SANDESH BHARATI

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OUR HOLY LAND..... THE HOLY TEMPLE OF "KAMAKHYA"

The Kamakhya temple is situated on a hill eight hundred feet above sea level, about three miles from Guwahati, Assam. This temple, dedicated to the Goddess Kamakhya, is unique when compared with other Devi temples in Bharat, in that it does not enshrine any image of the Goddess.

This temple, located atop the sacred Nilachal Hill, is one of the 51 *pithasthans* associated with Sati or Parvati and Her forms. These 51 *pithasthans* or *shaktisthans* (Sati/Parvati is also called as Shakti meaning strength), are located throughout cultural Bharat. Kamakhya has also been famous as a centre of Tantric worship since ages.

The temple was supposed to have been built by King Narakasura (a ruler of the Mahabharat age). It was later destroyed by the fanatic Kalapahar in the 16th century. Soon afterwards, Malladeva, the king of Assam, went on an expedition to conquer Bengal. In the battle that was fought between Malladeva and the Sultan of Bengal, Malladeva was badly beaten and his brother, Sukladeva was captured by the Sultan. At night, Sukladeva saw Kamakhya in his dream. She told him it was wrong to fight a battle while Her temple lay in ruins. Sukladeva realised his blunder. He was told by Kamakhya, as the dream continued, that he would be released when he cured the Sultan's mother who would soon be bitten by a snake.

Sukladeva was soon called upon to try and cure the sultan's mother as all other efforts had failed. Sukladeva, by the grace of Goddess Kamakhya, proved successful and was set free.

Sukladeva and Malladeva then devoted their attention to building a new temple over the ruins of the old one. It is said that the new temple was built with the bricks baked in ghee.

The temple of Kamakhya is important as it has contributed to some of the best specimen of sculptural art in Assam. It typifies Assamese temple architecture with its special shikara or spire in the shape of a beehive, the nymph motifs and the long turtle back hall. The hill top also affords a very panoramic view of the sacred Brahmaputra River, which is the most important river flowing in Assam. This celebrated shrine wears a colorful look during annual fairs and festivals, of which Durga Puja, the Ambuvaci fair and Debaddhani festival are intensely popular.

OUR FESTIVALS……. Vijaya Dashami - DASHERA

Vijaydashmi or Dashera, the tenth day of the bright half of the lunar month of Aashwayuja, is among the most auspicious days in the Hindu calendar. It comes as the finale of the nine-day festival, Navaraatri. This festival of victory is preceded by worship of Saraswati, the Goddess of Learning and of Durga, the Goddess of Strength.

There was a time when at one stage the Gods felt powerless against the onslaughts of the demoniac forces. In answer to their prayers for protection, the goddess Durga was created by Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh for overpowering the demons. A fierce light came out of the mouths of Brahma –Vishnu – Mahesh. All that light united and became one. It was a huge mount of light , throwing flames on all sides. That united light grew into a female form known as Durga - Mahamaya. Mahesh gave her a trident like his own. Vishnu gave her a counterpart of his own chakra. Brahma gave rudraksh beads and the ascetics gave water pot. Varuna gave the conch, Agni gave the missile named shakti, Vayu gave bow and arrow, Indra gave Vraj and bell, Yama gave danda and the sea gave the noose. Vishwakarma gave her weapons of sorts and powerful amulets. The Himalayas gave her a lion to ride upon. Thus armed and adorned, the goddess sent forth

a loud cry that filled all space, and the echo reverberated with terrible noise, striking terror all round.

Durga vanquished all the demons and she is worshipped widely during the Navaratri festival. During this period, many devotees even observe fasting for the nine-day period.

Dashera is also associated with Lord Rama, the incarnation of Lord Vishnu. Lord Ram fought a fierce battle with the Ravana, the king of the demons, in Lanka. The battle lasted for 10 days and on the last day, Lord Ram killed Ravana. Thus, the tenth day of Lord Ram's victory is called as **Vijay Dashami,** Vijay meaning victory and Dashami meaning the 10^{th} day.

Symbolic of the victorious occasion, Rama-Leelas are observed with great enthusiasm and celebrations in Bharat. Grand processions of all Gods and Goddesses are taken out in every town and village on this day, signifying the victory of the forces of righteousness over those of evil.

Vijaya Dashami is preceded by the Aayudha Pooja on the Mahaanavami day, when not only the weapons are worshipped by the warriors, but the blacksmith, the potter, the carpenter, the tailor, the mason, the typist, the musician, the artist and every type of technical worker - worships his instruments and tools. Buses, trucks and huge machines in factories are all decorated and worshipped. It is the Vishwakarma Divas - the National Labor Day of Bharat,. Can there be a more telling way than this of investing sanctity in one's allotted work? The motto `work is worship' is writ large in this ceremony.

On this very day the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) was founded in 1925 in Nagpur for the rejuvenation and reorganization of the age-old Hindu Nation and Hindu Dharma and true to the tradition of Vijayadashami, the Sangh too has been marching from success to success.

THE LATEST NEWS OF

VEDIC MATHEMATICS

It is being taught in some of the most prestigious institutions in England and Australia. NASA scientists applied its principles in the area of artificial intelligence. **And yet, in the country of its birth, it languishes as a forgotten science.**

Vedic mathematics, which simplifies arithmetic and algebraic operations, has increasingly found acceptance the world over. Experts suggest that it could be a handy tool for those who need to solve mathematical problems faster by the day, especially in a system where the emphasis is on examinations.

The subject was revived largely due to the efforts of Jagadguru Swami Bharathikrishna Tirthaji of Puri Jaganath. Having researched the subject for years, even his efforts would have gone in vain but for the enterprise of some disciples who took down notes during his last days. That resulted in the book, *Vedic Mathematics*, in the 1960s.

Says P.R.Srinivas, who has taught the subject in some of the city's colleges: "It is an ancient technique which simplifies multiplication, divisibility, complex numbers, squaring, cubing, square and cube roots. Even recurring decimals and auxiliary fractions can be handled by Vedic mathematics."

Vedic scholars did not use figures for big numbers in their numerical notation. Instead, they preferred to use the Sanskrit alphabets, with each alphabet constituting a number. Several mantras, in fact, denote numbers; that includes the famed *Gayatri Mantra* which adds to 108 when decoded.

The bases of Vedic mathematics are the 16 *sutras* which attribute a set of qualities to a number or a group of numbers. Mr Srinivas feels that given the initial training in modern maths in today's schools, students will be able to comprehend the logic of Vedic mathematics only after they have reached the 8th standard. Among his students are Armymen and doctors in their 50s and younger students keen to make their mark in competitive entrance exams.

India's past could well help them make it in today's world.

(Courtesy: Sriranjan Chaudhari, The Economic Times, 15/4/99)

NASA Selects New Name For Advanced Space X-Ray Telescope

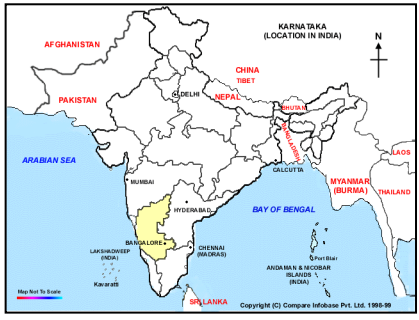
NASA today announced that the Advanced X-ray Astrophysics Facility will be renamed the Chandra X-ray Observatory in honor of the late Indian-American Nobel Laureate Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar.

Chandrasekhar, widely regarded as one of the foremost astrophysicists of the 20th century, won the Nobel Prize in 1983 for his theoretical studies of physical processes important to the structure and evolution of stars. He and his wife emigrated from India to the U.S. in 1935 and he served the University of Chicago until his death in 1995.

Chandra will be carried to space aboard the Space Shuttle Columbia on mission STS-93, commanded by astronaut Eileen Collins.

"Chandrasekhar made fundamental contributions to the theory of black holes and other phenomena that the Chandra X-ray Observatory will study. His life and work exemplify the excellence

that we can hope to achieve with this great observatory,"said NASA Administrator Daniel Goldin.



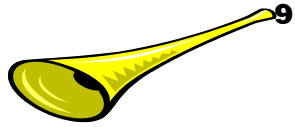
The states of BHARAT

KARNATAKA

Area:- 191,791 sq.kms, Population:- About 45 million,
State capital:-Bangalore, Main language:- Kannada
Famous pilgrimage centers:- Udipi, Srirangapatna, Shravanabelgola, Sringeri
Famous touristic places:- Mysore, Ullal, Karwar, Gokarna, Madikeri, Somnathpur, Belur, Halebid, Hampi(Vijayanagar), Badami, Aihole, Pattadakal

KARNATAKA HAS A LUSH COASTLINE, 320 KM LONG. FROM COONDAPUR TO KARWAR, SOME OF THE ESTUARIES OF THE FAST FLOWING RIVERS WHICH FLOW WEST DOWN THE GHATS STILL HAVE MANGROVES, MANY STILL IN EXCELLENT CONDITION. THE WESTERN GHATS, CALLED THE MALNAD OR HILL COUNTRY, HAVE BEAUTIFUL FORESTS WITH WATERFALLS AND WILDLIFE PARKS. THE JOG FALLS, LOCATED IN SHIMOGA DISTRICT, ARE THE HIGHEST WATERFALLS IN BHARAT. THE VIJAYANAGAR RUINS, LOCATED AT HAMPI, ARE REGARDED AS THE MOST AMAZING AND BEATIFUL RUINS IN THE WORLD, WITNESS TO A GREAT PAST WHEN THE CITY WAS AT ITS FULL GRANDEUR. KARNATAKA IS RICH IN NATURAL RESOURCES AND IS THE ONLY STATE IN THE COUNTRY TO PRODUCE GOLD AT KOLAR, WHERE SOME OF THE WORLD'S DEEPEST MINES ARE OPERATED.

Contributions in Music



Music has been a favorite with the Hindus from the earliest times. Even the Vedas (e.g. Sama Veda) treat of this divine art.

According to Anne C. Wilson in 'A Short Account of the Hindu System of Music' page 5, "The People of India are essentially a musical race… To such an extent is music an accomplishment of existence in India that every hour of the day and season of the year has its own melody."

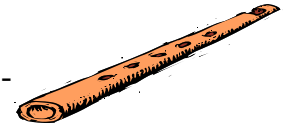
The same lady, Anne C. Wilson, further adds," It must therefore be a secret source of pride to Hindus to learn that their system of music, as a written source, is the oldest in the world. Its principle features were given long ago in Vedic writings. And its principles were adopted by the Muslim portion of the population in the days of their predominance, and are still in use in their original construction at the present day."

Even at present, the Rags and Ragnis of the Hindus are innumerable and the majority of them differ so minutely from each other that even the 'cultivated ear of the musical Europeans' cannot fully understand and follow them.

Not content with the tones and semitones, the Indian musicians employed a more minute sub-division, together with a number of sonal modifications which the western ear can neither recognize nor enjoy. Thus, they divided the octave into 22 subtones instead of 12 semitones of the European scale.

That the Hindus cultivated music on scientific principles is proved by the fact that the ragas were so designed to move some passion or affection of the mind and to each was associated some particular season of the year, time of the day and night or special locality or district.

The six principal ragas are the followings:-



1. Hindaul:- It is played to produce on the mind of the hearers all the sweetness and freshness of spring; sweet as the honey of the bee and fragrant as the perfume of a thousand blossoms.

2. Sri Raga:- The quality of this raga is to affect the mind with the calmness and silence of declining day, to tinge the thoughts with a reseate hue, as clouds are gilded by the setting sun before the approach of darkness and night.

3. Megh Malhar:- This is descriptive of the effects of an approaching thunder-storm and rain, having the power of influencing clouds in times of drought.

4. Deepak:- This raga is now extinct. No one could sing it and live. It has consequently fallen into disuse. Its effect is to light the lamps and to cause the body of the singer to produce flames by which he dies.

5. Bhairava:- The effect of this raga is to inspire the mind with a feeling of approached dawn, the caroling of birds, the sweetness of the perfume and air.

6. Malkos:- The effects of this raga is to produce on the mind a feeling of gentle stimulation.

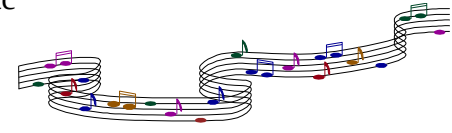
There is much that is common to both the Hindus and European systems. According to Mr. Arthur Whitten, "The Hindus' scale undoubtedly resembles our diatonic mode and consists of seven sounds. Their voices and music like ours are divided into three distinct classes. The bass, called odarah or lowest notes; the tenor, called mudurrah or middle notes; the soprano; called the tarrah or upper notes. The similarity of the formation of the Hindu scale to our modern system is noteworthy. We name the sounds of our scales: Do, Ray, Me, Fah, Sol, La, Te. That common is India is: Sa, Ray, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ne. The reason of this similarity is evident."

And according to Sir W.W. Hunter says, "The reason of this similarity is evident as a regular system of notation was worked out before the age of Panini and then seven notes were designated by their initial letters. This notation passed from the Brahmans through the Persians to Arabia. And from there it was introduced into European music by Guido D'Arezzo at the beginning of the eleventh century."

Bharat, Ishwara, Parana and Narada were among the great Hindu musicians of ancient India.

If one is to judge merely from the number of instruments and the frequency with which they apply them, the Hindus must be regarded as far ahead of others.

Some of the most important instruments are:- the flute (Bansuri), nadaswaram, veena, gotuvadhyam, thavil, mridangam, damroo, santoor, sarangi, tabla, sitar, sarod, tanpura, shankh, dholak, etc



FEAR PSYCHOSIS *by Vivek Fernandes*

I remember when I was eight years old, I found my friend Prashant crying in a corner of the school playground. When I asked him what was wrong, he said that one of the priests who taught us had told him:"Oh,I feel so sad for you because I won't see you in Heaven, as you're not a Christian, so I don't know what's going to happen to you."

Growing up in a Catholic family, I found many instances like this through the years. We were told by our grandmother that anything that was not of our faith was 'satanic' and that we would be severely punished for disobeying the Lord. Tempted by the delicious *modaks* that the Marathi family next door made for Ganesh Chaturthi every year, my friends and I would always visit them and when we returned, some matronly relative would always rush to wipe the traditional *tilak* off our foreheads lest it corrupt us. Needless to say, there was an implicit ban on partaking of *prasad* at households, which we sneakily defied whenever the appetizing opportunity arose! Even something as simple as watching a serial like the Ramayan or Mahabharat on TV was not without a sense of unease, especially for my younger sister, a die-hard TV addict.

We were told that anything non-Catholic was sinful, devilish and that to transgress would mean a one-way ticket to perjury. Recently, a rather overweight cousin of mine was advised by her doctor to join a yoga class to help her trim down. Two weeks later, she quit the class with a mixture of fear and self-righteousness, saying,"You know, they made us chant OM. They want to convert us." I couldn't for the life of me figure out how saying OM would convert her; after all, all my Hindu friends sang hymns with us in school and they're fine now. This fear psychosis appears to be unique to my Christian brethren in India. Travelling abroad first as a student and now as a computer professional, I have never

experienced the kind of fear and loathing that was drilled into my own psyche by the people in my neighbourhood.

At that time, I was told,"Jesus is the only way" and I believed it, but in college I met this Krishna devotee who said that in the Gita, Krishna says:"Take refuge in me alone" and now I understand that similar sentiments exist in nearly every philosophy on this planet. So is there something wrong with the interpretations down the ages, or am I missing something here? As Christians we have been brought up with these feelings of insecurity, and many a time, I've heard pastors explain diligently how there was danger for the flock at every step, for the devil just waited with all his weapons, just to lure us away from the path. But, if I could carefully avoid all these pitfalls I would one day reach to a beautiful golden land which, no prizes for guessing, would be populated only by Christians. We have been reminded time and again that we are born sinners, and that every action that is perceived to be connected to another religion, faith or even point of view is taboo, for it would tip the scales inexorably in favour of our exclusion from the pass-holders to the pearly gates.

I read widely, trying to get some answers to these dilemmas of mine but drew a blank almost at every stage. Recently, however I chanced upon a small booklet by Shri Ravi Shankar titled *HINDUISM AND CHRISTIANITY,* where more than 25 examples illustrate that Christianity is derived in large part from Hinduism.

I feel that the paranoia of my fellow Christians is unjustified. Considering myself an Indian first, I feel very much at home with the customs and traditions of a country which has a documented heritage of at least 10,000 years. It is my homeland; no God or prophet, especially Jesus, who is the symbols of love and compassion, would punish His children for participating in other religious functions.

(this interesting letter, published in ORGANISER, was written by a Christian gentleman from Bangalore, Shri Vivek Fernandes, telling of his experiences of growing up in a Christian family in India and facing the false 'fear psychosis' created by the Christian missionaries among its followers).

NEWS EVENTS OF HINDU GROUPS FROM U.K AND U.S.A



- Mananeeya. Ashok Singhal ji, International President of Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), met Karyakartas of VHP (UK) and Hindu Swayamsewak Sangh on Tuesday, 31 August 1999 in London. He was on a brief stop on route to Bharat from USA where he attended the 2nd Dharma Sansad of USA at Austin in Texas. Man. Ashokji gave a very encouraging report on the growing Hindutva movement everywhere. Some 400 delegates representing various sects of Hindutva and Hindu organisations and temples attended the Dharma Sansad.

- A 10 Day Dharma Prasaar Yatra was organised in the USA from 30 July to 8 August 1999, covering 10 cities across the huge country. The Yatra was organised by VHP of America and supported by some 100 temples. Some 20,000 Hindus attended this programme which was addressed by a team of Swamis and Sants who travelled in a specially hired plane. The team included the famous Kathakar Shri Rameshbhai Oza and the famous singer Anuradha Paudwal. Inspite of some programmes being held at weekdays, the attendance was huge, beyond the expectations of the karyakartas (workers) of VHP and HSS.

- Major Surendra Narain Mathur, Akhil Bharatiya Khel-Kud Pramukh of Vanavasi Kalyan Ashram, arrived in the UK on 28 August 1999 for a tour of the country, organised by Kalyan Ashram Trust. He addressed a gathering of Hindus in Cardiff to celebrate Janmasthami. He met a large number of doctors there. On 4 September 1999, he addressed a meeting in Birmingham at the Sangh Karyalaya. He explained the

seriousness of the situations in the Vanavasi belt of Bharat, and why the support to the Kalyan Ashram is very essential. His talks were very well received. He was also one of the chief guests at the Hindu Marathon in Coventry.

- A very successful 16th Hindu Marathon was held at the University of Warwick, Coventry on Sunday 5 September 1999. Some 3000 people participated in the event which also marked the tricentenary of Khalsa Panth. A very well organised exhibition on Khalsa Panth was set up by the VHP (UK) at the Marathon. There was good media coverage of the event. The weather was good, in fact quite hot for the runners. A colourful souvenir with good articles on Hindutva and Sikhism was also released at the event.

- A very successful Sangh Shiksha Varg of Sewika Samiti was held in Ilford at the ICH School, U.K from 10 – 15 August 1999. Total Sankhya of 115 Sewikas participated with 96 Sewikas full-time. There was a good Gruhini group for training in all 3 years. Samiti received good inspiration. The Varg was inaugurated by Smt. Vandana Arora, a well known writer and is the niece of the famous freedom fighter, Sardar Bhagat Singh. Nearly 400 people packed the school hall at the Samarop function on Sunday 15 August 1999.

- YOUNG HINDU ACHIEVERS

  The name of Krishan Radia has been added to the 'Guiness Book of World Records'. Krishan, at the age of 6 years, became the youngest to pass the GCSE exam last year. His name is also included in the BBC's "Record Breakers". Krishan was honoured by VHP (Wembley) last year. This year another Hindu boy stunned the world by passing GCSE exam in Computing with 'B' grade at the age of 7 years. He is Neerav Gathani, who lives in North London.

RANI LAKSHMIBAI OF JHANSI

Rani Lakshmibai of Jhansi was one of the bravest leaders who fought for India's first war of independence against the mighty British rule in 1857. She will always be remembered for her unbreakable patriotism and astonishing courage.

Lakshmibai was born in Bittoor in Central India. She was named Manikarnika. As a child, she was very athletic and loved to compete with boys. She also learned to ride horses. She was also an avid reader with a love for learning.

When she came of age, an unexpected marriage proposal came from Gangadhar Rao, the Maharaja of the kingdom of Jhansi. She accepted the name of Lakshmibai, after the Goddess of wealth and victory, when she married the king.

This was the king's second marriage. His first wife died without producing a heir. Rani Lakshmibai gave birth to a son. But unfortunately the child died after three months. The whole kingdom was grief stricken.

The Maharaja was also unwell and was worried that he had no successor to the throne. At that time, most of India was in the hand of the British rulers who had made it their policy to annex any kingdom which was without any heir. Therefore, the Maharaja arranged to adopt his distant relative, Damodar Rao, as his son, as per Hindu rites.

A short time after the adoption, the Maharaja died. The prince was still a minor. Lakshmibai decided to run the kingdom until the adopted son reached maturity. It was not easy for a woman to be the head of state at that time. Rani Lakshmibai faced many difficulties but she ran the kingdom well. She mastered

the martial arts and inspired Jhansi's women to join the army and take a more active role in defending their kingdom.

The British were in no mood to accept Damodar Rao as the legal heir as they were determined to take over Jhansi. Lakshmibai wrote a petition to the British Governor-General and also sent an envoy to London to plead her case. However, the British rejected her arguments.

Not wishing to give up her kingdom to the foreigners, Lakshmibai ordered that the defenses of the city be strengthened.

Around that time in 1857, there was an uprising for independence by the Indian soldiers who had been working for the British. It began in Meerut and rapidly spread to other places, especially in Northern and Central India. The nationalist soldiers overthrew Delhi and many other British positions in many cities and aimed at completely driving out the British from the country.

The nationalist soldiers even reached upto the British garrison located near Jhansi. The British approached Lakshmibai for refuge but she refused, saying that she would never betray her fellow Indians.

The British suffered heavy casualties initially but gradually, being shrewd politicians and highly organized, they recovered. Their soldiers were better equipped and better trained. Besides, they used their tested 'divide-and-rule' policy as a result of which they were able to make major gains, even re-taking Delhi in September,1857, with the help of their Indian allies.

All but three of the kingdoms had surrendered and their rulers had become British puppets. The three exceptions were:- Rani Lakshmibai, Tantia Tope and Rao Sahib Peshwa. These three swore that they would jointly fight the British until their last breath.

The people of Jhansi unanimously supported their queen and assured her that they would lay down their lives to defend their kingdom. On March 25, 1858, the British attacked Jhansi with a huge army equipped with powerful cannons. Shelling of Jhansi was fierce and the British were determined not to let anyone escape while Lakshmibai was determined not to surrender. The British noted that almost all of Jhansi rallied on the side of the Rani. Even women were seen working the batteries and carrying ammunition, food and water to the soldiers. However, with the help of the traitors, the British finally suceeded in entering the fort after a two-week siege. A priest from Mumbai who had witnessed it all said that the British followed up their victory with a four-day looting and destruction of the city and its people without distinction.

But the British could not find Rani Lakshmibai as she had already escaped on horseback under the cover of darkness and within a short time had reached the fortress of Kalpi, which was Rao Sahib Peshwa's camp. Several other nationalist leaders and soliders also gathered over there. But it was not long before the British attacked Kalpi too and won it over.

The nationalists then took shelter in the Gwalior fort. The king of Gwalior was not willing to help them as he was afraid of the British. But the soldiers of Gwalior laid down their arms in respect for Rani Lakshmibai. Thus the nationalists entered Gwalior without a fight. The British, on learning of this,

wasted no time in attacking Gwalior. It was one of the fiercest and bloodiest battles ever fought.

In the end, the British captured back the fort. Rani Lakshmibai personally led one of the divisions of the army and fought very bravely but in the end lost her life. Her courage, strength and ability, as she valiantly fought the British army's vastly superior forces are remembered to this day. Her bravery even won the admiration of her enemies. Sir Hugh Rose, the commander of the British force, wrote, "The Rani was remarkable for her bravery, cleverness and perseverance". Rani Lakshmibai became a heroine and a symbol of resistance to the British rule.

BJP-LED ALLIANCE GAINS COMFORTABLE MAJORITY

In the recently concluded elections in early October, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) secured a majority by winning 298 of the 537 seats that went to the polls. Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee, from the BJP, was sworn in as the prime minister of Bharat on 13th October 1999.

Shri Vajpayee was also the prime minister of the last government and it is for the first time, since 1984, that any incumbent leader has managed to retain power.

Shri Vajpayee's personal popularity itself is the highest that any non-Congress political leader has ever enjoyed since 1947. Recent opinion polls have shown that over 50% of the people feel that Shri Vajpayee is the best person suited to be the prime minister.

WHAT LEADING INTELLECTUALS OF THE WEST SAID ABOUT HINDUISM AND INDIA:-

In the whole world there is no such study so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Upanishads. It has been the solace of my life; it will be the solace of my death.

Arthur Schopenhauer on Upanishads

In the morning I bathe my intellect in the stupendous and cosmogonal philosophy of the Bhagwad Gita in comparison with which our modern world and its literature seem puny and trivial.

Henry David Thoreau

Writings such as the Gita will survive when the British dominion in India shall have long ceased to exist, and when the sources which it once yielded of wealth and power are lost to remembrance.

Governor Warren Hastings (during British rule)

If one would ask me under what sky the human mind has most fully developed its precious gifts, has scrutinized most profoundly the greatest problems of life, and has provided solutions which deserve to be admired even by those who have studied Plato and Kant, I would indicate India. And, if one would ask me which literature would give us back the necessary equilibrium in order to make our inner life more perfect, more comprehensive, more universal and in short, more human, a life not only for this life, but for a transformed and eternal life, once again I would indicate India.

Max Muller

At this supremely dangerous moment in human history, the only way of salvation is the ancient Indian way. Here we have the

attitude and spirit that can make it possible for the human race to grow together in to a single family.

Arnold Joseph Toynbee

After a study of some forty years and more of the great religions of the world, I find none so perfect, none so scientific, none so philosophical and no so spiritual than the great religion known by the name of Hinduism. Make no mistake, without Hinduism, India has no future. Hinduism is the soil in to which India's roots are stuck and torn out of that she will inevitably whither as a tree torn out from its place. And if Hindus do not maintain Hinduism who shall save it? If India's own children do not cling to her faith who shall guard it. India alone can save India and India and Hinduism are one.

Annie Beseant on India and Hinduism

Now it is not good for the Christian's health to hustle the Hindu brown for the Christian riles and the Hindu smiles and weareth the Christian down; and the end of the fight is a tombstone while with the name of the late deceased and the epitaph drear, " A fool lies here who tried to hustle the east".

Rudyard Kipling to Fundamental Christian Missionaries

Perhaps in return for conquest, arrogance and spoilation, India will teach us the tolerance and gentleness of the mature mind, and quiet content of the unacquitive soul, the calm of the understanding spirit, and a unifying, pacifying love for all living things.

Will Durant

The Gita is the "most beautiful, perhaps the only true philosophical song existing in any known tongue.....perhaps the deepest and loftiest thing the world has to show.

Wilhelm von Humboldt

Take a Better Look at the Work of a Rebounding India

Author: Prasenjit Basu

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SINGAPORE - India recently passed two milestones: the 52d anniversary of its independence and, by some estimates, the birth of its billionth living citizen.

Virtually unremarked on Independence Day, amid the focus on military matters and the national election, was the fact that India's real GDP has sustained a compound annual growth rate of 6.5 percent for the last six years - a performance that makes its economy the fastest growing among the world's democracies.

Indian software exports have increased at an annual rate of 65 percent over the same period, and agricultural production by 4 percent - well ahead of the 1.8 percent pace of population growth. Food grain output has trebled in the last 30 years.

It is also worth celebrating what India is not. It is not seeking handouts from the rest of the world. (Net inflows of foreign aid amount to considerably less than $1 per person.) Nor is it among the 42 highly indebted poor countries for which debt forgiveness is now being worked out. In fact, India has never had to undertake a rescheduling of its external debt.

During 190 years of British colonial rule, India was regularly afflicted by famine. Since independence it has had none. And despite some serious religious and ethnic conflict, India has remained united.

In 1947, India inherited an economy that had grown at an annual pace of 0.7 percent in the previous 50 years, less than the rate of population increase. It had an adult literacy rate of 14 percent and a higher education system oriented toward producing a narrow elite of imperial bureaucrats.

By contrast, South Korea and Taiwan at that time had adult literacy rates in excess of 50 percent (a level that India achieved only at the beginning of this decade). They had, after all, been ruled by a country, Japan, which was the first after the United States to achieve universal literacy, and so paid special attention to education. That difference in the initial endowment of human capital (plus massive infusions of external aid per capita in the early years) goes most of the way towards explaining the faster trajectory of their initial growth.

But India can and must do better. The untapped potential remains enormous, especially when you consider the talents and achievements of India's diaspora in business, technology and the professions.

India's judiciary is lumbering and slow, but it maintains a genuine check on both the legislature and the executive. Parliament appears chaotic, but it unfailingly produces laws that are humane and faithful to the country's secular tradition. The executive is overstaffed and almost always poorly led, but it can never function arbitrarily because of the checks and balances in the democratic system.

Despite a ponderous state, economic growth has accelerated from the 3.5 percent of the first three decades of independence to 5.5 percent in the 1980s and 6.5 percent in 1990s. Inflation has rarely reached double digits, while current account deficits have usually been less than 2 percent of GDP. Only on fiscal policy have there been serious slippages in the past two decades. Adult literacy has risen from 52 percent in 1991 to an estimated 65 percent today.

As a democracy with functioning institutions and a vibrant capital market, India has been the great, if largely untold, success story of the 1990s. Where Russia failed, India succeeded in completing a rapid transition away from quasi-socialism. With its vast army of

professionals and its abundance of labor at every level of skill and creativity, it can achieve more in the decade ahead.

What remains is for the talents of the vast rural population to be effectively deployed in labor-intensive exports, and for urban infrastructure to improve without further increasing the budget deficit.

Then, perhaps, a decade from now, India will begin to benefit fully from the return of what the late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi called its overseas "brain deposit," and become again the economic beacon that once attracted the European explorers Christopher Columbus and Vasco da Gama.

(The writer is chief economist, Southeast Asia, for Credit Suisse First Boston in Singapore. He contributed this personal comment to the International Herald Tribune).

NOTE: PRESENT INFLATION RATES ARE UNDER 3 PERCENT PER ANNUM.

DID YOU KNOW???

THAT DIWALI, ONE OF MAJOR HINDU FESTIVALS CELEBRATED, HAPPENS TO BE A PUBLIC HOLIDAY NOT JUST IN INDIA BUT ALSO A NATIONAL HOLIDAY IN **COUNTRIES RANGING FROM SINGAPORE, MALAYSIA, NEPAL,SRI LANKA, FIJI, MAURITIUS, SOUTH AFRICA, GUYANA AND TRINIDAD & TOBAGO!**

CHANAKYA-NITI

Chanakya was an epoch-making personality. He was one of the greatest thinkers who appeared about 2,500 years ago. He was the political Guru of Chandragupta Maurya, the founder of the Maurya Dynasty. He guided Chandragupta to throw the Greek invaders out of the country. Chanakya wrote two outstanding books, the **Arthashastra**(under the name of Kautilya) and **Chanakya-niti**.

Chanakya-niti is in fact the great thinker's observation to impart the practical wisdom to the people of his time. But these teachings are so fundamental and rooted so deep in the human pschyology that their relevance is almost ever-lasting. Enshrined in the simple *shlokas,* these are the pearls of the practical common sense.

SANDESH BHARATI, in this issue, concludes the series of quotes that had been appearing since the past three issues.

'QUOTES FROM CHANAKYA-NITI (AUTHOR: CHANAKYA)

If one really seeks liberation of the soul, then shun all the sensual attractions as if they were poison and instead cultivate the spirit of forgiveness, the rectitude of conduct, compassion, piety, truth and similar other qualities which are nectar for human life.

Bondage is indulgence in vices and renunciation of them is liberation. Thus, it is mind which drives one to bondage or to liberation.

The one who produces you, the one who gets your sacred thread ceremony performed, the one who

gives you education, the one who gives you food and the one who protects you from all sorts of dangers – these five persons deserve the status of your father.

What can all the scriptures do for a person devoid of his own wisdom? What use does a blind man have for a mirror?

The seat of poison in a snake is the tooth, in a fly the head, in a scorpion the tail but the wicked person has poison in his entire body.

One must shun the company of the wicked and seek association of the noble; one must keep on doing good deeds without forgetting the Lord Almighty even for a moment.

The power of the brahmins is knowledge, of the king his army, of the trader class their wealth and of the workers, their service-ability.

A man comes alone in this world, meets his end alone and alone does he bear the consequences of his good or evil deeds.

One must save money for the evil days. It is not that distress won't touch the moneyed people. Riches are by nature fickle and even the large, accumulated wealth can be destroyed suddenly.

The greatest piety lies in keeping one's thoughts and speech pure; in practising continence; in showing mercy to all beings and in doing good to others.

EU English

As all of you know, from this year a new currency is in the market called EURO. Now people are getting used to it instead of individual European currency. What is next after the currency?

The European Commission has just announced an agreement whereby English will be the official language of the EU, rather than German, which was the other possibility. As part of the negotiations Her Majesty's Government conceeded that English spelling had some room for improvement and has accepted a five year phase-in plan that would be known as Euro-English.

In the first year the soft 'c' will be replaced. Sertainly, this will make the sivil servants jump with joy. The hard 'c' will be dropped in favour of the 'k'. This should klear up konfusion and keyboards kan have one letter less. There will be growing publik enthusiasm in the sekond year when troublesome 'ph' will be replased by the 'f'.This will make words like 'fotograf' 20% shorter.

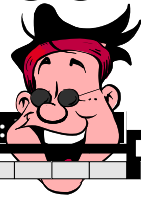
In the 3rd year, publik akseptanse of the new spelling kan be expekted to reach the stage where more komplikated changes are possible. Governments will enkorage the removal of double leters which have always ben a deterent to akurate speling. Also al wil agre that the horible mes of the silent 'e' in the languag is disgraseful and it should go away. By the 4th yer people wil be reseptiv to steps such as replasing 'th' and 'w' with 'z' and 'v'. During ze fifz yer unesesary 'o' can be dropd from vords kontaining 'ou' and similar changes vud of kors be aplid to ozer kombinations of leters.

After ziz fifz yer ve vil hav a reli sensibl riten styl. Zer vil be no mor truble or difikultis and evrivun vil find it ezi tu onderstand ech ozer. Ze drem vil finaly kum tru!

Children corner



Time to laugh!



Why was the football stadium so cool?
- Because there was a fan in every seat

Why do cows have bells?
-Because their horns don't work

What did the cat like about the computer?
-The mouse

What did the big flower say to the little flower?
-"What's up, bud?"

What is the best year for frogs?
-Leap year

What did the artist name his son?
-Drew



Quick Thoughts...

* A bus station is where a bus stops. A train station is where a train stops. On my desk I have a work station.

* Can atheists get insurance for acts of God?

* If Fed Ex and UPS were to merge, would they call it FedUP?

* How come you never hear about gruntled employees?

* I don't have a solution, but I admire your problem.

* Why are they called apartments, when they're all stuck together?

* Why do they call it the Department of Interior when they are in charge of everything outdoors?

* Why doesn't glue stick to the inside of the bottle?

HOW I MANAGE TO RETAIN MY CULTURE, LIVING IN HK

-BY GORDHAN GURNANI (14 YEARS)

This should be important to all Indians living abroad. How to be an Indian, not just physically, which we already are, but also mentally and intellectually.

Living in Hong Kong is not easy because there are many things that distract our minds. There is a large population of Indians in Hong Kong but many of us youngsters don't pay enough attention to our culture. We are more interested in going to game-centers or attending late night parties. We seem to know more about the number of states in U.S.A than in India. We don't even spend a fraction of the time that is wasted on useless things to subjects which should be more important to us.

Even when we celebrate our festivals like Diwali or Shivaratri, we tend to get more excited on meeting our friends in the temple rather than learning the significance of the day and worshipping.

So, how do I manage to keep my Indianness living in Hong Kong? Simple. First, by going to the temples, praying to GOD and reading the Ramayan, Mahabharat and other sacred books.

Second, by trying my best to communicate in Hindi with other Indians, even though my knowledge of our national language is limited. But, I think it is better to try to speak in broken Hindi rather than speaking in English with fellow Indians.

Third, by going to our Saturday HSS (Hindu Swayamsewak Sangh) *shakha.* What have I learnt in my HSS *shakha*? Well, I used to think that *shakhas* were places where one just played all sorts of Indian games. This is partially true but now I understand that the main object of one's going to a *shakha* should be to learn more about ancient and present day India and her culture, to which we all belong. Through my *shakha* I have learnt the position of India in the ancient times and her achievements to the world.

Actually, after going to the temples and *shakha,* I believe that my outlook of India has changed completely. I have learnt to love India dearly.

Of course that does not mean that I have stopped my other activities, like going out with friends, watching movies, playing sports, etc. No, I have continued all that but I have made it a point to also remember that I must devote equal or more time to keep on learning more about India which should be important to all Indians living anywhere.

Story Time

TOLERANCE

There once was a little boy who had a bad temper. His father gave him a bag of nails and told him that every time he lost his temper, he must hammer a nail into the back of the fence. The first day the boy had driven 37 nails into the fence. Over the next few weeks, as he learned to control his anger, the number of nails hammered daily gradually dwindled down.

He discovered it was easier to hold his temper than to drive those nails into the fence.

Finally the day came when the boy didn't lose his temper at all. He told his father about it and the father suggested that the boy now pull out one nail for each day that he was able to hold his temper. The days passed and the young boy was finally able to tell his father that all the nails were gone.

The father took his son by the hand and led him to the fence. He said, "You have done well, my son, but look at the holes in the fence. The fence will never be the same.

When you say things in anger, they leave a scar just like this one. A verbal wound is as bad as a physical one. Therefore avoid harming anyone.

PRARTHANA

SARVA MANGALA MANGALAYAM **DEVEEM SARVARTHA SADHIKAM** **SHARANYAM SARVA** **BHOOTANAM** **NAMAMO BHOOMI MA TARAM**	***THE MOST SACRED OF ALL THAT ARE AUSPISOUS*** ***THE MEANS TO ACHIEVE ALL ONE ASPIRES*** ***THE SAFE REFUGE OF ALL LEAVING BEING*** ***O, GODDESS, MOTHER EARTH, WE SALUTE THEM***
SACHIDANANDA ROOPAYA **VISHVA MANGALA HE TAVAY** **VISHVA DARMA KA MOOLAYA** **NAMOSTU PARMATMANE**	***YOU ARE THE CAUSE FOR THE UNIVERSAL GOOD*** ***THE EMBODIMENT OF TRUTH, WISDOM & BLISS*** ***THE UNIQUE ORIGIN OF UNIVERSAL RIGHTOUSNESS*** ***OUR SALUTIONS TO YOU. O SUPREME!***
VISHWA DHARMA VIKASARTHAM **PRABHO SANGHTHITA VAYAM** **SHUBA MASHISHA MASMABHYM** **DEHI TAT PARIPOOR TAYE**	***TOGETHER WE HAVE COME ORGANIZED O PARAMATMAN THE PURPOSE BEING*** ***FLOURISHING OF UNIVERSAL DHARMA WE SEEK*** ***YOUR BLESSING, THE DIVINE GRACE BESTOW ON US TO ACCOMPLISH THE AIM***
AJAIY YAM ATMA **SAAMARTHYAM** **SUSHEELAM LOK POOJITAM** **GYANAM CHA DEHI VISHVESHA** **DHEYA MARG PRAKASHKAM**	***POSESSION OF VALOUR, UNCONQERABLE EVER*** ***CONDUCT, CHARACTER, RENOWNED WORLD*** ***OVER BESTOW THE WISDOM THAT BRIGHTENS, O PARAMATMAN*** ***PAVING THE WAY TO REALISE THE GOAL***
SAMUT KASRSHO STU NO NITYAM **NIH SHREYAS SAMAN VITAH** **TAT SADHIKAM SPHURA** **TAVANTAH** **SUVEERA VRAT MUJ WALAM**	***ENDOWED WITH PROSPERITY EXALTATION PEPETUAL*** ***MAY THERE BE AFFLUENCE, BESTOWED ON US*** ***INSPIRED WE ARE TO PRACTICE WITH ZEAL*** ***THE RADIANT, WORTHY, VALIANT VOW***
VISHVA DHARMA PRAKASHENA **VISHVA SHANTI PRAVARTAKE** **LOK SANGHTHANA KARYE** **DHEYA NISTHA STHIRASTU NAH**	***WITH ENLIGHTMENT FROM THE UNIVERSAL DHARMA IN PROPOGATING PEACE, THROUGHOUT THE WORLD IN THE TASK OF ACHEIVING WORLD WIDE UNITY MAY AIM, DEEP FAITH REMAIN RESOLUTE***
SANGH SHAKTIR VIJETREEYAM **KRITVA SMAD DHARMA** **RAKSHANAM** **PARAMAM VAIBHAVAN PRAPTUM** **SAMARTHA STU TAV ASHISHA**	***WITH THE TRIUMPHANT POWER OF THE ORGANIZATION*** ***BY SAFEGUARDING OUR OWN DHARMA, THE RIGHTOUSNESS*** ***MAY WE BE BLESSED TO BE COMPETENT*** ***TO ATTAIN THE GLORY SUPREME, SUBLIME !***
VISHVA DHARAMA KI JAI !	***VICTORY TO THE RELIGION OF WORLD***

BHARAT MATA KI JAI

THEY WROTE IT HERE FIRST

Writing wasn't invented by the Sumerians, or even the Egyptians, but by the Indus people (Hindus) in what is now Pakistan, says Dr. Richard Meadow of Harward University. Meadow thinks he's found evidence of writing on pottery fragments dated around 3500 BC. These fragments were dug up at an ancient site called Harappa, in north-east Pakistan. Last year, hieroglyph jar labels found in Abydos, Egypt were dated around 3300 BC. Prior to that, the Sumerians of Mesopotamia were thought to have been the world's first scribes, around 3100 BC.

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