SANDESH BHARATI

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Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh

[Registered Charitable Society]

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Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (HSS) Hong Kong News

26th Annual Hindu Cultural Orientation Camp

Last year, Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (HSS) completed a silver jubilee in holding camps, and this Easter camp – the 26th to be precise – was held between the 11th – 14th of April, 2009 at the Po Leung Kuk Pak Tam Chung Holiday Camp, located in the picturesque Sai Kung area of New Territories in Hong Kong

HSS holding Easter camps in Hong Kong has become a milestone event in the history of the Hong Kong Indian community. Even those Hindus, who are not that much familiar with the activities conducted by the HSS in Hong Kong, are well aware that we will be busy organizing the camp in the Easter holidays

Like all the previous camps, two teams were divided – one named Surya (SUN) captained by Jainam Mehta, and the other named Chandra (MOON) led by Karthik.

The timetable of the day used to start at 05:30 in the morning with *Prarthana Smaran, YOGASAN, Surya Namaskaar* , various other warm up exercises and games.

Besides the regular Indian games that are always played in each camp, such as the various *Mandal* games, *Lathi* games, *Kabbadi, Kho Kho,* the presence of our Pracharak, Shri Lakshmananji in the camp witnessed many more new games being played this time. The kids also had a great time playing football. This time, for the first time for our camps, the *swayamsevaks* also made full use of the camp amenities, riding on bicycles, playing archery and doing the rope course

The subject of this camp – the Ramayana – was taught by Vijaiji.

Nirmalji conducted two discussion topics, 1) Why Hinduism can be considered as the most unique religion in the world, and 2) Understanding the core beliefs and values of Hinduism – cow worship, vegetarianism, karma and re-incarnation, idol worship, etc…

Dipakji took charge of conducting the camp *geet* which this year was *HEY JANMABHOOMI BHARAT HEY KARMABHOOMI*

BHARAT. He also spoke about India's mission to the moon – the *Chandrayan*

Hareshji and Niteshji also contributed immensely to leading the games

This was the first camp, in which both the teams drew. Surya team won in the games, while Chandra team led in the debates, discussions and cleanliness.

The ideal swayamsevak award this time went to Anuj Hakked, Gaurav won the best sportsman prize and Kartikeya Sharma was judged the upcoming swayamsevak.

It was a great camp, and everyone enjoyed and learnt a lot (SB is also publishing in this issue, what the kids thought about their stay in the camp)

We invite more and more Hindus, especially the youngsters and youth, to participate in our camps and other activities, in order to consolidate Hindu unity and work towards the glory of Bharat Mata and Bharatiya culture.

How I enjoyed the camp

– A look into the views of some of our young participants of Camp'09

I would consider this to be the best HSS camp that I attended. There was so much fun, we played so many games. Not just did we play games, but also learnt so many good facts about India, such as the beauty of Hinduism and yoga. We could find so much leisure time - we did bicycling, basketball and soccer. I just want to say that I feel that the camp is not just to play games, but also

to learn about our culture. I have learnt that Hinduism is the best religion. Besides that, it is also the oldest religion in the world, has got the oldest books in the world and created the numbers system.

- Sahil Shahazadpuri (12 years)

This was my first camp, and I learnt a lot of things, such as the Ramayana, about Indian scientists. We played lots of games, such as ring-o-stick, langdi kabbadi, and many more games. Among the Indian scientists, we learnt about Bhaskaracharya, Aryabhata, etc....In this camp, I also discovered the importance of being disciplined.

– Rohan (12 years)

I have learnt a lot from this camp. I have also enjoyed a lot. I found the Chandrayan lesson very interesting. It taught me a lot about Indian astronomy. I didn't like too much the Samata because we have been doing it every year. Like always, I loved the discussions a lot. Especially, the one that taught me that Hinduism is the greatest religion. It was extremely informative. Of course, I loved the games most of all. Especially, my favorite game, RING-O-STICK. Overall, I loved the camp, and am already waiting for next year to come so that I can attend the camp in Easter, 2010.

- Jainam Mehta (13 years)

I enjoyed the wonderful camp a lot. The games were, as usual, great fun. We also played football with Chinese players and this was a new experience. I learnt a lot abot Chandrayan. I thought a lot about Indian astronomy; the debate and discussions gave me a lot of knowledge. Finding about great Indian scientists was amazing. Learning about JC Bose' s wonderful wireless invention was interesting. I was introduced to many new sitting and mandal games. I made friends with many people. I am happy that I came to the camp, and I will surely come next year.

– Anuj Hakked (13 years)

I think the camp was awesome, because we had games, but most importantly, we learnt a lot about India and Hinduism. We learnt a lot about co-operation and to never give up. The camp facilities and areas were really nice and good. I want to come regularly to shakha and the camps. We had some fights but we co-operated and always found a solution. The lessons were very interesting. And we had a superb time. I hope we can have more regular camps.

- Asokan Senthil (10 years)

The HSS camp was a nice experience. I had loads of fun. We played games, learned lessons, participated in debates and other enjoyable activities. The best game that I enjoy playing is ring-o-stick. We learnt a lot. The best highlight for me was Mittakaal, which was a marching practice. I was in the Chandra team, and it was fun competing against the Surya team. I am going to surely come to the camp next year. It was a wonderful and very interesting camp. I just wish it had not been raining, so that we could have played even more games. The lessons were interesting.

- Abhishek Laungani (10 years)

My first HSS camp was simply great. I got to know about my country, and also about the space programs, religion (Hinduism) and our culture. We learnt that Hinduism is the best religion, and one important reason also is that we never forced others to become Hindu either in the past or present. We also played mandal games and shakha games, such as the memory game and ring-o-stick. I enjoyed very well. Also, my team captain did a good job. I hope that I would also be allowed to come next year.

- Kartikay Sharma (11 years)

SOME PICTURES OF THE CAMP








Shri Mohan Rao Bhagavat is new RSS Sarasanghchalak



Sri Mohan Bhagwat hails from Chandrapur in Vidarbha, Maharashtra. Born on 11 September 1950 Sri Bhagwat obtained his graduation in Veterenary Sciences and Animal Husbandry (BVSc) from Punjabrao Krishi Vidyapeeth, Akola, Maharashtra. Hailing from a family that had strong RSS roots (his father was the Prant Pracharak of Gujarat for some time) Sri Bhagwat left his Masters course in Veterinary Sciences towards the fag end to plunge into the Sangh work as a Pracharak. He became a Pracharak towards the end of 1975 at the time of the infamous Emergency.

After working underground during Emergency he became the Pracharak of Akola in 1977 and subsequently rose to become Pracharak of Nagpur and Vidarbha region. He was elevated to Akhil Bharatiya Saha Shareerik Pramukh in 1987 and subsequently became Akhil Bharatiya Shareerik Pramukh in 1991, the post he held till 1999. In 1999 he

was made the Akhil Bharatiya Pracharak Pramukh for one year.

In 2000, when Prof. Rajendra Singhji and Sri H.V. Seshadriji decided to step down as Sarsanghachalak and Sarkaryavah respectively due to health reasons Sri K.S. Sudarshanji was nominated as the new Sarsanghachalak and Sri Mohan Bhagwat got elected to the post of Sarkaryavah for three years. He got re-elected to the office of Sarkaryavah on the next two successive occasions in 2003 and 2006.

During his long career of 28 years as Pracharak he travelled extensively in and outside Bharat and guided countless activities and activists.

He was nominated by Sri K.S. Sudarshanji to succeed as the Sarsanghachalak during the Akhil Bharatiya Pratinidhi Sabha which held its meeting on 20-22 March 2009 at Nagpur. Sri Mohan Bhagwat became the 6th Sarsanghachalak of the RSS.

सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः ।

सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु मा कस्चिद्दुःखभाक् भवेत् ॥ ७ ॥

sarve bhavantu sukhinaḥ sarve santu nirāmayāḥ

sarve bhadrāṇi paśyantu mā kascidduḥkhabhāk bhavet

Let all be happy. Let all be free from diseases. Let all see auspicious things and positive in all. Let no body suffer from grief.

Justice of the Peace in New Zealand

Guna Magesan, the general secretary of the Hindu Council of New Zealand, is now a Justice of the Peace in New Zealand.

Dr Magesan , a senior scientist at Scion Research in Rotorua, was sworn in on May 20 as a JP, making him the only JP on the Crown Research Institute' s Rotorua campus.

Dr Magesan has served the community for many years through his work with several organisations and trusts. Guna' s work on youth development and Hindu-Maori relations are well recognised.

He was the Liaison person for the 7th Joint Conference on " Preservation of Ancient Cultures and the Globalisation Scenario" jointly organised by School of Maori and Pacific Development (Waikato University) and International Centre for Cultural Studies (India).

He helped in releasing a book on " Indo-Maori cultures" in Rotorua. Last year he organised NZ Hindu conference that was inaugurated by respected Te Arikinui King Tuheitia, the Maori King.

Dr Magesan was also instrumental in organising the inaugural Hindu Youth Conference held on May 2 at the Hindu Heritage Centre in Mangere.

" I enjoy organising the annual Marae stay for the Indian community because it gives them an opportunity to experience and learn about Maori culture and heritage"

Dr Magesan said. Now it has now become part of the Rotorua Deepawali Festival that he co-ordinates.

In fact, it was the community groups that encouraged him to become a JP. He is also the chairperson for the Rotorua GlobalFest Trust. In the past he has served as vice-president of the Rotorua Ethnic Council and a Trustee of the Indigo Festival Trust, Hamilton, and the Multi-cultural Services Trust. They all provided him with letters of support. Scion also gave a support letter.

JPs are appointed by the Governor-General on the recommendation of the Minister of Justice, following a nomination by the local Member of Parliament.

A JP' s duties fall into two categories: ministerial and judicial. All JPs have to undertake ministerial duties, but they can also opt to do the judicial functions, which include issuing arrest warrants and sitting in a judicial capacity in court.

Dr Magesan elected to provide ministerial duties only, such as: witnessing signatures, certifying documents and taking affidavits or affirmations.

Dr Magesan was sworn in at a ceremony at the Rotorua High Court, he was presented with a certificate, a stamp, and " Royal Federation of Justices New Zealand" badge from Pat Lawrence, vice-president of Rotorua and Districts Justices of the Peace Association.

First New Zealand Hindu Youth Conference - Modern living with traditional values

Parliamentarian Kanwaljit Singh Bakshi mentioned that he was proud to be a Hindu and he would like members of the Hindu community to be proud of being a Hindu.

The aim of the conference was to celebrate the identity of Hindu youth and to ensure that Hindu youth develop into productive citizens. It is by creating awareness about opportunities to channelise their energy in a constructive way so as to contribute and facilitate social cohesion and economic prosperity of New Zealand.

The Hindu Youth Foundation, a division of Hindu Council, New Zealand, organised the first New Zealand Hindu Youth Conference at Hindu Heritage Centre, Mangere, Auckland on May 2. The theme of the conference was "Living in Modern New Zealand with Traditional Values". The guests and dignitaries were welcomed in traditional Hindu way by placing a tilak on their forehead.

The conference started with lighting of the traditional lamps by special guests. Maori Elder, Haare Williams, blessed the conference with a Maori karakia (prayer and blessing) and Swami Vigyananand blessed the occasion with a Vedic prayer. In his speech, Haare Williams said youth are like flower buds and need to be nurtured and looked after.

Welcoming the participants, the conference coordinator Smt Pritika Sharma mentioned that the Hindu youth conference was the first step towards building a stronger and dynamic youth network based on principles of Hindu

civilisation; and to network with other like-minded organisations. “Encouraging and retaining the cultural heritage and individual identities of various ethnic communities, makes New Zealand so unique and diverse,” she said.

The aim of the conference was to celebrate the identity of Hindu youth and to ensure that Hindu youth develop into productive citizens. It is by creating awareness about opportunities to channelise their energy in a constructive way so as to contribute and facilitate social cohesion and economic prosperity of New Zealand.

More than 130 delegates participated in the conference. Six parliamentarians including Pansy Wong, the Minister for Ethnic Affairs & the Minister of Women’s Affairs; Phil Goff, Leader of the Opposition, and the former Minister of Foreign Affairs; Chris Carter, former Minister for Ethnic Affairs & the Minister of Education; and Members of Parliament Dr Rajen Prasad, Kanwaljit Singh Bakshi, and Su’a William Sio, participated in the inaugural session. There were also a number of special invitees (Government and non-government agencies), community and business leaders, and members of the Hindu Elders Foundation who participated in the event. Their participation was heart warming and boosted the morale of Hindu youth. The buzz at the conference was that positive development of Hindu youth is vital towards building a stronger and more dynamic New Zealand society.

Speeches delivered by youth leaders Meena Lakshmanan, Nikita Sharma and Deepal Singh were well received and drew enthusiastic applause from the audience. In her presentation, Smt Meena Lakshmanan said youth is the life force of a nation, or society; youth is the strength; youth is wealth. “When you study the nature of the young mind, you will find them a born rebel, born revolutionary or born reformer, sometimes all rolled in one,” she said.

She also mentioned that in terms of youth power "Hindu civilisation is the youngest!" because 700 million Hindus are below the age of 35; 560 millions are below the age of 25; 350 millions are below the age of 19; and 250 millions are below the age of 14. The Hindu youth power will continue to contribute to the world's peace, progress and prosperity.

Smt Nitika Sharma mentioned that Hindu Dharma is dynamic and so are Hindu youth. She called upon the Hindu youth to be comfortable and proud of their cultural heritage. "The confidence comes from who you are, where you come from and how you have made a positive contribution to society you have lived in," she said. In her well researched article, she mentioned that despite the challenges faced in New Zealand, Hindu youth are very well placed in New Zealand community by showing some interesting facts obtained from Statistics New Zealand. In percentage terms, Hindu youth have almost twice the bachelor and post-graduate degrees, and twice the roles as administrators and managers, when compared to rest of the population.

Smt. Deepal Singh, in her presentation, emphasised four stages of globalisation of culture: start with facing the "unknown" – Phase 1; excitement upon arrival, everything is new and wonderful – Phase 2; homesickness, frustration, fear where depression may occur – Phase 3; Beginning to adjust, making friends, and participating in activities – Phase 4. She defined culture as "the shared patterns of behaviours and interactions". This shared patterns-identity helps in distinguishing one group from another group.

All speakers praised the efforts of the Hindu youth leadership in terms of putting the conference together, and for their positive contributions for the overall development of the country. Pansy Wong said New

Zealand is the land of opportunities, and those who dare to dream will be able to realise their aspirations, by giving a personal example of herself – the first ethnic community member becoming a Cabinet Minister in New Zealand Government. Parliamentarian Kanwaljit Singh Bakshi mentioned that he was proud to be a Hindu and he would like members of the Hindu community to be proud of being a Hindu.

This also gave the service providers an opportunity to guide and support Hindu youth to enable them to achieve their full potential. The discussion panel was chaired by Rohan Jaduram (Human Rights Commission). The government agencies that participated in the panel were Ministry of Youth Development (MYD), Ministry of Social Development (MSD), New Zealand Police, Office of Ethnic Affairs (OEA) and Child Youth and Families (CYF). MYD offered Hindu Youth Foundation to join Provoke (a youth network); MSD offered Project Planning workshops; and HRC invited Hindu youth to the diversity forum and annual Outward Bound Multi Ethnic Leadership course.

The New Zealand Hindu Students Forum, for university students, was launched during the conference.

In the Hindu community, elders play an important role in shaping the youth – the future generation. As soon as the youth conference was announced, the Hindu Elders Foundation came forward to help in all areas. All delegates, speakers and participants gave their best input and efforts to make this a worthwhile conference.

(FOC)

Cover Story

THE GREATNESS OF HINDUISM…..

(Based on the talk given by Nirmal Laungani in the HSS CAMP'09, which had taken place during the Easter holidays)

It is a common sentiment for one to consider one's religion as the best, though many Hindus make the claim that all religions are equal. Herewith, we will discuss those unique points, on the basis of which we could safely consider Hinduism to be the most special, **if not the greatest**, religion in the world

~ **IT IS ETERNAL –** One of the names of our religion is SANATAN DHARMA, which literally translates into the ETERNAL FAITH; never was there a time in the history of mankind or of this world, when Sanatan Dharma did not exist and never will there be such a time when it will not exist. In fact, GOD created TIME and the eternal Vedic scriptures, so this means that Hinduism is not time - bound. Another name of Hinduism is also VEDIC DHARMA

~ **THE MESSAGE IS FOR ALL HUMANITY –** The message of Hinduism is for the entire world. Hinduism does not divide the world into "believers and non-believers" and there is no exclusive club of followers that alone can reach heaven. When Lord Krishna preached the Bhagwad Geeta to Arjun, he never claimed that spiritual benefits were only open to Hindus or Indians. Long before the world became aware of the concept of internationalism, or the idea of countries' working together (League of Nations / United Nations), the ancient Vedic scriptures had boldly declared ***Vasudeva Kutumbakam*** – "the whole world is one family". A very powerful name of Hinduism is Manav Dharam – which

translates into the religion for humanity. What to speak of human beings, Hinduism even abhors killing of animals for flesh (being the source of vegetarianism), and Hindus are supposed to even treat animals with dignity.

- TOTAL EQUALITY, INCLUDING GENDER EQUALITY – According to Hinduism, spiritual life begins when a person realizes that he is not this body, but the soul. And the soul, being a spiritual being, is not black in color or white, brown or mixed, so there cannot be any basis for racial discrimination. In fact, Megasthenes, the famous Greek ambassador to India during the reign of Chandragupta Maurya about 2,300 years back, writes that slavery did not exist in India. This shows the total equality, as propounded in our scriptures, and as observed in ancient India.

Besides that, the soul is neither male nor female – so where is the question of who is superior? Even otherwise, Hinduism is the only religion where the divinity is also worshipped as SARASWATI, LAKSHMI, DURGA and other forms of the Goddess. Also, Hindus have always worshipped PARVATI with SHIV, RADHA with KRISHNA and LAKSHMI with VISHNU, etc. Thus, Hinduism is the only religion in the world which is not male – centric. Women have always been held in high esteem in our religion. Manu-Samhita says, "Where women are honored, there the gods are pleased; but where they are not honored, no sacred rite yields rewards. Where the female relations live in grief, the family soon wholly perishes; but that family where they are not unhappy ever prospers". Furthermore, according to the Atharva Veda, when a woman is invited into the family through marriage, she enters "as a river enters the sea" and "to rule there along with her husband, as a queen, over the other members of the family". The Vedic hymns were also revealed by great

women saints, such as Lopamudra, Romahsa, Gargi, Ghosa, etc.

- TOLERATION TOWARDS OTHER RELIGIONS – Even most non- Hindus agree that Hinduism is most tolerant – GOD is not regarded as jealous or vengeful. The Vedic scriptures define GOD as SAT CHID ANAND (meaning truth + consciousness + bliss); Hindu kings or priests never forced or coerced anyone to become a Hindu. Even when Hinduism spread across the length and breadth of South-East Asia, and when Hindu kings ruled these countries, not a single instance was recorded, where any non-Hindu subject suffered discrimination. Even, the great Hindu king, Shivaji Maharaj who was fighting against the Mughals, the Bijapur Sultans and the Portugese enemies (who destroyed temples and forced many Hindus to convert), was praised by hostile Muslim chroniclers that he always respected Islam, even describing an incident when some Muslim religious books were honorably returned to the mosque. Hindus are most tolerant and maintain respect towards others faiths.

- OPEN MINDEDNESS AND FREEDOM IN WORSHIP – There is a complete democracy within the Hindu religion; some worship GOD as impersonal, others in the personal deity form Most Hindus visit temples and take part in various rituals, while others simply spend time in meditation. Some consider *Gyaan* as the preferred method to realize GOD, whereas others would regard *Bhakti* as the best way. For some, the Ramayana is the most important scripture, while to the others it is the Bhagwat Purana or the Shiv Purana. The Bhagwad Geeta is considered by most Hindus to be the most venerated scripture, as it was spoken directly by Lord Krishna to Arjun, yet others would give more importance to the various Upanishads. There are also many Hindus who

would consider all forms of the divinity and all scriptures to be equally placed. Yet, despite the supposed differences, our first identity is that we are Hindus, integral followers of the Vedic Dharma / Sanatan Dharma

- HINDUISM IS MOST LIBERAL – One reason why Hindus living abroad have done so well for themselves, have prospered in business and as professionals, have rarely got into trouble with the law, and are considered ideal citizens by the Governments of the countries that they reside in, has got something to do with our liberal culture – "Let noble thoughts come to us from all sides" so said the Rig Veda, considered the first Veda. Thus, Hindus have integrated with many different cultures and societies in the world, trying to take the good from other cultures, while at the same time remained firm in retaining and preserving their own culture and traditions

- THE MOST ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY RELIGION –

a) Says the Atharva Veda "The earth is our mother and we are all her children". The Rig Veda says "Do not cut trees because they remove pollution". The Yajur Veda declares, "Do not disturb the sky and do not pollute the atmosphere". And once again, the Atharva Veda declares, "We invoke all supporting Earth on which trees, lords of forest, stand ever firm." The Mahabharat describes Yuddhisthira telling his subjects not to cut trees more than it is essentially needed. From the ancient scriptures, we can thus learn that Hinduism demonstrates an ecological awareness and great respect for the natural world. Ancient Hindus felt the Supreme Being's presence in everything around them, and thus lived in harmony with GOD's creation, including the earth, the rivers and the forests.

Thus the modern environmentalists can find great solace and backing from the Hindu scriptures.

b) Even otherwise, the Vedic religion propogates a vegetarian lifestyle, and as it is well known, rearing animals to be killed for slaughter puts tremendous pressure on earth's limited resources of water, clean air and land. According to a report by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (of 2006), livestock use 30% of the earth's land surface, including 33% of the global arable land used to producing feed for livestock, plus livestock generates 18% more greenhouse gas emissions than transportation.

c) Finally, Hindus cremate their dead, and this also saves precious land. This is one reason why many in the West from a non-Hindu background also cremate, rather than bury their dead

- MOST LOGICAL UNDERSTANDING OF "WHY WE ARE HERE IN THIS WORLD, "WHERE DO WE GO AFTER THIS LIFE" AND "WHY IS THERE SUFFERING" – Many people question that if GOD is all-loving and caring, why does HE allow so much suffering to take place? Why is there so much unhappiness? Why is there so much unfairness, where some people are billionaires whereas others can't even eat two meals a day? Hinduism provides very logical and precise answers to this. **Whichever** body we get – man/woman or animal, Chinese or African, **whatever** unhappiness we suffer or happiness that we enjoy, **whether** we are born in an aristocratic family or a poor one, is all due to the results of our own *karma,* which is the sum of one's actions and the force that determines our next re-incarnation. As mentioned earlier, the very first understanding should be that we are not this material body, but the eternal soul, which transmigrates from one body to the other. So, actually it is our own past actions that have led us to "occupy" our current

body, and it will be an accumulation of our past and present deeds that will take us to our next destination. Many intellectuals from non-Indian / non-Hindu background, who otherwise may be skeptic of religion in general, find this core belief of Hinduism to be extremely logical and realistic. With this explanation, one can understand that GOD is neutral, and does not interfere with the results of our *karma* (**though it is also a fact that GOD can alleviate or reduce the bad *karmas* of those who perform devotion**). This understanding also makes us realize that it is upon us to be careful not to do any bad actions, as bad deeds may not even guarantee us the body of a human being in the next life – we may even get the body of an insect or animal. We should therefore always strive to perform good and noble deeds. The cycle of continuous life and death only comes to a stop when one becomes totally detached from the results of one's activities – finally achieving *Mukti / Moksha /* a place in the spiritual world (**in Hinduism, heaven and hell are only temporary destinations, not the ultimate)**

- NO CONFLICT WITH SCIENCE: It is generally accepted that Hinduism is the only religion which is in tune with science (though of course, science does not accept a creator, and Hinduism does).It is a very vast subject and not possible to cover in this article, but a very brief introduction from an article, "Hinduism and Science" written by the late T.D.Singh (**former Director, Bhaktivedanta Institute; former President, Vedanta and Science Educational Research Foundation)** is given here "**Vedanta, the scientific and theological doctrine of Hinduism, explains that in principle there is no conflict between science and religion. In fact, the two fields are complementary. This is because of the understanding that the domain of each realm is well-defined. In Hinduism there are two categories of knowledge – (i) *para vidya* – the spiritual knowledge and (ii) *apara vidya* - material**

knowledge. Scientifc knowledge is the realm of *apara vidya*. Spiritual knowledge - knowledge of God and life - belongs to *para vidya.* Hinduism points out that scientific knowledge can lead to spiritual knowledge…it's scientific and intellectual contents have attracted the attention of some of the world's finest scientific and philosophical minds, such as Erwin Schrödinger, Robert Oppenheimer, Albert Einstein, and Aldous Huxley. It speaks of billions of years of history, creation of the universe, medicinal science, metallurgy, space travel, embryology, art, music, etc. It is no exaggeration to say that there is almost no branch of knowledge that is left untouched in the Vedas. There are five core features in Hinduism: (1) God – *Isvara*, (2) Soul – *Jiva*, (3) Time – *Kala*, (4) Matter – *Prakriti*, and (5) Action – *Karma*. Of these the first four principles are eternal whereas the last feature is temporary. Based on these principles, Hinduism provides a deep knowledge and understanding of life and the universe. In its pure form, Hinduism is also known as *Sanatana Dharma* or the eternal function of the living entity…….Vedantic worldview in reference to many of modern science's perspectives *include* the subjects of mind, consciousness, embryology, epistemology and cosmology" (the entire article- **http://www.metanexus.net/conference2005/pdf/td_singh.pdf**

- ANCIENT HINDUS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE WORLD: This is also a very vast topic, but we present a quick list of some very few achievements to the Hindus (most of this list has been sourced / derived from www.hindusarise.com)

- First people to calculate the age of the universe in billions of years
- Idea of cyclical universe, creation and destruction

- First to have knowledge of earth's rotation, and the ability to calculate eclipses
- First to correctly calculate the earth's circumference
- Invented the zero, numerical and the decimal system
- Invented algebra, geometry and trigonometry)
- Originators of the "Taylor" series for sin, cos, tan inverse, pi before the Europeans
- Usage of Pythagorean Theorem, and quadratic formula before Europe
- First to learn how to solve simultaneous equations
-First people to theorise about the water cycle
-Ability to build an iron pillar that hasn't rusted for 2000 years
- Invented stainless steel
- Built some of the strongest weapons/armor in the ancient world
- Preliminary ideas about the atom (called anu in Sanskrit)
- First to theorise that water can be broken into Hydrogen and Oxygen
- The Vedic scriptures have many descriptions of airships / planes *(VIMANAS)* and the ancient Rishi, Bharadwaj's massive book, Yantra Sarvaswam has one section devoted to aeronautics – named Vaimanik Prakaran, containing 8 chapters, hundred topics and 500 sutras, proving that air technology came from the ancient Hindus. Another great book, Samarangana Sutradhara, written at least 1,000 years back has chapters completely devoted to describing the various airships and aeroplanes
- Navigation began with the Hindus, the very word navigation being derived from the Sanskrit *Navagatih.* The Vedic scriptures refer to ancient Hindus traveling across the oceans in huge ships
- The first to study the human anatomy
- First surgery

- Knowledge of how to cure cataracts (opthomological surgery)
- First people to do rhinoplasty (plastic surgery)
- Invention of Ayurveda which contains knowledge on thousands of medicinal herbs, and a holistic approach to medicine - Ayurvedic remedies destroy the source rather than cure the disease, so although they worked gradually, they didn't have any side effects.
- Ability to heal bones without casts
- Advanced forms of meditation had the ability to alter the rate of metabolism of the yogi, allowing them to survive in the harshness of the Himalayas with little clothing.
- Advanced Yoga can even help lower blood pressure, blood sugar.
- First people to work on Veterinary Medicine
- Knew that trees absorbed water from the roots
- The World's first university was established in Takshashila in 700BC. More than 10,500 students from all over the world studied more than 60 subjects

- WHAT GREAT INTELLECTUALS SAID ABOUT HINDUISM?

"Hinduism has proven much more open than any other religion to new ideas, scientific thought, and social experimentation. Many concepts like reincarnation, meditation, yoga and others have found worldwide acceptance. It would not be surprising to find Hinduism the dominant religion of the twenty-first century. It would be a religion that doctrinally is less clear-cut than mainstream Christianity, politically less determined than Islam, ethically less heroic than Buddhism, but it would offer something to everybody. It will appear idealistic to those who look for idealism, pragmatic to the pragmatists, spiritual to the seekers, sensual to the here-and-now

generation" *Klaus L. Klostermaier, Professer Religious Studies at the University of Manitoba, former director of Oxford Centre Of Hindu Studies*

"The Hindu religion is the only one of the world's great faiths dedicated to the idea that the Cosmos itself undergoes an immense, indeed an infinite, number of deaths and rebirths. It is the only religion in which the time scales correspond, to those of modern scientific cosmology. Its cycles run from our ordinary day and night to a day and night of Brahma, 8.64 billion years long" *Dr. Carl Sagan, (1934-1996) famous astrophysicist.*

"It was my advanced research in physics that had started me on a spiritual quest. It culminated in me accepting the non-dualism or absolute monism of Shankara as my philosophy of life and science. You are fortunate to inherit such knowledge. I envy you. While Greece is the country of my birth, India is the country of my soul. *Queen Fredricka of Greece (1931- 1981) The wife of King Paul of Greece.*

"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 none so spiritual that 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 wither 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 Besant (1847 – 1933)*

"India had the start of the whole world in the beginning of things. She had the first civilization; she had the first accumulation of material wealth; she was populous with

deep thinkers and subtle intellects; she had mines, and woods, and a fruitful soul. Our most valuable and most instructive materials in the history of man are treasured up in India. Land of religions, cradle of human race, birthplace of human speech, grandmother of legacy, great grandmother of tradition. The land that all men desire to see and having seen once even a glimpse, would not give that glimpse for the shows of the rest of the globe combined." *- Mark Twain (1835-1910)*

"The Hindu mind represents humanity's oldest and most continuous stream of conscious intelligence on the planet. Hindu sages, seers, saints, yogis and jnanis have maintained an unbroken current of awareness linking humanity with the Divine since the dawn of history, and as carried over from earlier cycles of civilization in previous humanities unknown to our present spiritually limited culture. The Hindu mind has a vision of eternity and infinity. It is aware of the vast cycles of creation and destruction that govern the many universes and innumerable creatures within them" *David Frawley*

"Whenever I have read any part of the Vedas, I have felt that some unearthly and unknown light illuminated me. In the great teaching of the Vedas, there is no touch of sectarianism. It is of all ages, climes and nationalities and is the royal road for the attainment of the Great Knowledge. When I am at it, I feel that I am under the spangled heavens of a summer night". *Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862) American Philosopher, Unitarian, and writer.*

"HINDUISM AND THE VEDIC LITERATURE HAS MANY DIRECT WORDS AND INSTRUCTIONS FROM GOD - The Vedic literature is filled with stories and conversations of instruction, and many of those instructions are given directly by God or one of His many incarnations.

Other spiritual paths may provide a few commandments that are said to be given by God, or books given by His representatives or prophets. And these certainly can be helpful for the guidance of mankind. However, no where else but in the Vedic scripture do we find such a collection of direct instructions given by Lord Krishna, Lord Vishnu, or the Lord's other forms that direct us in explicit methods of reaching spiritual realizations and perfection. No where else can you find such lofty and spiritual advice as that related in books like the *Bhagavad-gita*, or the *Bhagavat Purana* and other numerous Vedic texts. No culture or religion has anything that compares, or that go far beyond basic moralistic rules to provide the higher principles of direct spiritual realization. These instructions are a scientific process in which the results are assured to cleanse our minds and purify our hearts, if we sincerely follow the formula. *Stephen Knapp in "Why Be a Hindu – The advantages of the Vedic Path"*

Sanskrit: A global language to be proud of

By Achyut Railkar

Sanskrit is the oldest and the living language on our planet. We see its wonderful history passing through many millennia. It is the language of the most ancient Indian scriptures belonging to various faiths and it is the language of divinity.

Sanskrit was introduced on the earth, by the eternal sages along with Vedas, Upanishads, Yogashastras and Puranas. A plethora of such ancient texts mostly in verses represent highly civilised life, creativity of the Indian mind and spiritual tradition which is unique in its scope, depth and

vitality. It has provided the basis of India's civilisation unity.

About 2,600 years ago, the sage Panini had re-established the science of Sanskrit grammar in his Ashtadhayi and even today it is considered as the standard authority. Westerners describe Sanskrit as one of the greatest productions of the human mind. The philologists term it as an ideal scientific work; the grammarians have identified it to be the mother of most Indo-European languages, and also of Persian, Kurdish or Armenian.

Research scholars have identified around 90 languages of the world, especially English, Greek, Latin and Arabic to have either directly or indirectly derived words from Sanskrit; it has been noticed by Dr Varhadpande that about 25 per cent of the words in English have emerged from Sanskrit.

Sanskrit and related languages have influenced Sino-Tibetan-speaking neighbours through the spread of translated Buddhist texts. Buddhism has also spread to China and thereafter to Japan and Korea by the missionaries mostly through translations of Buddhist hybrid Sanskrit and classical Sanskrit texts and was directly added to the Chinese vocabulary. The Thai language contains many loan words from Sanskrit. Many such loan words are also found in traditional Malay, modern Indonesian, numerous Philippine languages, Javanese language (nearly half) and to a lesser extent, Vietnamese, through hybrid Sanskrit.

It has abundant literature of poetry, drama and philosophy and has produced outstanding personalities such as Kalidasa, Banabhatt, Bharavi, Bhaskaracharya, Chanakya, and Adishankaracharya etc, equivalent to great lives in the

world. It is a misconception that Sanskrit is concerned only with spiritual wisdom. Its texts cover the entire gamut of human activity including fine arts, branches of science, and literature. Hence it is a foundation for a global language of consciousness, any modern science and spiritual science.

The two great epics Ramayana and Mahabharata were originally written in Sanskrit have influenced many people for a long time. The famous German poet Goethe was very much impressed about them. Regarding the play Mrichchakatikam enacted in New York with English rendering in 1924, the dramatic critic JW Crutch says, “Such a play could be produced only by a civilisation which has reached stability.” The famous Indologist Max Muller said, “Sanskrit is the greatest language of the world. Many world personalities love Bhagawat Gita for its teachings on liberation through renunciation.”

There are many mottos in Sanskrit which have been readily adopted, like: Republic of India, Satyameva Jayate “Truth alone triumphs”; LIC of India Yogakshemam Vahâmyaham “I shall take care of welfare”; Indian Navy Shanno Varuna “May the ocean be peaceful to us”; Mumbai Police Sadrakshanaaya Khlaha Nigrahanayah “For protection of the good and control of the wicked”; All India Radio Bahujan Hitay Bahujan Sukhay “For the benefit of all, for the comfort of all”; Indonesian Navy Jalesvava Jayamahe “On the sea, we are glorious”. The first two stanzas of our national song Vande Mataram are in Sanskrit.

The Vedanta philosophy enshrined in our Constitution, needs to be fully understood, a process in which Sanskrit has a crucial role to play. Today there is tremendous international interest in the science of yoga, meditation,

eastern philosophy, stress management and holistic medicine. All of them have roots in Sanskrit literature. The language has many koshas (lexicons). Amarsinh's Amarkosha (600 AD) has around 3,000 thesaurus shlokas (entries); later on many more koshas were added like Ekakshar (single letter words), Dwarthkosha (double meaning words), etc.

Sanskrit is the only language available that has the letters and sounds to make up the powerful mantra. No other language can meet the power and energy of the true divine sound. Chanting mantras means that you and others around will always be protected. Other languages may have rhythm, harmony and poetic sounds but Sanskrit has all of that plus more.

Sanskrit has direct link between sound and signs; it has sandhi (coalescence) and samas (compound word) that will facilitate flow of the language. It has unique pronunciation of its alphabets. The chanting of Sanskrit text makes anybody achieve clear-cut voice. Its sentence structure is flexible as order of the words does not matter. It is systematised and perfect and its alphabets are impeccably arranged. It has written rules of grammar, phonetics, etymology and epistemology; it has power of forming infinite number of words and many are used in computers; in the language both, brevity and elaboration are possible. Because of its relatively high regular structure, it is claimed to be applicable in the modern computers for the machine translation and other areas of natural language processing.

Aligarh Muslim University, Kashmir University and madarsas of Delhi, Tamil Nadu, and West Bengal have Sanskrit teaching section. Our past leaders Lokmanya Tilak, Swatantryavir Savarkar and famous economist CD

Deshmukh used to correspond in Sanskrit among their colleagues.

There have been numerous attempts at reviving Sanskrit in terms of preservation of its literature and making it popular. Since 1981 Sanskrit Bharati, have been conducting Sanskrit camps and their efforts met with huge success. It claims that now there are over four million people around the world who can speak the language.

Even in the last two centuries, due to the rapid advances in technology and science, Sanskrit abundant with new and improvised vocabulary has come into existence. Furthermore, there are at least a dozen periodicals published in Sanskrit, all-India news broadcast in Sanskrit. Television shows and feature movies are produced in Sanskrit. A village Ziri of 3,000 inhabitants in Madhya Pradesh and Mattur village in central Karnataka communicate through Sanskrit alone. There are countless smaller intellectual communities and many schools and universities where Sanskrit is fostered throughout India. "Contemporary Sanskrit" is hence alive.

The former President Dr Abdul Kalam was greeted in Sanskrit when he had been to Athens (Greece) in 2007. 2,300 students of MIT in US received their degrees amid chants of Sanskrit prayers in 2005. A British school in the heart of London has made Sanskrit a compulsory subject for its junior division because it helps students grasp mathematics, science and other languages better. The Indian guided missile programme commenced in 1983 by DRDO has named the five missiles as Prithvi, Agni, Akash, Nag and Trishul. India's first modern fighter aircraft is named Hal Tejas (spirited instrument) and the first satellite over the moon as Chandrayan I. Recently, Sanskrit also made a brief appearance in western pop music especially

for devotion to a higher power and a wish for peace on earth.

Sanskrit lovers from various countries met and agreed to form the International Association of Sanskrit Studies (IASS). They have Vedanta guided motto Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam meaning the whole planet is one family. They held the first world Sanskrit conference at New Delhi in March 1972. Fourteenth world conference is proposed to be held this year during 1st to 5th September, 2009 at Kyoto (Japan).

Sanskrit is the heart of India and mind for the globe. It is a 'world language' in the real sense of the term. But for the access to India's pristine glory, rich tradition and a vast literature of science and philosophy, one has to learn Sanskrit with dedication. It has inspired many Indian and global personalities. What needs to be done is to promote Sanskrit education at elementary level and link it to the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. There are enough universities for Sanskrit but root is needed to be strengthened.

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The birthday of Lord Rama was celebrated at the House of Commons

Source: www.hinducounciluk.org

LONDON, UK, April 4, 2009: The birthday of Lord Rama was celebrated at the House of Commons on Monday, as the Members' Dining Room was turned into a Mandir for the afternoon. Over 200 invited guests sang bhajans and watched

Aarti performed by two young children, as Hindus from many different traditions celebrated the festival beneath the flag of Lord Hanuman.

The fifth annual event of its kind, the festival was once again hosted by Tony McNulty MP and Abhay Lakhani, Parliamentary Advisor on Community Issues. “Today we are here to celebrate Ram Noumi in this majestic building, the Mother of all Parliaments, the Palace of Westminster,” said Abhay Lakhani. “It is absolutely right that we celebrate the birth of Lord Ram here. He was the Law-Maker himself.”

Reminding visitors that such **an event would not be possible in the Indian Parliament**, Mr Lakhani suggested the festival proved we live in a nation which truly values its Hindu brothers and sisters, a nation which demonstrates the principles of Ram Rajya in practice.

Anil Bhanot, General Secretary of the Hindu Council UK, was invited to speak at the event and he too highlighted how British representative democracy embodies the aspirations of Ram Rajya. He said, “We need to always apply ancient wisdom to run our fast moving modern living, and that we can learn a lot from the principles that Lord Rama governed with.” Sanjay Jagatia, General Secretary of the National Council of Hindu Temples reminded us of the loving devotion held for Lord Rama in the hearts of all Hindus.

Several other MPs attended the event. Baroness Verma also came from the House of Lords. All praised and welcomed the enormous role of Hindus within the UK, mentioning Hindu contributions to the economy, cultural diversity and moral values.

BJP at crossroads: Back to basics or irrelevance?

Virendra Parekh

25 May 2009
http://www.vijayvaani.com/FrmPublicDisplayArticle.aspx?id=593

"Many of us, utterly overcome by Tamas, the dark and heavy demon of inertia, are saying nowadays that it is impossible, that India is decayed, bloodless and lifeless, too weak ever to recover; that our race is doomed to extinction. It is a foolish and idle saying. No man or nation need be weak unless he so chooses, no man or nation need perish unless he deliberately chooses extinction" - Aurobindo, "Bhawani Mandir"

"One who may die but will not perish has life everlasting" - Lao Tse

Following the stunning defeat of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the recent Lok Sabha elections, the secularist commentariat lost no time in advising the BJP to eradicate once and for all the remaining traces of Hindutva from its thinking and programmes and move to a centrist position.

The carrot is: this will enable the party to win more allies and overcome the limitations of its vote base. The stick: the alternative is to play to its core support base by emphasising the party's point of difference with the Congress and others on the secularism issue and indeed to seek polarisation on this count. The latter course might enthuse party cadres but will stunt BJP's growth and confine its seat share in Parliament to double digits.

The advice is not new. It resurfaces every time BJP suffers electoral reverses. It is renewed now that the BJP's

strength in the Lok Sabha has declined by about 15 percent to just 116 seats (its lowest tally in two decades) and its vote share dropped to barely 18 percent, a good 10 percentage points short of the Congress score. These results are conveniently interpreted as "defeat of Hindu chauvinism," "rejection of communal agenda" and so on. The situation is described as an "existential dilemma" which can be resolved only by a determined divorce from Hindutva.

The alternative explanation - that BJP might have been rejected by the people for not being "chauvinist" or "communal" enough - never occurs to those offering this unsolicited advice. "Mr. (Varun) Gandhi has swept a polarised Pilibhit, but the party has done poorly in Uttar Pradesh.

Indeed, even in Mr. (Narendra) Modi's Gujarat, the difference between the BJP vote and the Congress vote is barely 3 percentage points," points out an edit writer gleefully. What if the whole of Uttar Pradesh had seen polarization? How many more seats could BJP have won in UP without Varun Gandhi? What if Mr. Modi could polarize Gujarati votes as he has done in the past?

BJP will be courting certain death if it were to heed the secularists' advice. For the advice is not objective and well-meaning but interested and partisan, motivated by a burning desire for total disarmament of Hindu society ideologically, morally and politically.

Yet the critics have a point: BJP cannot avoid taking a hard look at itself without risking total irrelevance and terminal decline. Its 'success' in persuading Mr. L.K. Advani to continue as Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha for a while has only exposed its weakness. It has

postponed the day of reckoning to prevent exposure of the faultlines in its central leadership. But sooner rather than later, it has to come to terms with the reality that the Vajpayee-Advani era is truly over.

The real challenge before the BJP, however, is not to find a successor to Mr. Advani but to rediscover its own original self, to compare what it aspired to be in its original incarnation with what it has made of itself through decades, and chart out a course of self-renewal which would restore its credibility and relevance.

Ever since it tasted power in Delhi, BJP has been consistently diluting its commitment to Hindutva to broaden its political base, to win and retain allies and to win acceptability and respectability in secularist circles. Commentators on this website (Sandhya Jain, Radha Rajan, B.R. Haran) have described in graphic detail BJP's degeneration into a Congress B-team in its futile chase of a secular label.

It is amazing that BJP has been fighting a life and death battle as per rules framed by its inveterate enemies. Instead of challenging the values fashioned by the anti-Hindu secularist elite, BJP has been bending backwards to conform to them. The enemies say "secularism is good." BJP says "We are secular, you are pseudo-secular." Murli Manohar Joshi says BJP lost because it did not field significant numbers of Muslim candidates. Arun Jaitley boasts of Muslims being drawn towards BJP. Is this what BJP was set up to achieve?

The enemies say "caste-based reservations are good." BJP says "we are all for it." The enemies say "women's reservations are good." BJP says "We support it." The enemies say "middle class is sold on the nuclear deal." BJP

says "We will accept it with a few minor changes." At no point does it turn around and say "your values are perverse. Your programmes are worthless. We do not want any of them. We will chart our own course."

The strategy was flawed from the beginning, both at the political and ideological level. Whatever assurances BJP may hold out to Muslims and other minorities, it can never compete with the likes of Mulayam Singh (whose biggest achievement is showering bullets on kar sevaks in Ayodhya), Manmohan Singh ('Muslims have first claim on national resources') and Sonia Gandhi (about whom nothing need be said). More importantly, Muslims would get the message that it pays to be cross with BJP (Bigad ke rahane se jyada milta hai).

This is a battle BJP can never win. The secularists in media and politics have fashioned an identity for BJP which they want it to acquire, but which they will never concede to it. The more the BJP bends, the more will it be asked to bend. Secularists are like spoilt rich brats. The sight of beggars craving for crumbs makes them laugh. Even if BJP were to formally renounce all traces of Hindutva and disown every one of its nationalist planks, it will still be accused of being communal simply because that is the surest way to put it on the defensive.

There is a historical parallel between the plight of BJP now and Congress in the pre-independence era. Everything that Congress is saying now about BJP is what Jinnah used to say about Congress in the 1940s (party of Hindu baniyas, Muslims can never get justice from it.) Under Gandhi, Congress embarked on a path of winning over the hearts and minds of Muslims over the heads of Muslim League and Jinnah (a brave and noble endeavour no doubt, but foolhardy) and ended up conceding Pakistan. BJP

under Vajpayee embarked on a similar mission vis-à-vis Muslims, secularist parties and media. It has no Pakistan to concede, but it can end up compromising Hindu interests beyond repair.

The first thing for BJP to do, therefore, is to resolve its 'existential dilemma' in favour of returning to its roots. It must develop the courage and vision to think and act like a party centred on Hindu India. If parties speaking for Dalits, Muslims, Yadavs and other small groups claim legitimacy, a party whose vision encompasses 82 percent of the population cannot be denied it. Secondly, a Hindu-centric party or polity need not be anti-Muslim in intent or action. Only it will not run after votes of Muslims as Muslims.

The key requirement in making the right choice is courage. As Radha Rajan put it so aptly, as long as BJP keeps looking only at the trees of parliamentary seats currently held by its allies and adversaries, it will not see the wood of Hindu sentiments and aspirations which will give it the seats required to stand alone. To do that, BJP must first have the vision and the courage to stand alone even in its weakened state. The legs will find their strength in movement, not in paralysis.

On the face of it, this may look like a losing proposition. For too long, BJP has been dominated by the mindset of a calculative Vaishya. But politics is a business of Kshatriya.

The second essential requirement is vision. Being rooted in the native soil is necessary but not sufficient. If BJP is serious about emerging as a party capable of governing a billion-strong country in the 21st century with a fast-globalising economy, it must evolve an economic programme simultaneously growth-oriented and inclusive.

Such a programme will shun the old and the new orthodoxy in economic thinking. It will judge policies, events and trends by their impact on different sections of the population and the economy as a whole, rather than their conformity with notions and theories currently in fashion. It will push for social reforms centering on ending caste inequities and promoting gender justice. It will conjure up a vision of India where sky is the limit for youth with drive and ambition.

Earlier, BJP relied exclusively on ideology. Of late, it is relying exclusively on development. Naturally, it faltered. At a time when the community felt besieged nation-wide by jihad and Christian evangelism, BJP disappointed its supporters by consciously avoiding these issues. BJP lost because Hindus who gathered to hear Narendra Modi did not get to hear what their hearts wanted to hear.

Third, BJP must have a 24x7 TV channel of its own. It must also have a chain of newspapers both in English and in regional languages, which would have excellent secular content (be it economy, society or sports) but whose editorial policy would be driven by a nationalist vision.

Finally, BJP must prepare for a long haul and develop the strength to sustain the effort. As Sri Aurobindo put it, "in India the breath moves slowly, the afflatus is long in coming. India, the ancient Mother, is indeed striving to be reborn, striving with agony and tears, but she strives in vain. What ails her, she who is after all so vast and might be so strong? There is surely some enormous defect, something vital is wanting in us, nor is it difficult to lay our finger on the spot. We have all things else, but we are empty of strength, void of energy. We have abandoned Shakti and are therefore abandoned by Shakti."

In strengthening the motherland, BJP will strengthen itself. In reclaiming its glory, it will glorify itself.

The author is Executive Editor, Corporate India, and lives in Mumbai

INDIAN STUDENT IN HK WINS BEST SPORTSPERSON AWARD



A PROUD MOMENT FOR ALL INDIANS LIVING IN HONG KONG, AS AN INDIAN STUDENT, ROHIT RATHI, 16 YEARS OLD, AND A VEGETARIAN, WAS AWARDED THE HONG KONG SCHOOL SPORTS FEDERATION (HKSSF) SPORTS BOY OF THE YEAR. Rohit Rathi is a student at West Island School. He is 16 years old, currently doing his GCSE's. He participates in cross country and athletics, and he also plays football for Hong Kong Football Club's under 17 team. Rohit has captained the school basketball team, and also the football team, which won the championship this year. Under his captaincy West Island School won gold medal in Football match organized by HKSSF. He has been awarded 3 MVP's (Most Valuable Player) for basketball, cross country and athletics. He holds the gold medal in HKSSF 3000m race and also came first in the Fanling cross country race.

Power of the Indian mind and Sri Aurobindo's vision of India and the world

By Jagmohan

Every nation has its own special attributes. The special attribute of Germany is its organisation, of the US its enterprise, of Japan its adaptability and of Great Britain its balance. The hallmark of India, in the hey-day of her civilisation, has been the power and profundity of her mind and the purity and punctiliousness of her soul.

It was this power and purity which had made the Indian civilisation as one of the most creative and constructive civilisations of the ancient world. In his own inimitable style, Sri Aurobindo had noted: "For three thousand years at least—it is indeed much longer –she has been creating abundantly and incessantly, lavishly, with an inexhaustible many-sidedness, republics and kingdoms and empires, philosophies and cosmogonies and sciences and creeds and arts and poems and all kinds of monuments, palaces and temples and public works, communities and societies and religious orders, laws and codes and rituals, physical sciences, psychic sciences, systems of yoga, systems of politics and administration, arts spiritual, arts worldly, trades, industries, fine crafts—the list is endless and in each item there is almost a plethora of activity".

It were the saints and sages of ancient India who, by virtue of their disposition to ponder over, in great depth and in utter solitude, on the mysteries of life, had

injected power and potency in the Indian mind. In turn, this power and potency had added to the capacity of the sages and saints to think still more deeply on the phenomena around. The cycle of mutual reinforcement went on, and the sage and saints moved silently, in the inner recesses of their mind, 'from unreal to real, from darkness to light, from death to immortality'.

One of the fundamental truths discovered was that the universe was an organic web in which every item of life and nature were inextricably enmeshed with every other item and that this web was permeated with cosmic force of which man and nature were the constituents as well as contributors.

Many other principles of living in balance and harmony with nature were also evolved. A philosophic structure, in the form of Vedanta, was raised and a way of attaining elevation of mind and moving towards truth, while carrying out day-to-day work, was indicated through a comprehensive system of yoga.

Unfortunately, for a variety of reasons, which need not be gone into here, the power of the Indian mind, which had produced profound systems and structures of the genre indicated above, began to wane after the seventh century. Soon, there was a near total desertification of the Indian mind, with small meadows of green appearing here and there occasionally.

The 'mighty evil' that had invaded the Indian mind and soul was, to a large extent, beaten back by a galaxy of profound thinkers and reformers who brought about a

new awakening that led to the great renaissance of the later nineteenth century and early twentieth century. Out of the stalwarts of renaissance, Sri Aurobindo emerged as the strongest champion of the Indian spirit and expressed the highest confidence in its underlying strength. In no uncertain terms, he declared: "India cannot perish, our race cannot become extinct, because among all the divisions of mankind it is to India that is reserved the highest and most splendid destiny, the most essential to the future of the human race. It is she who must send forth from herself the future religion of the entire world, the Eternal religion which is to harmonise all religions, science and philosophies and make mankind one soul".

In Sri Aurobindo's thought, the Sanatana Dharma and India always appear as the two sides of the same coin. But in his famous Uttarapar speech, delivered on May 30, 1909, he placed the former at a higher pedestal. He expressed his belief in these memorable words: "When therefore it is said that India shall rise, it is the Sanatana Dharma that shall rise. When it is said that India shall be great, it is the Sanatana Dharma that shall be great. When it is said that India shall expand and extend herself, it is the Sanatana Dharma that shall expand and extend itself over the world."

Sri Aurobindo makes it clear that the Sanatana Dharma is designed to uplift the entire human race and not merely the Hindus: "What is this religion which we call Sanatana, eternal. It is the Hindu religion only because the Hindu nation has kept it, But it is not circumscribed

by the confines of single country. That which we call the Hindu religion is really the eternal religion because it is the universal religion which embraces all others".

It needs to be underlined that in the post-Uttarpara-speech period, Sri Aurobindo committed himself mainly to the liberation of human consciousness. He made it clear: "Spirituality is India's only politics, the fulfillment of the Sanatana Dharma is only Swaraj." A regenerated India alone, he thought, could free the world from its "enslavement to materialism" and for pointing to it the "way towards a dynamic integration of Spirit and Matter and to make life perfect with Divine Perfection." He believed that a great evolution was the real goal of humanity.

After Sri Aurobindo's thought had undergone a subtle shift at Uttarpara on May 30, 1909, his vision was to liberate India's consciousness and bring back Sanatana Dharma as her national religion—a religion which is all embracing, non-sectarian and eternal. His vision was to build a nation of Karmayogis who would have a higher consciousness, get rid of their egos, desires and attachments, have no joy over their successes and no grief over their failures, achieve inner rather than outer renunciation, perform passionless and impersonal actions and take themselves to such a height where no distinction is kept between their wills and the will of the Divine and truth of non-duality of existence is fully realised. And, further, his vision was to make us of India's heritage and cause a situation in which human

life would become the Life Divine—'a perfect expression' of the Divine Essence.

But what is position today? Has not a deep and dark shadows fallen between Sri Aurobindo's vision and the reality that obtains in India today? Do we find Karmayogis around or see signs of liberation of India's spirit? Has there been any advance towards spirituality or higher level of human consciousness?

Clearly, the answer to all such questions is in the negative. On the other hand, what a discerning eye sees around is that in practically every walk of life, be it intellectual, social, political or cultural, reverse gear has been in operation and key activities are now virtually controlled by blind men with lantern in their hands.

On the centenary day—May 30, 2009—of Uttarpara Speech, let all the students and teachers of Sri Aurobindo's school of thought resolve that they would not lose heart on account of current dismal scenario and would work with a renewed sense of mission to ensure that vision of the great prophet of twentieth century is fulfilled. Undoubtedly, the task is Herculean, the goal is distant and would take a long time to traverse. But let us not forget that even the longest journey begins with the first step.

(The writer is a former Governor of Jammu & Kashmir and a former Union Minister.)

KNOW YOUR HINDI

This is our thirteeth 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
Laayak	Arabic	Yogya	Capable
Lihaaz	Arabic	Vyahaar	Etiquette
Lajawaab	Arabic	An-ulekhneeya	Incredible
Jawab	Arabic	Uttar	Answer
Laash	Farsi	Shav	Dead body
Laazim	Arabic	Uchit	Appropriate
Luft	Arabic	Anand	Enjoy
Mulaazim	Arabic	Chaakar	Employee
Mujrim	Arabic	Apradhi / Doshi	Convict
Mulayam	Arabic	Komal	Soft

पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते ।

पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥ ८ ॥

pūrṇamadaḥ pūrṇamidaṁ pūrṇātpūrṇamudacyate

pūrṇasya pūrṇamāadāya pūrṇamevāvaśiṣyate

That (Absolute Brahman) is Infinite. This (Manifested Brahman, the Universe) is also infinite. This infinite has manifested from

that infinite. Infinite being taken out from infinite, what remains is also infinite.

Our grand Vision - Pinnacle of Glory

Sangha Shaktir Vijetreeyam
Krutvaasmad Dharma Rakshanam
Paramam Vaibhavam Praaptum
Samarthaastu Tavaashisha (7)

Our grand vision is to establish peace and harmony in the world. It will be a glory to the human civilization whereby every individual can realize his or her potential to the fullest. The means to achieve this is by protecting the 'Dharma'. We are seeking your blessings so that this organized strength will be triumphant.

Firm conviction that this is divine mission - God's work

This is God's work. Offerings

Tvadiiye Punya Kaaryesmin
Vishwa KalyaaNa Saadhake
Tyaaga Seva Vratasyaayam
Kaayome Patatu Prabho (8)

This mission of welfare of the entire humanity is God's work. We are only instruments in this noble task. We are praying God that let our life be offered in this life of sacrifice and service.

| | Vishwa Dharma Ki Jai | |
| | Bharat Mata Ki Jai | |

| | Victory to the Universal Dharma | |
| | Victory of Bharat Mata| |

With Compliments from:-

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