, is his dearest devotee.

## SĀDHANA PAÑCAKAM CLASS BY SWAMI SADĀTMNANDA

**INTRODUCTION:** This work is attributed to Sri Ādi Śaṅkara. This work is also called Upadeśa Pañca Ratnam and Sopāna Pañcakam. Sādhana refers to the means to attain the goal, the sādhyam, which is mokṣa. It has five verses consisting of totally 40 instructions. Step by step instructions can lead a spiritual aspirant to reach the ultimate goal. Achievement of one step automatically leads to the next step.

**VERSE 1:** Study one's own Veda daily. Perform karmas well prescribed in the Vedas as per one's svadharma. Dedicate the karmas as an offering to the Lord. Give up desire based action. Wash away the multitude of pāpa. Analyze life's experiences and recognize the limitations of worldly pleasures. Cultivate desire for ātm jñāna. Reduce involvement in house-hold activities.

**VERSE 2:** Seek the Company of noble and spiritual people. Develop devotion to the Lord. Cultivate virtues such as shanti. Give up worldly actions. Approach a Sadguru and serve him. Seek to know Brahman. Listen to upaniṣads.

**VERSE 3:** Reflect upon the teachings of the upaniṣads. Understand the teaching. Refrain from getting involved in analysis based on faulty logic, not in keeping with the śāstra. Do nidhidhyāsanam to assimilate the teaching. Give up pride and arrogance. Remind that you are not the body. Give up arguments of any form with learned people.

**VERSE 4:** Treat hunger like a disease to be cured by taking food like medicine. Do not



ask for tasty food. Be satisfied with whatever comes one's way as alms. Endure heat and cold. Avoid useless talks. Be impartial. Cultivate indifference towards praise and censure. Do not ask for undue favour from others.

VERSE 5: Remain comfortable in solitude. Contemplate on Brahman. Appreciate limitless Ātma as oneself. Negate the world by understanding the reality. Destroy sañcitaa karma by knowledge. Detach from āgāmi karma. Exhaust prārabdha karma. Abide in ātma jñāna.

### **DHANYĀṢṬAKAM CLASS BY SWAMI SHANKARANANDA**

#### **INTRODUCTION:**

This work is attributed to Sri Ādi Śaṅkara. It has eight verses mainly explaining the characteristics of a person who is blessed.

#### **VERSE 1:**

That alone is the means of knowledge which makes the mind and senses available. That alone is to be known, which is unfolded in the upaniṣads. They alone are fulfilled, whose actions are guided by a clear understanding of Paramātmā. Others only wander in confusion.

#### **VERSE 2:**

Blessed are they who have mastered their mind. Having known oneness and non-duality, they stay and enjoy the understanding of ātm vidya.

#### **VERSE 3:**

Blessed are they who have grown out of experiences of family life, from whom binding desires have gone away and who

retires to a quiet place to live a contemplating life.

#### **VERSE 4:**

Blessed are they, who take respect and disrespect as equal, and give up the feeling of me and mine and see everything as Īśvara.

#### **VERSE 5:**

Blessed are they, who have grown out of the desire for son, wealth and svarga, who live alone, who subsist on whatever comes on their way and see themselves as consciousness.

#### **VERSE 6:**

Blessed are they, who understand that Brahman cannot be categorized. All others who fail to understand this are bound.

#### **VERSE 7:**

Blessed are they, who have cut off the bond of worldly life with the sword of knowledge after understanding the limitations of all worldly pursuits.

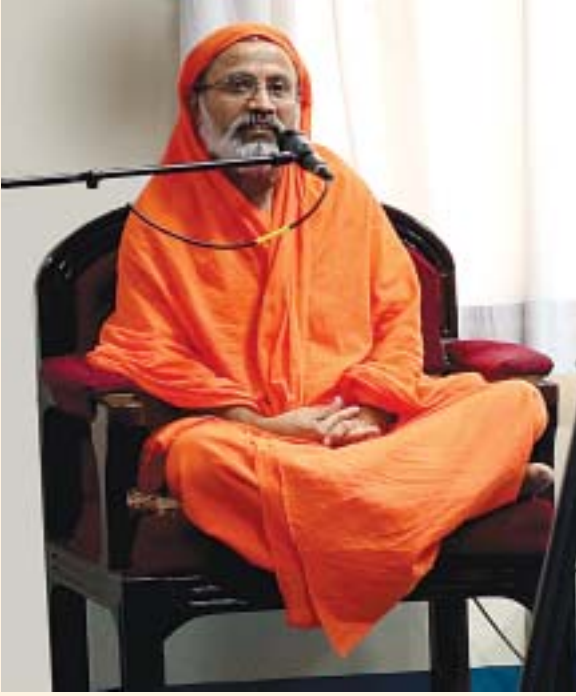
#### **VERSE 8:**

Blessed are they, who live a life with compassion and ātm jnana in the company of a Guru.

In today's context, blessed are they who stay at Anaikatti Gurukulam over a long duration and study upaniṣads under guidance of Pūjya Svāmiji.

*Report by N. Avinashilingam*

## Valedictory Function of Three-months Course at AVG



Swami Dayananda Sarasavati and the other Acharyas.

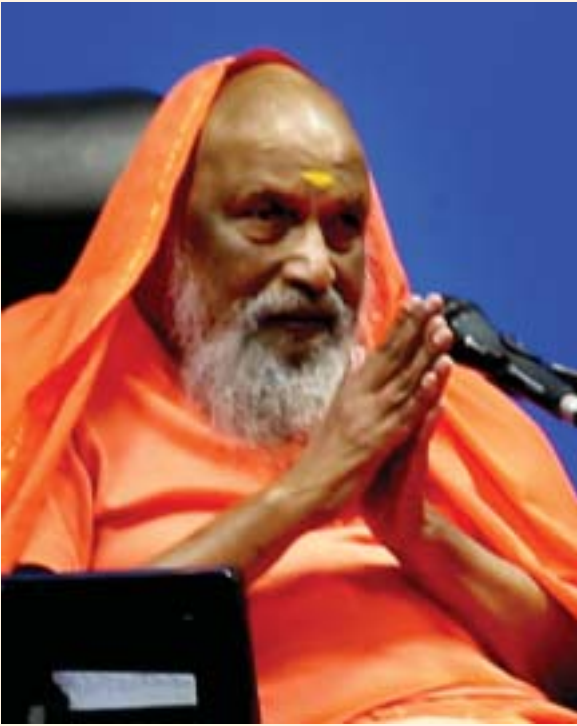
Brni. Medha Michika told that she was always lucky with her Teachers, who gave her special love and care, and that she was now fortunate as she had 45 good students to teach Sanskrit during the course.

Swami Shankarananda said that all were blessed to have Pujya Sri Swamiji teach one Gita class and conduct Satsangh daily. Swami Sadatmanada supported him and had love and respect for what he did. Swamini Vedarthananda and Swamini Saradananda took care of all the events in the temple. Brni Medha Michika taught in her own loving way with a lot of enthusiasm. All the students had been wonderful, taking part in all the activities.

The valedictory function for the three months course at AVG, Anaikatti, was held on July 31, 2014. A few students spoke expressing their gratitude to Pujya Sri

Swami Sadatmananda said that it was his first experience to conduct a course and that the presence of Pujya Sri Swamiji made all the difference. It was an elevating





experience. He got Swami Shankarananda as his friend who did most of the work and all his co-Teachers gave their best. The

students cooperated and learnt with enthusiasm.

Pujya Sri Swamiji gave his valedictory address. He said that he had seen many beginnings and ends of Vedanta courses. After every end, there is a new beginning. It is a continuous process and the learning never stops.

Svakarma is unfolded and not created by one. It should be done cheerfully. One should see Isvara's order in that. **We** pray for clear thinking for us and our associates. Many Vedic mantras are chanted to clear anything that inhibits our vision.

He added that his voice was good enough to teach and keep him going. He was happy that he could talk without any difficulty and complete the teaching of the Bhagavad Gita in three months. He had the entire vision of Gita inside that he was able to summarise all the chapters in one hour on the penultimate day of the course.







He said that Vedanta teaching cannot be given to everybody in the course. He had total trust in the Acharyas. Temple Swaminis had made all the students chant well. He said that he was proud of Michika, who is focused like other Japanese and who came as a student and is now a Teacher.

He said that the students who go back home after three months may continue their earlier work with *karma yoga* attitude. They

should do regular study of *sastra*. They may continue their study through tapes and CDs and they may also follow the same routine of study as in the Gurukulam. If they had any other commitment to work, they may study during convenient time. The students can go back with the idea that they are part of our *parampara*.

*Report by N. Avinashilingam*

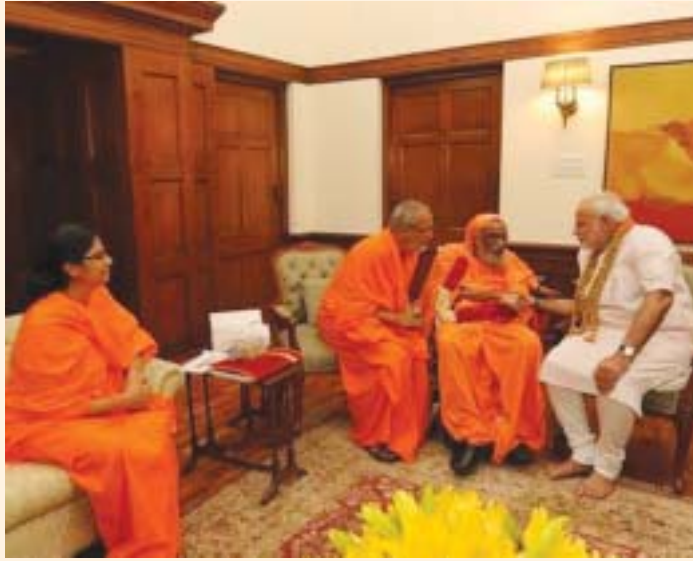
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**A Well Wisher**

## Swami Dayananda Saraswati meets PM Narendra Modi

Tuesday, 19 August 2014  
PTI

Courtesy: [www.newstodaynet.com](http://www.newstodaynet.com)



New Delhi: Swami Dayananda Saraswati called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi here on Monday.

Swami Dayananda Saraswati is the founder of Arsha Vidya Gurukulam in Tamil Nadu's Coimbatore city.

Swami blessed the Prime Minister to serve the country with courage and compassion.

He was accompanied by Swami Paramatmananda and Swamini Dhanyananda.

Arsha Vidya Gurukulam is an institute of traditional study of the Advaita Vedanta and Sanskrit.

## Sixteen-step Puja taught at AVG

On July 29, 2014, the long term course students were taught how to do the 16 step pūjā called ṣoḍaśa upacāra pūjā at the satsaṅg hall adjacent to the temple. The main altar was set up in the hall. Every student was given an altar of the picture of Lord Dakṣiṇāmūrti. Every student was also provided lamp, flowers, camphor and vessel with water, ritual spoon and fruits.



Sri Svāmi Sadātmānandā chanted the mantras and the students repeated the same. Svāmiji explained the meaning of the mantrās. Students lit the lamp, offered flowers, did ācamanam, guru dhyānam, Lord Gaṇeśa dhyānam, praṇāyāmaṁ, saṅkalpa, āsana pūjā, ghaṇṭā pūjā, kalasa pūja and ātma pūja. After that the elaborate 16-step pūjā was performed with enthusiasm and prayerfulness.

Pūjya Śrī Svāmi Dayānanda Sarasvati delivered his anugraha bhāṣaṇam. He said

that this 16-step pūjā should be done regularly. It helps one to change from a routine life to a spiritual life. This is an effective means to gain puṇya. This 16-step pūjā was introduced to the students of the fourth long-term course at AVG at the end of the course. For this fifth long-term course, this has been done in the beginning itself. Pūjya Śrī Svāmiji blessed the students.

**Report by N. Avinashilingam**





## 16<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Arsha Vidya Kuteeram



With the blessings of Pūjya Svāmi Dayananda Sarasvati, Ārṣa Vidyā Kuṭīram, established under the aegis of Ārṣa Vidyā Vardhini Trust by Svāmi Sudīrānanda at Singanallur, Coimbatore, celebrated its 16<sup>th</sup> anniversary on June 22, 2014.

The celebrations began with chanting of Kaivalya Navanītam, a Tamil text on Vedānta, led by Svāmi Sudīrānanda. He



gave his anugraha bhāṣaṇam, and it was followed by the chanting of the Guru aṣṭotra nāmāvalī (108 names in praise of Guru, Lord Dakṣiṇāmūrti). The celebrations concluded with distribution of mahā prasāda.

Svāmi Sudīrānanda, in his address, said that not only is it a great privilege to chant Kaivalya Navanītam but listening to it too helps one earn a lot of grace. And the students who understand it will gain ātma jñāna. Kaivalya Navanītam contained the essence of the Upaniṣads. Sri Thandavaraya Swamigal, of Nannilam in Thanjavur District, wrote this work as per the instructions of his Guru Sri Narayanan.

Kaivalya Navanītam means Brahman, the only reality; *navaneetham* means butter, here referring to the essence of ātma jñāna. Those interested in *dharma*, *artha* or *kama* cannot get mokṣa; only qualified students who enquire into their real nature can get mokṣa.



We got physical comforts in our life as per our *karma*. Deep sleep as an experience indicated to us that we could be happy even without external objects. So, we had to *choose* to understand what our real nature is. The upaniṣads taught by Guru is the only pramāṇa for ātma jñāna. Satsaṅg will help one to continue the pursuit.

He blessed the students to walk the way shown by great men and achieve ātma jñāna.

*Report by N. Avinashilingam*

**Three-month Residential Course - 2014**  
**By ĀRṢA VIDYĀ VIKĀS KENDRA**  
**Bhubaneswar**

Om

ĀRṢA VIDYĀ VIKĀS KENDRA, Bhubaneswar, announces a Short Three-month Residential Course on Vedānta, and Sanskrit commencing from 6<sup>th</sup> of October, 2014. The period is roughly broken into three One-month Courses to accommodate those short of time.(open-ended), although one can attend continuously.

6<sup>th</sup> October - 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2014 - Muṇḍakopaniṣad with  
Śaṅkarabhāṣyam  
10<sup>th</sup> November - 6<sup>th</sup> December, 2014 - Praśnopaniṣad with śaṅkarabhāṣyam  
8<sup>th</sup> December - 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2014 - Kenopaniṣad with Śaṅkarabhāṣyam

The course will be conducted, by Svamini Ātmaprajñānanda Sarasvatī, student-disciple of Pūjya Śrī Svāmi Dayānanda Sarasvatī.

Brahmacāris and Brahmacariṇis familiar with the traditional Gurukula teaching paramparā may apply to:

Svamini Ātmaprajñānanda Sarasvatī  
Founder Ācārya  
ĀRṢA VIDYĀ VIKĀS KENDRA  
A 1/1 Palaspalli  
Bhubaneswar – 751 020  
ODISHA  
[atmaprajna@gmail.com](mailto:atmaprajna@gmail.com)

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

<http://www.speakingtree.in/public/atmaprajanandasaraswati>  
[www.atmaprajananda.blogspot.com](http://www.atmaprajananda.blogspot.com)  
You Tube - atmaprajananda saraswati  
[www.arshavidya.net](http://www.arshavidya.net)

The Kendra will provide facilities that are possible.



## Anecdote

**- Narrated by a student of Pujya Swamiji.**

Salutations to the Guru

Let me place at His Lotus Feet my cherished passage to a satisfied life.

I am blessed to have been born in a family, which knew Pujya Swamiji from his Poorva Asram days. Because my uncle, late Sri.L.S.Mani was his student from early days, I used to go with him to meet Pujya Swamiji, whenever he was at Trichy – 1970

In 1975, when I had just completed graduation, Pujya Swamiji was giving morning talks at National High School, Trichy, I heard Swamiji talk on “Who am I”. Then on, I became a serious student.

Thereafter, I moved to Mumbai, used to visit Sandeepany Sadanalaya, Powai during weekends while working with Hindustan Lever Ltd. For about two years (1976-78), I regularly attended all weekend programmes at Sandeepany – Lectures, meditation classes, pujas, satsang, bhajans, etc. That gave me a rounded understanding of the rightful place for karma, upasana & prayers in the overall spiritual mindset of a devotee. Pujya Swamiji’s teachings, his soothing and comforting presence meant a lot to me in my formative years as a young adult. I did approach Pujya Swamiji at that time to take to full-time spiritual studies; but Swamiji discouraged saying that I have to be working and taking care of family.

Thereafter, there was a period when I didn’t meet Pujya Swamiji for long periods, but I was reading His teachings, listening to His lectures, kept Swamiji informed of what I was doing in life.

Later, when Gita Home Study program started in 1990, I enrolled myself; started getting 50 pages of the manuscript every month. 1800 pages in 36 months, gave me sufficient time & mental space to study seriously the teachings as unfolded by Pujya Swamiji. It’s a great Blessing.

Thereafter, when I went abroad in 1997 till 2006, I have gone through Gita Home Study many times over. The study helped me have a wholesome understanding of life and my response to life situations has been fairly measured. I increasingly feel that the Gods & the Guru have blessed me.

So, it was only natural that in 2007, with the Guru's blessings, I have taken the opportunity of switching to a contributory vocation of being Gurukulam Manager at Anaikatti and subsequently, Admn. and Mktg. Manager at Arsha Vidya Publications, Chennai.

During my stay at Anaikatti, I had the blessing to closely associate with Pujya Swamiji. I could imbibe the attitudes of helpful interaction, unjudging approach to people, just deal with situations as appropriate, not to project far too ahead and miss the current picture, so on so forth. It was amazing how Swamiji could deal with such a large demand on his time and counsel a large varied society. He has a positive word and provides concrete help to all who approach him. Swamiji's teachings & his interactions with people are seamlessly intertwined without any contradiction. It's surely a blessing, to be there. The temple routines, Sri Rudram chanting, the homams, pujas have left a profound presence in my mind. The understanding of Vastu as one whole pervading all our lives has allowed me to "Be" – "just be" (no strings attached; no binding demands from life, which if not met, would leave me unfulfilled). Lord Dakshinamoorthy forever remains in our hearts.

I only would like to reiterate that constant association with Pujya Swamiji's teachings, satsangs, makes you so much a saner person that one can set proper priorities in life. One's sense of proportion for comforts, achievements, personal life, professional life, if properly set on the basis of overall understanding of life through the teachings of Swamiji is adequate to give one enough mental leisure and inner space. One can make oneself available for contributory activities. Yes, I am blessed; I am able to create enough inner space for me to share with others in small and big ways depending on the occasion.

DHANYOHAM! DHANYOHAM! DHANYOHAM!

## From Brahma Jignyasa Shibhir at AVG, Anaikatti to 'Samkranthi Shibhir'

at Swami Dayananda Ashram, Rishikesh



Shri Swami Brahmayogananda, Founder Acharya, Yoga Shanthi Gurukulam, Chennai conducted a one week camp named '**Brahma Jignyasa Shibhir**' at the prestigious Arsha Vidya Gurukulam, Anaikatti in January 2014. Swamiji taught Brahma Sutram to 150 students who had come from various parts of the country. It was a rare honour for him to teach the Brahma Sutras to his students from the very same place where he learnt it from Pujya Sri Swami Dayananda Saraswathi ji.

Since the camp at Anaikatti, various classes, camps and events have been conducted by Swami Brahmayogananda ji and following are the highlights

- In the month of April 2014, Swamiji conducted '**Vairakya Shibhir**' at Thiruvidaimarudur/ Govindapuram, where he taught Bharthruhari's text- Vairagya Shathakam followed by 'Neethi Shibhir' at Bangalore where the

text-'**Neethi Shathakam**' was taught to around 80 students

- At Thiruvidaimarudur, the Chariot (Thaer) of Mahalingaswamy, which was built with the support and blessings of Pujya Sri Swami Dayananda Saraswathi was seen by all the students

- On May 14<sup>th</sup> 2014, Yoga Shanthi Gurukulam's 19<sup>th</sup> Annual day was celebrated at 'Sastralayam', the newly built ashram for Swamiji, at Neelamangalam village, Maduranthakam (90 kms from Chennai). On that auspicious Chitra Pournami day, Swamiji took the inaugural class to Bhakthi Yoga Shibhir. Bhagavad Gita Sankara Bhashyam CD was released on this occasion.

- 2 Back to back '4 day camps' were conducted at Swami Suddhananda Ashram, Uthandi in May & June 2014. Swamiji covered Chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9 from the Bhagavad Gita during these camps totally spanning 8 days. These







camps titled 'Bhakthi Yoga Shibhir' were attended by around 100 students.

• **100 Continuous Bhagavad Gita classes at Sankara Mutt, West Mambalam**

- ❖ Swamiji commenced the 'Chaturmaasya Punya kaalam' on June 22<sup>nd</sup> 2014 in a very unique manner by announcing '**100 Continuous Bhagavad Gita classes**' at Sankara Mutt, West Mambalam, Chennai
- ❖ The Chaathurmasya daily schedule starts with Vishnu Sahasranama Paarayanam at 530 AM followed by Bhagavad Gita classes by Swamiji at 6 AM concluding with Narayaneeyam paarayanam between 7 to 715 AM
- ❖ Nearly 125 students are attending these classes on a regular basis and these classes are also being live webcasted thro [www.chellavideos.com](http://www.chellavideos.com)
- ❖ These Classes covering Chapters 10 to 18 will continue till Sept 11<sup>th</sup> 2014
- On July 12, 2014, **Guru Purnima** was celebrated in a grand manner at the Gurukulam classroom- Sri Veda Vyasa Sathsang hall, and the highlights of the function were:
  - ❖ Lighting of Kuthu Vilakku was by Smt Hema Gopal, VP , TCS and Invocation song was rendered by Smt Gayathri Girish, a noted Carnatic Vocalist



- ❖ Vyasa Puja performed by Swamiji and Guru Puja by the students of the Gurukulam
- ❖ CD Release of Vairakya and Neethi Shathakam - First Copy released by Dr. T. S. Sridhar, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary , TN Govt. and received by Sri Sikkil C Gurucharan, noted Carnatic vocalist
- ❖ Students of the Gurukulam made a unique presentation on the topic- Vyasaram en Gurunatharum
- **Pujya Sri Swami Dayananda Saraswathi ji's Jayanthi celebrated on August 15<sup>th</sup> 2014**
  - ❖ Under Swamiji's guidance, students of the Gurukulam joined together to celebrate the Jayanthi of Pujya Swamiji
  - ❖ These celebrations commemorated with Maharishi Aurobindo Jayanthi, Independance day and Raksha Bandhan
- **Krishna Jayanthi** was celebrated at Yoga Shanthi Gurukulam on August 17<sup>th</sup> with the following highlights
  - ❖ Carnatic Kutchery by 'Mambalam Sri Sisters' specialising on Krishna songs
  - ❖ Children dressed as Little Krishnas and Radhas welcomed Swamiji to the function
  - ❖ Vishnu Sahasranama Archana and Puja with Swamiji himself chanting the 1000



conclusion of this Chaathurmaasyam punya kaalam

❖ September 25<sup>th</sup> to Oct 6<sup>th</sup> 2014- **Samkraanthi Shibhir** by Swamiji attended by 100 students at Swami Dayananda Ashram, Rishikesh and Haridwar. Adi Sankara's text 'Bhaja Govindam' will be taken during this camp

Apart from the above Vedanta classes, camps and

names of Vishnu repeated by all students with Pushpa Archana

- ❖ Sri Krishna idols and Vishnu Sahasranama books were distributed to all the 200 participants
- ❖ Swamiji also led a Bhaja Govindam Paarayanam on that auspicious occasion
- ❖ A Unique presentation was made by Gurukulam students on the topic 'Sarvathra Samadarshanam'



#### • **Events coming up at the Gurukulam**

- ❖ September 11<sup>th</sup> 2014- Swamiji's Jayanthi to be celebrated by planting of 57 trees at Sastralayam, Maduranthakam in the morning and Bhagavad Gita classes Samarop function in the evening at Sankara Mutt
- ❖ **Vishnu Sahasranama Navaaham** classes by Swamiji at Sankara Mutt between Sept 13<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>
- ❖ September 21<sup>st</sup> 2014- A **Maha Samarop** function at Sankara Mutt to mark the

workshops, Swamiji has also been motivating his students to chant the Vijay mantra 'Om Sri Rama Jaya Rama Jaya Rama' to pray for the early Kumbhabhishekham of Sri Ram Mandir at Ayodhya. This Japa movement which started in February 2013 is being chanted by 3300 students of Swamiji and the total Japa count has surpassed 35 crores in the one and half year period.

Jai Sri Ram

Jai Gurudev

### **South Africa Temple Celebrates Akhand Hanuman Chalisa**

SOUTH AFRICA, July 29, 2014 (Indian Times): The Isipingo Dharam Mandir celebrated its 2nd Akhand Hanuman Chalisa on 25th May 2014 at the temple in Isipingo. The President of the Temple Society, Neelien Ramchand explain that the event included the recitation of the Hanuman Chalisa 108 times. Various satsang groups from the Durban area were programmed to perform the Hanuman Chalisa during this marathon recital. The recitation started at 6 am and ended at 6 pm.

The day's proceedings commenced with prayer at 4-30 am. Neelien said that the Akhand Hanuman Chalisa was a thanksgiving prayer to the Supreme Being in the form of Lord Hanuman to acknowledge our existence and give thanks to what we have in this world. Pundith Suman Singh, the officiating priest, said, "We are all servants of the Lord and our existence is by the grace of the Lord".

The origins of the temple started in 1963 when the community of Malakazi got together to start this organisation. It had very humble beginnings and has grown over the years. It currently has about 120 members of the temple society. However, during the major festivals and celebrations, hundreds of people from far and wide gather at the temple to offer prayers and pay homage to the Lord.

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### **Sydney Murugan Saivaneri Conference 2014**

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA, August 8, 2014 (Sydney Murugan Temple): The Saiva Manram & World Saiva Council Australia Inc. jointly present the Sydney Murugan Saivaneri Conference 2014. The theme of the conference is Humanitarianism in Saiva Agamas, Thirumurai and Siddhantha Texts. the conference will be held on August 29, 30 & 31, 2014, and tutorials on August 23, 24 and September 6 & 7, 2014. All conference sessions, religious ceremonies, cultural event, and tutorials will be held at the Sydney Murugan Temple Complex, 217 Great Western Hwy, Mays Hill NSW 2145, Australia. The conference is billed as a wonderful opportunity to learn the intricacies and greatness of Saivism

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### **The Himalayan Kumbh Begins**

Source

UTTARAKHAND, INDIA, August 19, 2014 (The Hindu): After being delayed by a year due to the June 2013 deluge, the 20-day Nanda Devi Raj Jat yatra, also called the Himalayan Kumbh, began amid religious customs and traditions from Nauti village in Chamoli district, on Monday. The yatra, which is dedicated to the Nanda Devi — the reigning Deity of Uttarakhand — takes place once in 12 years, and involves a 175-mile trek. About 62 miles of the trek passes through difficult terrain.



Uttarakhand Chief Minister Harish Rawat said: "A 62-mile trek can only be undertaken by medically fit persons." Mr. Rawat said the trek included swamps, mountain treks and many slippery zones. "We will use logs for swamps and sandbags for slippery zones. We have engaged rock-climbing experts for certain areas where the pilgrims will have to cross mountains," he said.

Nauti village is at an altitude of 4,000 ft. above sea level, and the yatra progresses till over 13,000 ft. above sea level. People from the State's Kumaon and Garhwal region join the yatra at different points. Thousands of people participated in the yatra which progressed from Nauti to Idaabdhaani — first of the 19 stops of the yatra — on Monday.

## **\$33 Million Hindu Temple Funded by Community Opens in London**

LONDON, ENGLAND, August 19, 2014 (BBC): A Hindu temple has opened in north west London, funded entirely by the local community. The ornate US\$33 million Shree Swaminarayan Mandir temple in Kingsbury combines traditional Indian architecture and carvings with "green" technology. It features solar panels on the roof and a rainwater harvesting system.

The temple's opening has been marked with a concert to celebrate the arrival of the sect's disciples in the capital 50 years ago. As part of the development, the Greater London Authority agreed to the relocation of community space from Barnet to Brent. The old temple site in Golders Green will be used to generate new funds that will go towards the temple's local community.

The new site includes a multi-function hall with facilities for sports and receptions, which will be made available to members outside the internal community under the terms of the temple's development.

## **RSS Sets Out to Write History Based on Puranas**

NEW DELHI, INDIA, August 18, 2014 (Indian Express): As part of grand preparations for its centenary in 2025, the RSS is working on writing a version of Indian history based on the Puranas. The Puranas are ancient Hindu texts eulogizing deities through stories told by one person to another. They cover creation of the universe to destruction and the genealogies of kings, heroes, sages and gods. The 10-year project has been dubbed Puranantargat Itihaas.

The Sangh is also planning to put together the history of each one of the over 670 districts in the country, as well as the history of the over 600 tribal communities in India. The organisation is planning to tap local historians who can write the history of their districts, providing them all possible help.

An organisation linked to the RSS, the Akhil Bharatiya Itihaas Sankalan Yojna (ABISY), has arranged a workshop for over 100 historians in Palampur (Banaskantha, Gujarat) on August 22-24 for its Puranantargat Itihaas project. The historians called are mostly professors of history in various universities associated with the ABISY and its office-bearers

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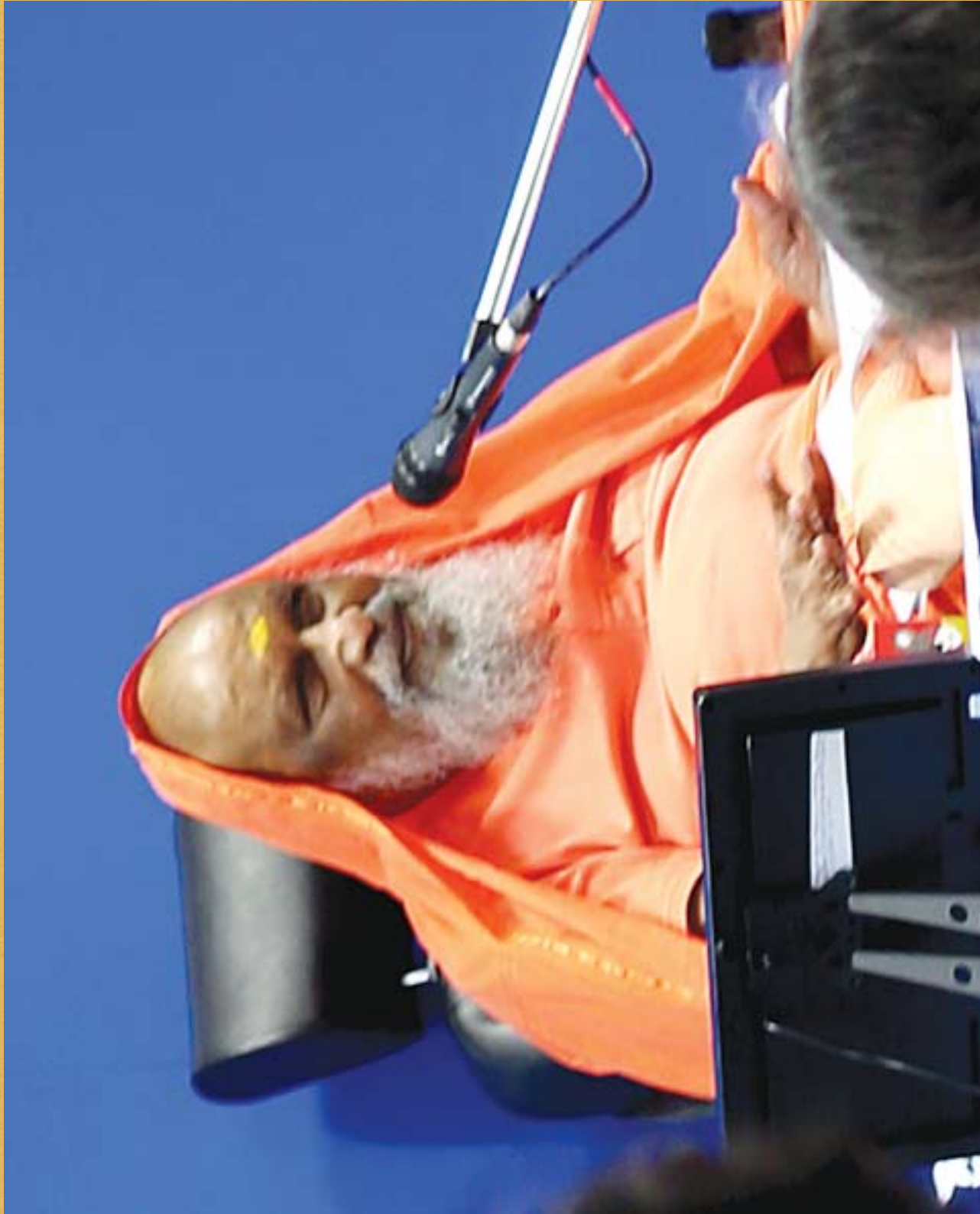
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"Sketch of Pujya Swamiji made by Yukako Mukta, a Japanese student in the course".