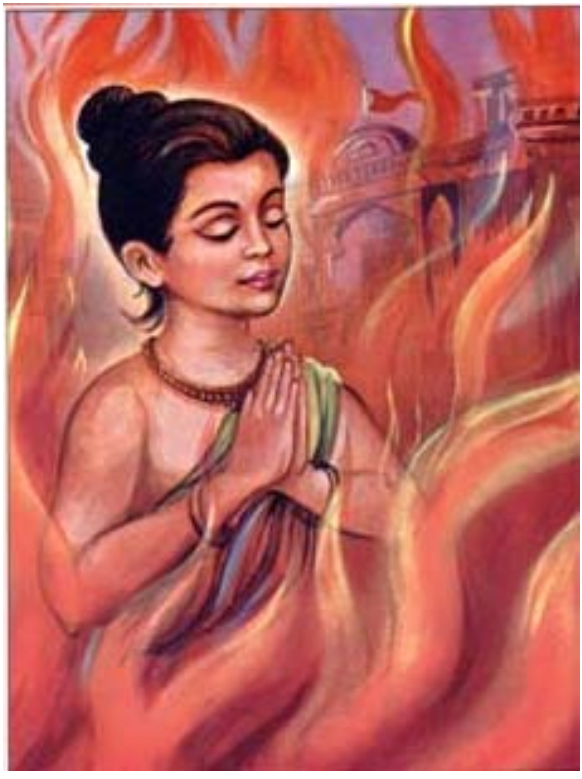
# SANDESH BHARATI

**Vol VIII No. 1** **Jan/Feb/Mar 2005** **HongKong**



## PRAHALAD

**HINDU SWAYAMSEVAK SANGH,**
B-4, 6/F., MIRADOR MANSION, 54-64 NATHAN ROAD, TST.,
G. P.O.BOX 11068, KOWLOON, HONG KONG.
TEL: 27217444, FAX: 25412742
Email: hongkong_hindus@yahoo.com

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## OUR HOLY LAND - **Bodhi Temple, Bodh Gaya**

More than 25 centuries back, in 531 BC, a light was kindled in Bodh Gaya when Prince Sidhartha attained supreme enlightenment renouncing a kingdom and the luxuries of royal existence. It was here that the Sakya prince first saw "light" under the Bodhi tree. The prince became "Buddha", the enlightened one. The tree that stands today, is said to have grown from the original Bodhi Tree.

Bodh Gaya is the greatest pilgrim centre for Buddhists of the world. A number of monasteries constructed by Burmese, Tibetan, Chinese, Japanese, Thai and Bhutanese in their native architectural styles provide great attraction to tourists. It is also a significant archaeological site. Devout Buddhists and tourists the world over visit Bodhgaya to study Buddhism and meditation, or to simply absorb the aura of solemn grandeur that surrounds the place.

The best time to visit is during winter when the climate is at its best and also when Tibetan pilgrims come down from Dharamsala. The

Dalai Lama also often spends December here. An alternative would be to come in the month of May to celebrate Buddha Jayanti (the birthday of Lord Buddha). This is the biggest festival day over here.

Bodh Gaya is located 12 Kms from Gaya Railway Station, an important junction on Grand Chord line of Eastern Railways. It is approximately 106 Kms by Road from the nearest airport located at Patna, the capital of Bihar.

## Places to See –

**MAHABODHI TEMPLE** - is the focal point of Bodhgaya. It marks the spot where Buddha gained enlightenment and set out on his life of preaching. It stands adjacent to a descendent of the original Bodhi tree under which Buddha meditated on the excesses of life and formulated his philosophy of a balanced approach to it. There is a red sandstone slab under the tree that is said to be the 'Vajrasan', or diamond throne, on which Buddha sat. This temple is a place of pilgrimage for all Buddhists and also for Hindus, as the Bhagvat Purana considers Gautam Buddha as the 9th major incarnation of Lord Vishnu.

The temple has a 50m (170ft) tower. In the inner sanctuary there is a huge Buddha. In the center of the temple, there is also a Shiva-linga that was installed here in 860 AD. The temple is surrounded by small pillars and delicate lattice work. These are major attractions for tourists who visit the place. To mtaintain the balance of the main tower there are four smaller towers.

The Bodhi tree here is said to be a descendant of the tree under which Buddha attained enlightenment. A sapling of the original bodhi tree that the Buddha sat under was carried by Emperor Ashok's daugher (Sanghamitra) to Sri Lanka. That tree is at Anuradhapura in Sri Lanka. A cutting from that tree was planted in Bodh Gaya when the original tree died. Under the tree is a red sandstone slab that is is said to be the Vajrasana, the diamond throne, that Buddha sat on and attained nirvana (enlightenment). The tree is located behind the temple and is about 80 feet high and over 115 years old.

**MONASTERIES** - Most countries with a large Buddhist population have a temple or a monastery in Bodhgaya usually built in their representative architectural style. Thus, there is a Thai

temple that looks very much like the colourful wats of Thailand. There is a Tibetan temple and monastery that contains a large prayer wheel. The Burmese who had led a campaign to restore the Mahabodhi temple in the 19th century also built their monastery. There is a Japanese temple (Indosan Nipponji) that has a very beautiful image of Buddha brought from Japan. There are also Chinese, Sri Lankan, Bhutanese, Vietnamese, Nepalese, Korean, Taiwanese and Bangladeshi monasteries. There is also a Tai Bodhi Khan monastery built by Buddhist tribes from Assam and Arunachal Pradesh.

**Archaeological Museum** - The museum contains a small collection of Buddha figures and pillars that were discovered in the area.

BODH GAYA is definitely the abode of Lord Buddha and in times of problems and turmoil we can all look at such places for a peace of mind.

# 'Hindustan' was first used by Guru Nanak: Jodh Singh

*By Sarbjit Dhaliwal*

Who was the first to use the word Hindustan? Obviously, it is the most difficult question to answer.

"Guru Nanak Dev, the founder of Sikhism, was the first to use this word. Unfortunately, this fact is little known to scholars and others concerned," asserts Dr Jodh Singh, famed scholar of philosophy and religion and the editor-in-chief of *Encyclopaedia of Sikhism*, which is being prepared by Punjab University, Patiala.

"In fact, Guru Nanak Dev was the first holy man to conceptualise our country as *Hindustan*. And *Guru Granth Sahib* is the first religious scripture of the *Bhakti movement* period in which the word *Hindustan* was used for the first time. Before *Guru Granth Sahib*, the word *Hindustan* had not been used in any religious *granth*," claims Dr Jodh Singh. "I would stand corrected if any one shows me the reference to

Hindustan in any other religious scripture before it was used by Guru Nanak Dev," adds Dr Jodh Singh.

Guru Nanak Dev wrote the word *Hindustan* in his *shloka* that was authored to lodge a protest to God against Babar's reign of terror in Hindustan. The *shloka* is "*Khurasan khasmana kiya, Hindustan draya, eti mar pai kurlane, tain ke dard na aiya*." Dr Jodh Singh, has completed in four volumes the translation of *Guru Granth Sahib* in Hindi.

Asked about the translation of *Guru Granth Sahib* in Hindi, Dr Jodh Singh said that he had performed this task keeping in view the requirements of millions of Hindi-reading people of the country. "The translation was in chaste Hindi that is written and read in central India," he adds. Dr Jodh Singh, who has also been designated as Professor of Sikhism, did his Ph.D. on Guru Nanak's thoughts from Banaras Hindu University and also served there as lecturer for some years before joining Punjab University. He is a member of the Indian Council of Philosophical Research and has held several eminent positions in Punjab University and other academic institutions. He has authored several books on Sikhism.

His most recognised earlier works are the translation of *Dasam Granth* in English and Hindi and also the translation of *Vars of Bhai Gurdas* in English and Hindi. Translation of *Guru Granth Sahib* is the latest one. In this work, on the left side pages, there is a translation in *shloka* form in Hindi and on the right side pages there is translation in Hindi prose. This has been done to make easy the understanding of *Gurbani* for Hindi-knowing people.

Talking about the translation of *Guru Granth Sahib*, he said that the number of pages of this translated work is the same as those of *Guru Granth Sahib*. A detailed introduction explaining Sikh history, philosophy and its doctrinal aspects and also a glossary of technical terms used in Sikh religious ethos has been part of the work.

*(Courtesy: The Tribune, December 14, 2004.)*

# SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY IN ANCIENT INDIA

## TEXTILES IN ANCIENT INDIA

The excavations at Mohan jo daro have revealed some details about Indian costumes and the materials from which cloth was manufactured. An actual piece of cotton has been discovered which shows that cotton was known to the people of Sindh 5,000 years ago. It is also possible that wool was used for warmer textiles.

Our Knowledge of the costumes of Mohan jo daro people is not lacking in evidence. A shawl is worn by a male figure covering the left shoulder and passed under the right arm. The nobles and deities wore a thin strip of cotton on their loins. Some very rare figurines are depicted wearing kilt or drawers. The hair was timed with a woven fillet.

The woven sari terminating well above the knees always fastened with girdles and in one case with kamarband is also seen. The narrow strip of cloth used as sari at Mohan jo daro very much resembles the "nivi" mentioned in the Vedic literature.

The most common word for clothing is vasas, though vasana and vastra express the same meaning. Vedic Indians were also fond of beautiful garments. Clothing well ( suvasas) is a common adjective. The clothes were also well fitting (surabhi).

Clothes were often decorated with borders or embroidered with patterns in gold. White cloth was preferred, while some

women used dyed cloth: the Vratyas had preference for dark blue cloth.

The Vedic Indians wore three garments: Nivi or loin cloth sometimes having long unwoven fringe, a garment ( vasas) and an over garment ( upavasana, adhivasa) generally consisting of a wrapper or sometimes consisting of a jacket, bodice or look like " pratidhi", drapi, or "atka". The "usnisa" or turbans is met in later Vedic literature and was worn by the Rajas and Vratyas and also sometimes by women.

Cotton was generally cultivated in fields near Kashi. Kashi, during the life of Buddha, seems to have been the chief center of the manufacture of cotton cloth. The texture of cloth produced at Kashi was fine, and the fineness and smoothness were obtained by skilled weavers and spinners, and bleaching was perfect due to the softness of the water. Kashi was also famous for its silk manufacture and upto this day it is one of the leading silk manufacturing centers in India.

Blankets were also produced from a mixture of ksuma fiber and wool. Kotumbara was another variety of cloth though we do not know the nature of the material from which it was made. It was manufactured in the country of the Audhumbaras which was on the upper Beas in the Gurdaspur and Hosiarpur districts.

For woolen cloths of all varieties the term kambala is used in Buddhist literature. The Gandhara zone produced fine shawls, the area of Sibis was equally famous for it. Vahika (the area between Sindhu, Sutlej and Beas) produced fine woolen chadars known as Vahitika. Besides the above mentioned varieties, clothes were manufactured from hemp, bhago, kisa, grass, bark, wood, feathers etc.

The clothing of the laymen was a little different. It consisted of "dhoti" and "uttarasanga" and turban and also sometimes tunic. The dhoti was pleated in various styles, such as "fan style", "elephant trunk" style "four cornered" style etc. The Kamarband was tied in various knots, such as "drum knot", "water serpent knot" etc. Besides the kamarband men and women used a patka or a decorative piece of cloth attached from the kamarband and hanging in front, made from bamboo, wool, etc.

We know from the Arthashastra of Kautilya that there was a separate department of state under a superintendent were thread, cloths, coats and ropes were manufactured. The materials employed for the manufacture of cloth were cotton, silk, wool, hemp, fiber etc

For the history of Indian costume there is ample material in the Gandhara & Mathura sculptures in the north, and the reliefs of Amaravat, Nagarjunakonda, etc in the south. Besides the typical Indian costumes consisting of dhoti, dupatta and turban for men, sari and orhni for women, sewn garments, such as tunics, trousers, high boots and armor were also worn.

Silk was also in great demand and pattamsuka (plain white silk), china (Chinese silk) kauseya (mulberry silk) and dhautapatta (washed silk) were the different varieties of silk. Patola or the silk sari of Gurjar Desa was known as vicitrapatolaka.

Golden brocade under the name hiryani and hirivastra, pandudukula or cloth manufactured from the fibers of dukula, the silk and cotton cloth of Kashi, the Aparantaka

cloth of Sind, Gujarat and Konan, phuttaka cloth and puspapatta of "flowered cloth" either printed of embroidered, were also known.

All the information about Indian costume pales into insignificance when we look at the paintings of Ajanta which show us in detail the costumes of the people of all classes. It is significant that commonly the kings wore dhoti and highly ornamental head-dresses but sewn garments were not tabooed. The nobles and princes imitated the king. The chamberlain and at times the ministers wore long tunics. The soldiers wore either a dhoti or were clad in tunics, trousers, head scarves and high boots. The queen and women of higher social status wore light garments consisting of saris, skirts, and scarves, though at times they also wore tunics with half sleeves or full sleeves.

Buddhist literature has much reference to the magnificent cotton spinners and weavers of Kashi. The fabric was so finely woven that oil could not penetrate the cloth. Spinning was the work of women. Cotton cloths were washed, starched and perfumed.

From the earliest times the Nagas of Kalinga country, who lived on the eastern coast, were regarded as great artisans. The word Kalingam in the South during this period became synonymous with fine cotton cloth. There is a reference in Tamil literature to fabulous muslin being offered by the warrior chieftain Ay to an idol of Lord Shiva. The fabric had been gifted to the Chief by Nila Naga of the Kalinga country. It is interesting to observe that, "the links of these Naga weavers to the Padmashali weaver of Andhra Pradesh and Orissa are evident. The padmashalis are great weavers of

cotton and silk. They are serpent worshippers and claim ancient ancestry.

In South India at Uraiyur, the modern Waraiyur, Thanjavur and Machilipatanam, fine cotton muslins were made from very early times.

Silk cloth was also widely used. The word Vichitra Patolka is mentioned in the beginning of this era in Buddhist texts to indicate tie-dyed patterned multi-colored silks akin to the Patolas of Gujarat. There is also mention of scarlet flowered silks being worn by the high born women of Madurai in South India. It is strange how tradition links most silk weaving centers with Gujarat. That this is so with regard to the silk weavers from Gujarat from the earliest times is established by an inscription of the eight century, found at Mandasor, Rajasthan, recording the building of a temple to the Sun by the silk weavers from Gujarat.

The names of the fabrics too, provide interesting information. Terms such as ahinvala (silk from Anhilvad-Patan in Gujarat) and tanchera (Tanjore silk) indicate their place of manufacture while other like kadali-garbha (silk comparable to the inside of a banana tree trunk) and muktaphala (silk with luster of pearls) suggest texture. Some words linked panchavarnapadi (five colored silk) and parevaupata (pigeon colored silk) are evocative of color.

In all cases, natural colors prepared from colored minerals and herbs were used as dye with enduring effect.

# Harvard Study: Poverty Is Not the Cause of Terrorism

Author:
Publication: IsraelNationalNews
Date: November 26, 2004
URL: http://www.israelnn.com/news.php3?id=72652

A new study by a Harvard professor has found that terrorism is not caused by poverty – thus further undermining the main premise behind international aid to Arabs of Judea, Samaria and Gaza (Yesha).

The Harvard University Gazette reports that Alberto Abadie, associate professor at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government, "examined data on terrorism and variables such as wealth, political freedom, geography, and ethnic fractionalization for nations that have been targets of terrorist attacks ... Before analyzing the data, Abadie believed it was a reasonable assumption that terrorism has its roots in poverty, especially since studies have linked civil war to economic factors. However, once the data was corrected for the influence of other factors studied, Abadie said he found no significant relationship between a nation's wealth and the level of terrorism it experiences... (New York Sun, Nov.10, 2004)

Arab journalist Khalid Amayreh, himself from the Yesha region, has likewise written that it "is simply nonsense" to "claim that Islamic terrorism in Israel, as elsewhere, is the product of poverty, backwardness, and ignorance ... Islamic fundamentalism is not a product or by-product of poverty. Several studies have shown that a substantial majority of Islamists and their supporters come from the middle and upper socio-economic strata ... The fact that city-dwellers [in Judea-Samaria], who are generally more educated and better off economically, have

consistently lent more support to Islamists refutes the widely held assumption that Islamist popularity thrives on economic misery." (Jerusalem Post, Feb. 21, 1995)

Morton A. Klein, National President of the Zionist Organization of America (ZOA), commented: "Poverty is not the problem; hatred is the problem. An entire generation of Palestinian Arabs has been raised to hate Jews and Israel. Giving them American money will not solve the problem – in fact, it will have the opposite effect, sending a message to them that they need not change their ways. Like German society after World War II, Palestinian Arab society will require a lengthy and intensive period of de-Nazification, to wean them away from their hatred and violence. What they need is years and years of education towards peace, democracy, and coexistence. As long as the PA educates its people for hatred, in the official PA schools, summer camps, television, radio, newspapers, speeches, and religious sermons, peace will not be possible."

# HONG KONG SANGH NEWS

## MAKAR SAKRANTI CELEBRATION

On Wednesday 12th January, the Makar Sankranti festival was celebrated at Sangh Karyalaya. Actually, Makar Sankranti falls on 14th January each year, but since there is a Shakha held every Wednesday as well as for the fact that 12th January also happens to be Swami Vivekananda's birthday, a programme was held on this day. A total of 26 swayamsevaks attended.

As always, the event started with the Sangh Prarthana, after which the master of ceremony, Shri Dipakji welcomed the guests and informed the significance of the day.

The chief speaker, Shri Shekhar Aiyar gave a very interesting talk of how Makar Sankranti is celebrated throughout India but is known by different names. Like in Punjab it is called Lohri, in Uttar Pradesh it is called "Khicri", in Maharashtra married women have a get together called Haldi-Kumkoom and gifts are exchanged; in Bundelkhand and MP it is called Sukarat or Sakarat. In south it is known by the name of Pongal. In Bengal at Ganga Sagar hundreds of thousands of people take a dip in the river Ganga. All this and more was very precisely explained by Shri Shekhar Aiyar in his speech.

Then, Dipakji summarized the complete life history of Swami Vivekanada. He emphasized how Swamiji had to face innumerable hurdles and yet despite all that never gave up his mission. A patriotic geet "Desh Jage, Desh Jage" was also rendered by Dipakji to keep the tempo of the moment.

The programme was concluded by an exciting quiz by Shri Nirmalji, wherein he freely interacted with the audience. A lot of interesting questions were asked such as, "In which countries outside India is Diwali a public holiday?"

Keeping in mind the tradition of this festival, a lot of sweets made of Til Gur were served, together with Preeti Prasad.

All in all, it was a very interesting program and everyone enjoyed a lot.

# PRAHLAD

Hiranyakashipu was the king of the demons (asuras). His brother,Hiranyaksha had been killed by Lord Vishnu for troubling the sages and the demigods. In revenge, Hiranyakashipu wanted to challenge the might of GOD and as a step in that direction,he issued orders to his soldiers to crush and punish all those who worshipped Lord Vishnu.

Hiranyakashipu wanted to obtain more powers in order to become the ruler of all the 3 worlds (heaven, earth and the netherworld). For this object only, he went to a secluded spot in the Himalayas and prayed to please Lord Brahma by performing severe austerities which lasted for many years.

While Hiranyakashipu was away, Indra, the king of the demigods, attacked his city and destroyed his palace. Hiranyakashipu's wife Kayadhu was expecting a child at that moment and the great Narada Muni gave her shelter in her hermitage. Kayadhu lived in the Ashram and learnt all about religion and the greatness of Lord Vishnu. The child within her, Prahlad absorbed all this knowledge.

Meanwhile Hiranyakashipu's deep penance for such a long time pleased Lord Brahma, who appeared before him and asked him for any boon that he wished except for immortality. Hiranyakashipu was disappointed at the refusal of Lord Brahma to grant him this very boon, but thought of playing smart. He asked Lord Brahma of a boon WHERE HE WOULD NOT DIE IN THE NIGHT OR THE DAY, NOT BE KILLED BY ANY KIND OF WEAPON, SHOULD NOT DIE BY A MAN OR ANIMAL, SHOULD NOT BE KILLED ON THE GROUND OR IN THE AIR and SHOULD NOT DIE INSIDE OR OUTSIDE.

With the granting of this wish by Lord Brahma, Hiranyakashipu thought that he had become invisible. He happily returned back to his palace and upon learning that in his absence his kingdom had been taken over by Indra, he ferociously attacked the demigods and not only retrieved back his own kingdom but also chased away Indra from his heavenly kingdom of Indralok.

He brought back his wife and his newborn son, Prahlad back to his kingdom. Even though Prahlad was the youngest of Hiranyakashipu's four sons, in virtues he was the oldest. He did not behave like other kids of his age, he did not like toys or playing. Instead he always remained submerged in devotion to Lord Hari (Narayana). He was truthful and wished well for everyone. He was completely untouched by the demonic qualities of his father

One day Hiranyakashipu very lovingly took Prahlad in his lap and asked him which thing he liked the most. Immediately Prahlad answered " to be in the service and devotion to Lord Vishnu". Upon hearing Lord Vishnu's praise from his son, Hiranyakashipu laughed loudly and thought that someone had misguided his young boy. He instructed Prahlad to be under the guidance of Shand and Amark (the sons of Shukracharya), for formal education. He told Shand and Amark that they should teach his son on his glories only and narrate the incidents related to his life (as Hiranyakashipu considered himself mightier than GOD).

Besides being taught the glories of Hiranyakashipu, Prahlad was also taught other subjecs, but he had absolutely no interest in any of these. Since he did not wish to show any disrespect to his teachers, he quietly listened to whatever was taught. The teachers thought that now Prahlad must have forgotten about GOD and they confidently took him back to his father.

When Prahlad reached home, he respectfully greeted his parents and elders. Once again his father lovingly took him on his lap and asked him what is the best knowledge? Instantaneously Prahlad replied, "Listening to the virtues of GOD, recalling and reciting his names, serving and praying GOD and having a sense of dedication for GOD, all of these form the best knowledge".

Hearing all this, Hiranyakashipu got enraged and threw Prahlad on the floor. Then he got angry on Shand and Amark as he thought that they had been the ones who had been teaching Prahlad all this. But Prahlad stood there unaffected and calmly explained to his father, "Do not be angry with them. Lured by lust, the whole world is moving towards hell. Such people cannot focus their mind on Lord Narayana. Please think about it, the only way for our welfare is to take the shelter of Lord Narayana."

Hiranyakashipu got more angry after listening these words from Prahlad. He sent him back to his teachers and insructed them that they must change his thoughts and direct his attention to him, not to Lord Vishnu

The teachers tried again and again and failed repeatedly. Prahlad had only GOD's name on his lips. When all attempts failed, Hiranyakashipu in his anger ordered his demons to kill Prahlad immediately. He told his demons that Prahlad cannot be his son, he must be his enemy. His wife begged him to spare her son's life, but Hiranyakashipu listened to no one.

The demons then started attacking Prahlad with their weapons. Prahlad was just standing quietly and meditating on GOD. The blow of the weapons had no impact on him. No weapon could cut or pierce his body. Then Hiranyakashipu thought of new ways to kill Prahlad.

Firstly, he attempted to get Prahlad trampled by the elephants, then he got him stung by poisonous snakes, got him thrown from a huge mountain, and made him drink poison, but all of Hiranyakashipu's methods failed miserably. How could a great and pure devotee of GOD like Prahlad be killed by a cruel demon?

Then, Hiranyakashipu thought of another idea to finish Prahlad, that was to burn him in the fire. Hiranyakashipu's sister, Holika, had a special blanket, which she had received as a boon. This blanket could not be burnt by fire. Holika put this blanket on herself, then took Prahlad on her lap. Holika sat on a huge pile of wood. Soon that pile was put on fire. But by the grace of GOD, a strong wind blew off the blanket from Holika and fell on Prahlad.

Hence, Holika was burnt to death and nothing at all happened to Prahlad.

Seeing that no harm was falling on Prahlad, Hiranyakashipu began to get scared as he felt that there was some power protecting him, but yet at the same time, his ego and arrogance would not let him beleive that a 5 year old boy could not be killed.

Getting desperate he tied Prahlad to a pillar, and roared loudly, "Fool, you always preached GOD is everywhere, now I am going to kill you personally. Let me see if your GOD comes to save you".

Prahlad replied humbly, "Dear father, GOD is everywhere, he is even in this pillar..." Before Prahlad could even complete his sentence, Hiranyakashipu in anger hit the pillar with his mace.

And lo, as soon as the mace touched the pillar, it broke with a thundering sound. Everyone present there

panicked, because they saw a huge figure emering from the pillar.

The powerful personality who emerged had THE FACE OF A LION BUT THE BODY OF A HUMAN This was Lord Vishnu, appearing in the form of NARASIMHA AVATAR, to save his devotee and kill the evil Hiranyakashipu. This was Lord Vishnu's 6th famous incarnation.

He was roaring constantly, the frightened Hiranyakashipu tried to run from him, but Narasimha Avatar caught hold of him and dragged him with his hands to the threshold (doorway) of the court room. He then held him on his laps and pierced his belly with his claws, killing him.

Note how Narasimha Avatar killed Hiranyakashipu respecting all the boons that he had received from Lord Brahma.

Narasimha Avatar was neither man nor beast, he had the face of a lion but the body of a man.

He killed Hiranyakashipu neither indoors nor outdoors, he killed him on the doorway of the court room.

He did not kill him on the air or on the ground. Narasimha Avatar killed Hiranyakashipu by holding him on his lap

The time that he killed him was neither day nor night.
It was the twilight hour

He did not kill him with any weapon. He killed him with his claws (nails).

Thus, Hiranyakashipu had thought that he could be smart by getting all the special boons from Lord Brahma but Lord Vishnu showed him how he could be smarter.

Prahlad later went near to Lord Narasimha who lovingly made him sit on his lap and blessed his great devotee.

Lord Narasimha granted Prahlad any boon he wished. But Prahlad replied that he did not want any boon. The only thing that he wanted was to always continue praying and remembering GOD and never to get any desire which may come in the way of his worship.

Prahlad also requested that his father be freed from the sins that he committed. At this, Lord Narasimha replied, "O Prahlad, that clan in which a devotee of mine takes birth becomes protected and specially blessed upto 7 generations. So, don't worry about your father".

Then, Lord Narasimha escorted Prahlad to the throne of his father, and kept his hand over him. He then disappeared

But this historical story of Lord Narasimha and Prahlad remains eternal for all generations of Hindus.

It shows how GOD will always protect his devotees

The famous HOLI festival is celebrated on the day when Holika was burnt by the fire, and Prahlad was saved by the GRACE OF GOD. It is a very popular Hindu} festival. The festival of Holi represents the victory of righteousness and devotion over demonical and sinister forces.

# RSS takes up massive rescue work

*From Our Correspondents - Organiser*

**Tamil Nadu**

The tsunami has caused extensive damage in many areas of Tamil Nadu, and Pondicherry particularly in Chennai, Cuddalore, Nagapat-tinam and Kanyakumari. Among these, Nagapattinam is the worst affected district in the state. Approximately 4,000 lives have been lost in this district alone.

According to Shri R.V.S. Marimuthu, Samyuktha Prant Sanghchalak of Tamil Nadu, "Tremors were initially felt around 6.30 in the morning. Around 8.45 a.m. the sea waves rose upto 10 metres height and came rushing in at a terrific speed to engulf the huts, the houses, the tenements and shelters on the shores. People living in the coastal areas and those walking along the coast, children playing nearby, fishermen both in and out of the sea, were swept away in the blink of an eyelid. By 10.30 a.m., the Sangh Swayamsevaks swung into action to get engaged in relief work and salvage the dead. At 12.30 noon, the Swayamsevaks started distributing food packets. By evening, relief work acquired momentum with more and more Swayamsevaks and volunteers of many social service organisations like Ramakrishna Mutt, pressed into service. They co-ordinated their efforts to distribute food packets, clothes, blankets, baby food, etc. to the needy. In some places, relief centres were opened and food was prepared in temporary kitchens erected to provide food round the clock. Soon about 800 Swayamsevaks gathered

to involve themselves in relief work. Around 20,000 food packets were distributed on December 26 itself. Six medical centres were opened for providing medical assistance. The response from the general public was also spontaneous as a result of which clothes arrived at the relief centres in a big way," he said.

The RSS has, besides mobilising the volunteers locally, rushed volunteers from Coimbatore, Madurai, Salem, Trichy, Ambur and Erode to the tsunami-affected areas. Outside reinforcements were directed mainly to Nagapattinam, which is the worst affected as 3,000 lives have been lost here so far.

Shri Marimuthu said that a survey was being conducted in the coastal belt to assess the extent of the damage and identify the areas that need rehabilitation. "In the coming days," he said, "it has been decided to take up rehabilitation work on a larger scale, particularly in providing boats, fishing nets, blankets, utensils, notebooks, textbooks to students, construction of houses, etc." He said the victims did need immediate help for repairing their damaged fishing boats, buying fishing nets and for meeting the diesel needs of mechanised fishing boats. He said an office had been started for relief work in the Sangh Karyalaya, Chennai. Shri Bhaktavatsalam, Sah-Prant Pra-charak is co-ordinating the relief work.

**Disposal of Dead Bodies**

More than 500 Swayamsevaks are engaged in removing the dead bodies. So far the state administration has removed 2,000 and the Swayamsevaks have removed 805. The massive work of disposal of the dead by burial or cremation was virtually handled mainly by the RSS volunteers and as many as 1,500 dead bodies were given

a decent funeral in Nagapattinam area alone. Since the Collector of Nagapattinam had sent an SOS to the local RSS workers, the state leadership sent volunteers from all over the state to Nagapattinam.

Two ambulances, one each from Salem and Coimbatore, were rushed to Nagapattinam for rescue and relief operations. Relief in the form of rice, *dal*, clothes and medicines from all parts of the state is pouring into the district.

In the Kolachal area of Kanyakumari district, more than 200 Swayamsevaks are engaged in relief activities. Seeing the excellent work being done by the Swayamsevaks, members of the Muslim Munnetra Kazhagam from the Melapalayam area of Coimbatore attacked them, thus preventing them from extending relief. To avoid any untoward happening at this crucial moment, the Swayamsevaks withdrew from the place. But the local people wanted only the Swayamsevaks to carry on with the relief work. Many members of the Christian community had also expressed similar sentiments. Government officials contacted the Sewa Bharati members and requested them to continue with the rescue and relief work.

**Training for Relief Distribution**

At Kolachal, the RSS, in a joint effort with the Ramakrishna Mission, undertook the task of distributing vessels for cooking. A medical camp was organised by Dr Srinivasa Kannan, Nagar Sangachalak and Dr Deiva Prakasam, district president, Sewa Bharati in Nagarcoil. So far five such camps have been held.

A seven-day RSS camp was going on in Tamil Nadu. The

Swayamsevaks at Vandavasi camp collected money for relief by asking for funds from house to house. One of the villages badly affected in Kanyakumari district is Pallam. RSS Swayamsevaks are actively engaged in relief work in this village, which has a predominantly Christian community and who regretted that no Christian had come forward to help them so far.

**Andhra Pradesh**

Relief teams comprising the Sangh Swayamsevaks swung into action in the worst affected Nellore and Prakasam districts of Andhra Pradesh and engaged themselves in relief and rescue operations. An eye camp is scheduled to be held at Mypadu in Nellore district. Doctors and other paramedical staff from Jaya Bharat Hospital, affiliated to Sewa Bharati, Nellore, were present when the calamity broke out. The Collector of the district felt relieved to hear that 43 persons had been rescued by the RSS Swayamsevaks. Additional batches of workers also reached Mypadu, Iskapalli and Channayapalem villages taking *chapatis* and tamarind rice packets to distribute among the displaced persons.

*Sewa Bharati, Gujarat donates Rs 50 lakh*
*Sewa Bharati, Gujarat has sent immediate relief of Rs 50 lakh to help the tsunami victims. Shri Vallabhbhai Savalia, managing trustee of Sewa Bharati, Gujarat, along with other trustees reached Chennai to identify the requirements of the relief to be provided further. Sewa Bharati has also sent a team of 15 doctors to help the victims. It has also decided to utilise the expertise, acquired in rehabilitating the earthquake victims in Gujarat.*

According to Dr K. Sukumar, Prant Pracharak of eastern

Andhra Pradesh, some two scores of fishermen, who were feared to have been lost off the Iskapalli coast, reached safely Karedu in Prakasam district. At Singaraya Konda, 2,000 persons from the coastal villages have been provided shelter in a camp and arrangement for food and medical assistance is continuing with the help of local rice-millers and other philanthropic individuals. Dr Sukumar pointed out that fishermen were the worst hit as strong currents had washed away thousands of fishing boats and fishing nets. In Andhra Pradesh, Nellore, Prakasam, Krishna, east Godavari, Vishaka and Vijaya Nagaram were the worst affected districts.

Swayamsevaks have started relief work in various parts of coastal Andhra Pradesh. Batches of Sangh Swayamsevaks have reached Mypadu, Iskapalli, Koduru, Channayapalem and Krishnapuram villages and nearly 7,000 food packets had been distributed in these villages on the very first day. A temporary relief camp was started in Singarayakonda and Prakasam districts and the local Swayamsevaks are helping the government authorities. Three medical vans from Guntur district went to Prakasam district with preventive medicines and a batch of 50 Swayamsevaks from Kanigiri also joined the team. A batch of RSS workers in Natha Ramewsaram of east Godavari district has also started relief camps in the same area. Local Sangh Pracharak, Chitti Babu, with others workers are engaged in relief work. Besides fishing nets and boats, textbooks, notebooks and clothing for affected students in the coastal area are absolutely necessary. Construction of houses and undertaking reconstruction and repair of temples will also be done by Sangh Swaymsevaks.

The Swayamsevaks also conducted a door-to-door survey in 65 villages (out of the 82 affected villages) in Prakasam

and Nellore districts and have estimated that damage has been to the tune of Rs 24 crores. The total number of villages (belonging to the fishermen community) across the coastal belt is 520 out of which 300 villages are seriously affected. Fishermen are not keen to move their damaged boats and other equipments as they are awaiting insurance survey.

**Kerala**

Karunagapally *taluka* has been witness to the fury of the coastal storm in Kerala. Around 86 people have died, but the casualties are definitely going to be more. Over 66,00 people are housed in 26 relief camps. Swayamsevaks are managing 14 camps, beside operating six ambulances. They are providing food, clothes, medicines and beddings. An estimated 800 houses have been washed away. In Alappuzha area, 23 people are feared to be dead. More bodies are being recovered. Over 800 houses have been damaged; most of them belong to the poor fishermen. Relief camps are being run by Sewa Bharati, which has opened a relief camp in Kayamkulam Taluka Hospital. In Ernakulam district, an RSS training camp has been converted into a relief camp. Food and medicines have been arranged to help the 600 inmates. Further help is pouring in.

**Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh, Hong Kong (HSS) in association with Sewa International, collected substantial amount of funds to assist the rehabilitation of affected families. HSS thanks all the volunteers who came forward for this relief.**

# Conversion attempts in the time of grief

**Shobha Warrier in Nagapattinam**
January 24, 2005 15:45 IST. www.rediff.com

When I entered one of the rows of temporary shelters built for tsunami victims in Pattancherry village in Nagapattinam, I witnessed a minor scuffle in a corner.

Some inmates had surrounded a Christian priest and two nuns, and a war of words was going on. "We are Hindus and we want to live as Hindus. Why do you want to convert us?" some young men shouted at the missionaries. The priest said, "We are not here to convert people. We were only offering prayers for your peace of mind."

But flashing some pamphlets distributed among them by the three, the inmates snorted, "What does this mean?"

The priest had no answer. "Why do you enter our houses and pray?," they asked. "Your nuns do this when our women are alone at home. We know how to pray."

The young men were extremely furious. The priest was unruffled. But the nuns were shaken by the sudden surge of animosity from the muscular men.

The scuffle went on till the three were forced to leave the place.

**Day two:**
As I was visiting the areas close to the sea that were badly affected by the tsunami waves, I saw another angry scene outside another temple in another village.

Police jeeps were seen parked outside the temple in Samandapettai. So was a van. Villagers were complaining to the police about a missionary group to which the van belonged.

They said the group had taken away to another place their belongings and the relief they had got from nongovernmental

organisations and the government, which they had kept inside the temple, because they refused to listen to its missionaries.

"They want to try their luck at some other place. Since we resisted, they took away our things. We won't allow this to happen," they said. "Why don't you arrest all of them?" the villagers asked the police.

The villagers' torrent of angry words continued. "We have lost everything to the sea. They said they would help us if we followed their religion. What logic is this? Are they here to help us or change our religion?" The police couldn't cool their tempers.

The group said it did not take away the belongings of the villagers and insisted that the contents inside the van belonged to it.

That evening, some villagers came with the news that the police had arrested the priest they had confronted the previous day. Apparently some angry villagers had gheraoed him, and forced the police to arrest him.

"He shouldn't be doing this when we are grieving, when we are suffering. Everything has its time and place," a villager said.

When I wanted to talk to the panchayat president and locals of the Karakkalmedu village at Karaikkal, they called me inside the village temple. That was where they met outsiders. The temple has become the centre of activity in the village.

Before we started talking, one of them opened the door to the sanctum sanctorum and pointed to a mark left by the strong tsunami waves. They told me that water stopped at the feet of their deity and then receded. "We might have suffered, but our Goddess saved us."

This belief had taken the villagers all the more closer to their deity.

"That is why it hurts us when others come and tell us that it was because of our God and our belief that we suffered. We won't let anyone exploit us when we are down," the panchayat members asserted.

# Government control of religious institutions: A splendid idea

November 22, 2004

I have been hearing recently that there are proposals to take over religious institutions and use their funds to pay for the UPA government's programmes. One of the first uses for these funds would be to pay for the Rs 24,000 crores allocated to Jammu & Kashmir. As Manmohan Singh pointed out the Congress has had close ties with J&K from the time of Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi. 'Kashmir has a special place in our hearts.'

Since the population of J&K is roughly 1 crore, this means the UPA government is offering Rs 24,000 per head. Compare this to the central assistance of Rs 1,137 per head to people in all other states in 2000-2001. And this Rs 24,000 per head is for people who wish to secede from India, who prefer Pakistani terrorists over the Indian Army, who ethnic-cleanse, torture, rape, murder, oppress fellow-Kashmiris based on religion. A cynic might say this is reward for bad behaviour, but we should not judge others, should we?

In the past I have looked at the tribute extracted by Kashmir, and this latest cornucopia is even more bountiful. J&K has the **lowest** incidence of poverty in India (at 3.4% in 2000-2001 compared to 26% for the whole country), and even before this new munificence it was on course to be India's first and only state with **nobody** below the poverty line. But I must not carp or cavil. Since the Congress has 'a special place in [*their*] hearts' for Kashmiris we must keep giving and giving to them.

Now comes the interesting question of how to fund all this: given that the combined central and state deficits are at alarming levels, that is a non-trivial problem. That's where the wealth in the religious institutions comes into the picture. This is a wonderful idea, why didn't I think of it? This is along the same lines as the idea of taking India's foreign-exchange holdings, and using them for building infrastructure (and incidentally for rewarding our friends). Clearly, the UPA's brilliant economists such as Manmohan Singh, P Chidambaram and Jairam Ramesh are onto a good thing.

I can point explicitly to some religious institutions that I am familiar with. I merely have to drive in Trivandrum from the secretariat to the Kaudiar Palace to see a bunch of prosperous religious institutions that would fit the bill. I must apologise for not knowing the names of these institutions, but I will give precise enough directions so it is not hard to find them. Next time I go to Trivandrum I'll try to get their names. Let us see:

- At Spencer Junction, there is a large white church on the right hand side.
- Go a little further, and there is a spanking new church on the right hand side opposite the University Library
- At the junction look to your right, and next to the Martyr's Square is the large pink Jama Masjid mosque
- Across the Square from the mosque is the soaring Catholic Cathedral, with its statue of a benedictory Jesus rising high above the surrounding buildings

- Another half-mile, and across from the state legislative assembly, there is a fine-looking old white church on the right-hand side in a nice garden compound
- Just beyond the legislative assembly, on the left-hand side, there is a newly-built entrance hall to a small Hanuman temple
- Go around the stadium and on the left-hand side, across from the museum, there is the very large plot (30 acres?) belonging to the London Missionary Society and the Church of South India
- Go another mile or so, and on the right, just next to the Raj Bhavan, is the huge 35-acre plot housing an elegant Bishop's Palace, church, and other buildings
- Proceed another mile, and on the left, at Kaudiar Square, next to the Maharaja's Palace, is the giant 50-acre plot belonging to the Salvation Army (which also has other land just beyond on the road to Pattom) including a school, prayer halls, etc.

It would be a capital idea if the government were to take over all these: if I am not mistaken, all of them are built on public land that was ceded. The bounty for the Christians came during the Maharaja's rule, when under pressure from the British Resident, land was given away, and is not even taxed at fair market value now. One Resident, a Colonel Munro, was very diligent: he got Hindu temple lands annexed and commingled with Travancore government land on the one hand; on the other hand, he coerced the government to give away land to Christian churches. Not to mention he got them a government grant of Rs 10,000 in 1819, which was a colossal

sum: about Rs 480 million in today's terms at a discount rate of 6%.

The Muslims got their largesse about thirty years ago, probably under the Marxists, when prime land was given to them to build their mosque. The Hindus got the area in front of the Hanuman temple about ten years ago after much agitation: the government wanted to build a memorial to a Muslim minister there.

These are all the religious institutions on one main road in Trivandrum. When you land at Trivandrum airport, you can see a bunch of others: a dozen Muslim mosques and Christians churches can be seen from the air, and most of them are fairly new, having come up in the last twenty years. The only Hindu temple you see is the rather ill-maintained old Devi temple on the beach, right in front of which there is a gigantic 50-foot-long sculpture of a naked, voluptuous, sexually-aroused woman, recumbent. 'Secularism' in action: the place to put this is clearly in front of a Hindu temple to a goddess, wouldn't dream of putting this in front of the Virgin Mary church nearby.

If you drive north on the National Highway from Trivandrum towards Kollam, or south towards Kanyakumari, a profusion of new mosques is in evidence. On a stretch of about 2 kilometers towards Kollam, there are at least five mosques, all but one of which have come up in the last ten years.

And if you drive into Kanyakumari district, there is nothing but churches: this district is at least 50% Christian, and they are very religious people, so the place is chock-a-block with churches. Which is also the case if you go north to Kottayam district or Ernakulam district, which have, respectively, the

second-largest and largest numbers of Christians in any district in India. Kottayam, in particular, has some magnificent churches, which must be very prosperous.

If you drive further into Malabar, for instance Malappuram and Kozhikode districts, there must be large numbers of mosques: I am not familiar with the area.

Imagine the amount of money that is held in all these religious institutions! People have been talking about the huge amounts of Christian conversion money pouring into India. There are also reports that Rs 700 crores came into Kerala as hawala money, probably from West Asia. The Marxists are saying this, so it must obviously be true: (and some Rs 2 to 3 crore more per day) and surely some of that ends up in the mosques.

I think if the government can mobilise the funds from all these religious institutions, in no time the national debt can be retired. So I for one fully endorse the purported government moves to take these over. After all, what better use of the people's money other than to fund the Indian government's white elephants and illogical expenditures? In the bargain, if some foreigners' money also goes into the kitty, so much the better.

Comments welcome at rajeev.srinivasan@gmail.com

# Indian Americans live up to 'model minority' tag

Indo-Asian News Service
Washington, December 20

Indian Americans, often labelled the "model minority" with the highest levels of education and high-income levels, are living up to their name, according to the latest statistics released by the US Census Bureau.

The Census Bureau report titled, "We the People: Asians in the United States 2000" says there are 1.65 million Americans purely of Indian origin and 1.86 million when including some mixed parentage in the US.

The figure is occasionally questioned by Indian Americans as an undercount.

The report shows that as a whole, Asians do pretty well for themselves and are among the top rung in the ladder of success. But it is a diverse group that has many sub-groups not doing so well.

Indian American men had the highest year-round, full-time median earnings ($51,900), followed by Japanese, with earnings of $50,900.

The median income of Asian families was over $9,000 higher than the median for all families at $59,300 compared with $50,000.

Interestingly, the data shows a majority of Indians in this country came after 1990 (54 per cent), and nearly 82 per cent came after 1980.

Not to be ignored, however, was the fact that more than nine per cent of Indian Americans were at the poverty level, even though it was among the three lowest in Asian groups.

According to data provided, in 2000, Indians had the highest percentage holding a bachelor's degree, about 64 per cent, more than the Japanese, who however, have the highest number of those above high school.

Of the total US population (281 million in 2000), 11.9 million people, or 4.2 per cent, reported they were Asian. This number included 10.2 million people, or 3.6 per cent, who reported only Asian and 1.7 million people, or 0.6 per cent, who reported Asian and at least one other race.

Census 2000 found that, among 10 million Asians in the United States, five groups numbered one million or more: Indians, Chinese, Filipino, Korean, and Vietnamese. Together these groups made up about 80 per cent of the Asian population.

Chinese formed the largest group and represented about 24 per cent of the Asian population, followed by Filipinos, Indians, Vietnamese, and Korean.

Six other Asian groups, including Pakistanis, constituted about 15 per cent.

While 90 per cent of Americans are natives, only about 31 per cent of Asians can be similarly classified. In 2000, 69 per cent of all Asians were foreign born, with Indian Americans going as high as 75 per cent foreign born.

Even though nearly 55 per cent of Indian Americans were citizens, this meant 45 per cent of them were non-citizens, a concern many Indian American community leaders have voiced. They maintain that to exert political clout to match economic prowess, more Indians should move to become citizens.

Among men, Asian Indians and Pakistani men had the highest labour-force participation (79 per cent and 77 per cent). Only 54 per

cent of Indian women, however, were in the labour force compared to 65 per cent of Filipino women, the highest. Only 40 per cent of Pakistani women were in the labour force.

Indian Americans had also the highest proportion of those employed in management, professional and related occupations, at 60 per cent. They also had the least number employed in the service jobs, at less than 15 per cent.

This may be because a significant proportion prefers to branch out into their own businesses. Indians today own nearly 40 per cent of the hospitality properties in the US, and make up a notable proportion of doctors.

Till the IT bust in 2000, Indians were predominant in the technology businesses. They also own and run chains of mom-and-pop stores and newspaper stands around the country.

Asians as a whole were more likely than the total population to be in management, professional, and related occupations. Asian men and women who worked year-round, full-time, had higher median earnings than all men and women.

In 1999, among year-round fulltime workers, the median earnings of Asian men were nine per cent higher than those of all men, and the median earnings of Asian women were 14 per cent higher than those of all women. But Asian women earned $76 to every $100 their Asian male counterparts earned.

Indian, Japanese, and Chinese men had higher median earnings than Asian men and all men. Japanese, Indian, and Chinese women had the highest median earnings of all detailed Asian female groups and higher median earnings than all Asian women. They also earned between $4,300 and $8,800 more annually than all women.

Indian Americans and Japanese families' median incomes were more than $10,000 higher than that of all Asian families.

Cambodian, Hmong, Korean, Laotian, Pakistani, Thai, and Vietnamese median family incomes were substantially lower than the median for all Asian families. The median incomes of Hmong and Cambodian families were the lowest of all Asian groups ($32,400 and $35,600, respectively).

## KNOW YOUR HINDI

This is our thirteenth article about Hindi language. In our previous issues, we had mentioned that the so-called Hindi language is not spoken and written at its entire purity by the masses but is a mixture of mainly Farsi(Persian), Arabic and Turkish words. In Hindi movies, over 80% dialogues spoken use Farsi and Arabic words. In this issue, we continue the series of listing 10 such foreign words very commonly used in Hindi and have mentioned the apt Hindi word for it. It is about time that we should make an attempt to speak and write our national language as purely as possible

| WORD | ORIGIN | CORRECT HINDI WORD | MEANING IN ENGLISH |
|---|---|---|---|
| Kadam | Arabic | Pag | Step |
| Kamar | Farsi | Kati | Waist |
| Kamzor | Farsi | Durbal | Weak |
| Kadar | Arabic | Maan | Appreciation |
| Kasam | Arabic | Saugandh | Promise |
| Kasar | Arabic | Kami | Shortcoming |
| Kasrat | Arabic | Vyayaam | Exercise |
| Kasoor | Arabic | Dosh | Fault |
| Kamaal | Arabic | Anokha | Strange |
| Karz | Arabic | Hrin | Loan |




# The states of BHARAT

## ARUNACHAL PRADESH

Area:- 84,000 sq.km, Population:- About 900,000
State capital:- Itanagar Main language:- Various tribal languages
Famous touristic places:- Bomdila Valley, Ziro, Along, Pasighat, Namdapha, Malinithan
Famous pilgrimage places: Tawang Monastery, Parashuram Kund

ARUNACHAL PRADESH, FORMERLY CALLED NEFA, IS SO NAMED BECAUSE IT IS INDIA'S "LAND OF THE RISING SUN" THAT IS THE FIRST STATE IN THE COUNTRY TO RECEIVE SUNSHINE. IT IS NORTH EAST INDIA'S LARGEST STATE AND IS WITHOUT ANY DOUBT, INDIA'S MOST REMOTE STATE. HOME TO MANY DIFFERENT TRIBES, ARUNACHAL PRADESH BORDERS TIBET TO THE NORTH AND EAST, BHUTAN TO ITS WEST, AND ASSAM AND NAGALAND TO ITS SOUTH. THE MIGHTY BRAHMAPUTRA RIVER ENTERS INDIA THROUGH THIS STATE. STRETCHING FROM THE SNOW CAPPED MOUNTAINS OF THE HIMALAYAS TO THE STEAMY PLAINS OF THE BRAHMAPUTRA VALLEY, THERE IS AN EXTRAORDINARY RANGE OF FORESTS FROM THE ALPINE TO THE SUB-TROPICAL – FROM RHODODENDRONS TO ORCHIDS, REEDS AND BAMBOO. IT IS AN ORCHID LOVER'S PARADISE WITH OVER 550 SPECIES IDENTIFIED. THE WILDLIFE INCLUDES ELEPHANTS, LEOPARDS, TIGER, SLOTH BEAR, HIMALAYAN BLACK BEAR, RED PANDA AND MUSK DEER. THE NAMDAPHA NATIONAL PARK IS LOCATED NEAR MIAO. IN FACT, THIS NATIONAL PARK (BETWEEN 200 – 4,500 METERS) IS SINGULAR IN HARBOURING ALL THE FOUR OF THE CAT FAMILY – TIGER, LEOPARD, SNOW LEOPARD AND CLOUDED LEOPARD AND IS LOCATED ON THE INDO-BURMESE BORDER. THE DIFFERENT TRIBAL PEOPLE LIVING IN THIS STATE

SPEAK MORE THAN 60 DIFFERENT LANGUAGES / DIALECTS. THE ADIS, MISHMIS, MONPAS, THONGIS, TAGIN, NISHIS, APATINIS, NOCTES, WANCHOS ARE SOME OF THE MOST IMPORTANT TRIBES. SET IN A BREATHTAKINGLY BEAUTIFUL SETTING AT OVER 3,000 METERS ABOVE SEA LEVEL, THE TAWANG MONASTERY IS ONE OF THE LARGEST IN INDIA. IT HAS 65 RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS AROUND THE MAIN TEMPLE STRUCTURE, HOUSING OVER 500 LAMAS. ANOTHER FAMOUS PILGRIMAGE SPOT IS PARASHURAM KUND, WHICH IS LOCATED AT A LAKE NEAR TEZU. HERE IN MAKAR SANKRANTI THOUSANDS OF PILGRIMS COME TO TAKE A DIP IN THE HOLY WATER. PARASHURAM KUND IS ASSOCIATED WITH LORD PARASHURAM, THE $6^{TH}$ INCARNATION OF LORD VISHNU.

# 47% INDIANS SAY THEY ARE VERY HAPPY

Despite having a huge population of poor people, who would normally be regarded as unhappy as they do not enjoy sufficient "material comforts", 47% Indians regard themselves as VERY HAPPY and another 28% as somewhat happy. This means that a whopping 75% Indians consider themselves to be overall happy. This is according to a recent survey done by India's leading English newsmagazine OUTLOOK, and as carried out in their special new year issue of January $10^{th}$.

It should be stressed over here that sometime back, a similar poll was conducted by an international polling agency to determine which country had the largest percentage of population considering themselves to be happy, and while the rich European countries scored pretty bad, India came out with shining colors. Thus, the

OUTLOOK poll only conforms the result, but only with more interesting statistics:

Hyderabad scored the highest on the overall happiness scale with 92% people saying they were happy, followed by Jaipur (82%), Mumbai (79%) and Ahmedabad (78%).

In contrast, India's fastest growing city and arguably its most westernized with pubs and discotheques, Bangalore had among the lowest score of just 56% people considering themselves happy

Just 19% respondents believe money could buy happiness, but this number shoots up in Bangalore (50%) and Mumbai (41%). In Ranchi, located in economically backward Jharkhand, just 1% people believed that money could buy happiness. In short, people may not be rich but they are contented

Despite the growing westernization and vulgar MTVs, 76% people believe that GOD or a Guru can bring happiness in their lives

52% believed peace of mind will make us happier than good health, workplace success and wealth

Jealousy, backbiting, stress and poor health were regarded as the prime causes of unhappiness

56% believed that people living in villages are happier; 63% believed that a poor man can be happier than a rich man.

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K. L. Gupta
Director

ROOM 1105, 11/FL., ARION COMMERCIAL CENTRE,
2-12 QUEEN'S ROAD WEST, HONG KONG.
TEL : (852) 28152171 (3 LINES)
FAX : (852) 25412742
G.P.O. BOX 6943 H.K.
E-mail : noble@noblehk.com
gupta@noblehk.com

香港皇后大道西2至12號
聯發商業大廈11字樓1105室
電話 : (852) 28152171
圖文傳真 : (852) 25412742
電郵 : noble@noblehk.com
gupta@noblehk.com

**SANDESH BHARATI**

Published quarterly by Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh, Hong Kong
For private circulation only

***Editorial Team***

**Nirmal Laungani, Manoj Kumar Motwani, Haresh Khushi, Vijai Jeandani, Dipak Kumar**

**Sandesh Bharati is distributed free of charge, however, contributions in support of future publications are welcome.**