SANDESH BHARATI

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MAHAKAVI SUBRAMANYA BHARATI

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There is nothing superior to knowledge of truth; no truth higher than the truth, and there is no purifying austerity better than the truth; salutations to that guru.

A green rising

Uday Mahurkar, INDIA TODAY June 4th, 2010

That India is on the verge of a serious water crisis is a foregone conclusion. So much so that the possibility of water riots in the future can't be ruled out. And it's not that the farmers of Vidarbha in Maharashtra or Bundelkhand in Uttar Pradesh are the only casualties of depleting groundwater level. In satellite townships like Gurgaon and state capitals like Hyderabad, the situation is much worse than the rest of the country. And the blame doesn't go to bad monsoons alone. More than indifferent monsoons, this scarcity of water has been caused by over exploitation of groundwater and lack of water conservation measures at the micro level. The answer to this monumental challenge that stares at an otherwise resurgent India comes from Gujarat. The state shows the way in the form of a unique government-people partnership model for water conservation. There results are here to see.

In 2004, the water table of 112 tehsils of the total 225 tehsils in Gujarat was in semi-critical to over-exploited condition. But a satellite based survey done last year by the Central Ground Water Board (NGWB) found that as many as 60 of these 112 tehsils have regained their normal water table. What's more, the water table is rising further in many of these tehsils. Most of these tehsils are in Saurashtra and Kutch where the farmers and the government together have started a unique check dam revolution.

In the mid-90s, large parts of Saurashtra used to get water through train tankers from water-abundant areas of central and south Gujarat. Today it is a thing of the past. Earlier, many small rivers and rivulets in this region used to go dry by the end of

monsoon. Now they have become almost perennial and several villages have become self-sufficient in water.

In the past 10 years, 1,05,000 check dams costing Rs 1,480 crore have been built in Gujarat under the government-people scheme. The villagers have contributed between 10 and 15 per cent of the cost in the form of labour while the Government has done the rest. Around 70,000 of these dams have been piloted by the state irrigation department and the rest by the state rural development department. These dams have a cap of Rs 15 lakh in terms of investment.

The mechanism for these check dam scheme is very simple. As and when a village committee wants to make a dam, it takes the local irrigation engineer to the selected spot. After seeing the spot, the engineer helps them select one of the six technical designs for a check dam. The six designs are finalised by the Government depending on the local geological conditions. Once that is done the department releases funds and the work on the dam begins.

The changes are less evident in north Gujarat where the topography for building check dams is not as conducive and the farmers here are also not very enthusiastic. But in this region also the water level, barring some tehsils where it is falling due to local factors, has been rising for the past two years. Says R.C. Jain, Regional Director of the cgwb and in-charge of Gujarat, "Gujarat has shown that where there is a will there is always a way. This experiment can inspire people in many water starved areas of India.

Interestingly, the check dam revolution was triggered in 1999 by Mansukh Suvagiya, a Rajkot-based social worker in Jhamka village of Junagadh where the villagers collected money and

constructed 52 check dams in a span of two months on small rivulets in and around the village. Today, Jhamka is a symbol of water and agro self-sufficiency.

In the same year, the Saurashtra Jaldhara Trust, an NGO run by diamond magnate by Mathurbhai Savani built 213 check dams on rivulets in and around Khopala near Bhavnagar to turn the village's fortune. As the success of this experiment travelled to other areas of Saurashtra with the trust's help, the then chief minister Keshubhai Patel took interest in it and launched the ambitious Sardar Patel Water Recharging Programme in 2000 to build check dams in partnership with the people.

When Chief Minister Narendra Modi took over in 2001, he laid emphasis on creating farm ponds in areas like north and central Gujarat where building check dams was not very feasible. As a result 1,81,00,000 farm ponds have been built till date at a cost of Rs 181 crore. Farm ponds are built in that part of a farm where rain water collection happens in natural course.

In 2003, the Gujarat Government launched the Gujarat Green Revolution Company to propagate sprinkler and drip irrigation technology among farmers by giving them hefty incentives. Rated as the best in the country by the Union Agriculture Ministry for last three years, this initiative is one of the reasons why the groundwater level is getting recharged in the state.

But it was not easy for the Government to convince the farmers, who were agitating for more power, to participate in the project. The agitating farmers were told to take to water conserving farming techniques and tapping surface water through indigenous methods which could end their dependence on power. "To get something from mother earth you have to give something back. If you don't, it will stop giving you. It can't be a

one-way cycle," Modi told the farmers. The agitators understood the logic of his appeal and the rest is history.

Then there are other big irrigation schemes which have helped in enhancing the water table in Gujarat. For example, in north and central Gujarat, the mud canal of the Sujalam Sufalam Yojana played a key role in bringing up the water level. The project targeted at pumping 'excess' water from the Kadana canal into north Gujarat dams by laying pipelines; building an unlined canal across 21 rivers in north Gujarat, and building two lakh farm-ponds. In another initiative, the state government has partnered with NGOs to build over 40 bigger-sized check dams costing up to Rs 1 crore.

Besides these long-term projects, certain short-term initiatives have also worked wonders. Last year, Gujarat had a bad monsoon but when the Government realised that rains could hit the state in the last leg of monsoon, it launched a quick water conservation drive by building boribunds (very small dams made by blocking small rivulets with the help of sand bags). In 20 days, over 2,50,000 boribunds came up as a result of a joint effort by the departments of rural development and forest management, NGOs and village committees.

When the rains did come, these boribunds conserved a lot of water. Says Ram Kumar, CEO of the State Watershed Management Agency: "Our resolve is to ensure that not a single drop of water is wasted." The success has not resulted in complacency in the Government which launched another innovative scheme three months ago to tap surface water on the hilly slopes of the tribal regions of south, north and east Gujarat by making terrace talavis-small ponds dug on hill slopes.

In 2009, Gujarat registered 9.06 per cent agricultural growth rate while the nation's growth rate was less than three per cent. The total cultivable area in Gujarat has increased by a phenomenal 15 per cent in the past 10 years. During that period, Gujarat's agro production has jumped from Rs 18,000 crore to Rs 49,000 crore. The state increased its cotton yield six-fold from 175 kg per hectare to 798 kg, more than the world average of 787 kg.

"Gujarat has set the finest example of groundwater management through indigenous and modern methods and through people's participation," says Tushaar Shah, senior fellow at the International Water Management Institute. When Jhamka and Khopala did it, the rest of Gujarat wondered why not they. It's time the rest of the country asked the same question.

HINDU GRANDMOTHER IS TRINIDAD & TOBAGO'S FIRST WOMAN PM:

Kamala Persad-Bissessar, whose forefather went to Trinidad and Tobago from Bharat as an indentured labourer, has been elected the first woman Prime Minister after the political alliance led by her emerged victorious and ended the ruling party's 43 years in power. Persad-Bissessar's People's Partnership won 29 out of the 41 parliamentary seats in the elections held on May 24th.

A former Spanish colony, Trinidad & Tobago is located in southern Caribbean. It is mainly made up of two islands - TRINIDAD and TOBAGO. It covers an area of around 5,120 sq.km and 44% of it's 1.3 million population is of Bharatiya origin

Persad-Bissessar, 58, a grandmother of two and a devout Hindu, said "I am grateful for the immense support from women and

women's groups across the country and to the extent that this helps to break the barriers so many competent women face."

Over 2200 people return Hindu fold in Gujarat

MORE than 2200 people belonging to 384 families of 20 villages returned home on March 20 at a function organised at Sutarpada village under Kapvada teshil of Valsad district. These people belong to Varali and Konkana Vanvasi communities and had sometime back embraced Christianity. More than 300 other people belonging to seven other villages were also present on the occasion to welcome these people.

In the beginning, all the people offered ahutis in the yajna which was conducted by a team of Arya Samaj Purohits. The function was organised by Dharma Prasar Samiti. Addressing the gathering after the poornahuti of the yajna, VHP central secretary Shri Mohan Joshi reminded them of the glorious history of their ancestors. He said they fought for the protection of Hinduism from foreign invaders and made many sacrifices.

Swami Omkaranand Maharaj said Hinduism is the oldest religion in the world and we should protect it even by sacrificing our lives. He said Hinduism teaches both peace and love to the mankind. Gujarat state president of VHP Shri Dilipbhai Trivedi, Prant Dharma Prasar Pramukh Shri Dharmendrabhai Patel, joint secretary Shri Lalit Suvakia, state secretary Shri Neeral Patel, etc. were also present on the occasion.

ORGANISER *(FOC)*
May 09, 2010

HSS Hong Kong News:

27TH ANNUAL HINDU CAMP REPORT

The HSS camp this year was held between 3rd – 6th April, 2010. Like last year, the camp took place at the Po Leung Kuk Pak Tam Chung Holiday Camp.....this campsite is immensely popular and very practical for all our Sangh activities.

Many of those who attend our camps are regulars - some of whom have been attending since they were young children.

The emphasis in our camps is always on teaching and training our young swayamsevaks about our Bharatiya / Hindu culture and religion, history, geography, Bharatiya games, yogasan, conventional Hindi and Bharat's achievements, and the camp this year also achieved its goal.

The topics this time were on Bharatiya revolutionaries, conducted by Shri Dipakji and on Maharana Pratap, conducted by Shri Hareshji.

Shri Manojji taught the swayamsevaks on Vedic Maths - the ancient Bharatiya method of mathematics through which one can calculate complex mathematical numbers faster than through the conventional method.

Shri Sunilji conducted the games.

Two teams were formed, both named after our great freedom fighters - BHAGAT SINGH, who fought against the British and RANA PRATAP, who fought against the Mughals. Both these freedom fighers valued our nation's independence more than their lives.

The team captains are chosen with the idea of bringing out the leadership qualities in them, so that they could learn how to be in command and emerge as leaders in society in the future.

Here we present the report of the team leaders, of how they captained their teams...

I learnt a lot about our great revolutionaries and freedom fighters from the pages of our history. I had a wonderful experience of being the captain of my team. My team had a wonderful spirit. Although, we didn't win many games, but we had an excellent time together. The most important thing is to maintain Hindu unity and friendship at all times. According to me, this camp was quite fun as usual. By becoming the team captain, I have gained the confidence to lead, which is possible with proper spirit and discipline. And I hope to have more such kinds of great camps every year

- SIDDHARTH AGARWAL, Captain of Bhagat Singh team

I think this camp has been a thrilling experience, since it was challenging yet enjoyable. I believe this camp has allowed me to strengthen my communication and leadership skills. I also got to know more about my team members. They were very supportive, and it shows that working as a team can do wonders. I have attended so many HSS camps, and each time we get to learn more knowledge about our country and Hinduism. It is only by coming to the camps do I learn that Hinduism is the best religion.

- KARAN PARAKH, Captain of Rana Pratap team

Like the previous camp, this time also, the swayamsevaks used the camp's facilities such as cycling, etc. This time, the added feature was that they also learnt archery.

Maharana Pratap emerged as the winning team, though Bhagat Singh also gave a splendid performance.

The highest prize in the camp of Ideal Swayamsevak was won by Jainam Mehta Highest marks in the written test were won by Keyur Patel, while the best sportsman award was given to Siddharth Agarwal.

All in all, the camp proved successful in its objects, and at the same time was also educative, informative and entertaining.

If anyone wants to attend the next year's camp, or ask for additional information about HSS, please write to hss.hk@live.com

CORRECTION

IN OUR JAN / FEB / MAR ISSUE, IN THE REPORT "HSS HONG KONG NEWS: MAKAR SANKRANTI SPORTS DAY 2010", IT WAS WRONGLY MENTIONED THAT IN THE LONG JUMP GIRL'S OLDER GROUP, RIYA SHAH WON THE BRONZE MEDAL.

THE ACTUAL WINNER OF THE BRONZE MEDAL IN THE LONG JUMP GIRL'S OLDER GROUP WAS NEHA KUMAR

THE ERROR IS REGRETTED...

Ravi Shankar flays Husain for nude painting

Spiritual guru Sri Sri Ravi Shankar on Monday expressed surprise over the "hue and cry" over painter MF Husain's move to give up Indian citizenship and chided him for painting Indian gods in the nude.

"While India has a policy of free expression, one cannot accept blatant insult to the heroes of its land. It is the intention behind a man's creativity which is questionable," Ravi Shankar said in a statement.

"In one of Husain's paintings of Mahatma Gandhi, Karl Marx, Albert Einstein and Hitler, he painted only Hitler nude and said that his way of humiliating a person is to paint him nude.

"No one has ever sculpted Rama and Sita as nude. Creative expression is always welcome. No country has been as liberal as India... Any nude woman could have been painted by him but calling the women Sita, Lakshmi (and) Saraswati shows his perversion and hatred.

"Will MF Husain show the same creativity and the same spirit with Islamic heroes and would he, then, be able retain his Qatari citizenship?

Double standards, bias and hatred do not go well with men of excellence."

(Hindustan Times 08/March, 2010)

A PERSONAL TRIBUTE

Nanaji, a hugely respected political leader and humanist

By S.Gurumurthy

An incredible incident made Jayaprakash Narayan to agree to the plea of Nanaji and Ramnathji to lead the movement against Indira Gandhi. I came to know of this in late 1980s when at a dinner in the Express Towers in Bombay I asked Nanaji and Ramnathji how they brought JP into the movement. Nanaji described the thrilling and unbelievable episode. A historic meeting of Ramnathji, Nanaji, Achyut Patwardhan, the hero of the 1942 underground movement and Ramdhari Singh Dinkar, a great Hindi poet, took place sometime in 1973 in the Indian Express Guest House in Bangalore.

"NANAJI" as Nana Deshmukh was known in political and social circles, which he dominated for almost six decades, is no more. Many, who were inspired by him in politics and outside, saw and knew him as a towering idealist; his admirers and friends experienced and rated him as a great political strategist. Joining the RSS at a young age and becoming its pracharak [whole-time volunteer], he was undoubtedly a great organiser. He had intimate friends in high places everywhere. He was accepted from a very young age beyond his organisational fraternity. He was equally at ease with both the noble Bhoodhan movement of Vinobha Bhave and the gutter politics of Delhi. He had friends even in the garrisons of his adversaries. When Jawaharlal Nehru had banned the RSS in 1948, Nanaji Deshmukh, like many RSS workers began organising the underground movement. From where? Believe it, from the house of Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, a minister in Pandit Nehru's government. It was public knowledge that Nehru had regarded RSS as his archenemy and had even declared that he would not give an inch in India for the Bhagwa [the flag of the RSS] to fly. Still Kidwai, a great friend of Nehru and a minister in his cabinet, had no issues

about keeping Nanaji in house and more - allowing him to organise under ground activities. This speaks of the man's magnetic personality of the young Nanaji who must have been then in his twenties!

My association with Nanaji Deshmukh started with my friendship with Ramnath Goenka. Ramnathji and Nanaji were not only great friends, they both thought and felt about the country almost alike. The mutual trust and admiration that they had had was rooted wholly in their love of the motherland, totally devoid of any kind of personal interest. The Nanaji-Ramnathji combine that no goal other than what they thought was the good of the nation. Ramnath Goenka had shaped The Indian Express not as just a newspaper. It was an active partner with all nationalist forces in the cause of the country, setting the agenda for political and social discourse. Ramnathji never knew what fear meant in life. So was Nanaji. And these two courageous persons could effortlessly infect many others of high relevance, journalists or others, with fearlessness. It was the Ramnathji-Nanaji duo that persuaded Jayaprakash Narayan to agree to lead the Bihar movement in 1974, which changed the political picture of the country. The Bihar movement was one of the greatest movements in the history of free India.

An incredible incident made Jayaprakash Narayan to agree to the plea of Nanaji and Ramnathji to lead the movement against Indira Gandhi. I came to know of this in late 1980s when at a dinner in the Express Towers in Bombay I asked Nanaji and Ramnathji how they brought JP into the movement. Nanaji described the thrilling and unbelievable episode. A historic meeting of Ramnathji, Nanaji, Achyut Patwardhan, the hero of the 1942 underground movement and Ramdhari Singh Dinkar, a great Hindi poet, took place sometime in 1973 in The Indian Express Guest House in Bangalore. Ramnathji, Nanaji, Ramdhari Singh Dinkar and Achyut Patwardhan, began insisting that JP should lead the movement as Indira Gandhi had become highly autocratic and had begun destroying all

institutional framework of democracy including the judiciary and bureaucracy. Incidentally, Dinkar was one of the greatest friends of the Nehru family and particularly of Indira Gandhi herself. But that did not detract him from doing what he had thought was his duty to the nation. JP was hesitant mainly because of his health. He was a diabetic and had acute prostrate gland issues. He said that he would not be able to live for long and his health did not permit him to undertake such arduous task. Ramnathji assured him that he would have his prostrate operation done in Vellore, which he eventually got done later. But JP could still not make up his mind. At that point, Ramnathji, a great and traditional Hindu believer, suggested that all of them should go to Tirupati, have darshan and prayers and from there, go to Madras as it was known then, and continue the discussions. And they all left for Tirupati.

During the darshan at Tirupati, Ramdhari Singh Dinkar openly prayed to Lord Balaji, to the hearing of JP and the others, that whatever remaining years of life Dinkar had the Lord should give them to JP to help him serve the cause of the motherland. And they all returned to Madras and to Ramnathji's house in the Express Estates in Mount Road where the office of the Indian Express was also situated. Within hours Ramdhari Singh Dinkar fell on the lap of Ramnath Goenka and died - yes he died when JP, Nanaji and Achuyt Patwardhan were around. It was clear that Lord Balaji had answered Dinkar's prayers. JP's decision to lead the movement came in no time. Despite my several requests Nanaji had refused to write about it in The Indian Express. When I asked him how will the people of India know about it, he said that he had written in his diary and he would like it to be known after his death. Now that he is no more I felt free to write about it.

The rest is known history. After his prostrate operation JP began to lead one of the biggest mass movements against corruption in free India and that led to the imposition of the infamous emergency on India, arrest of all national opposition leaders and ban on the RSS.

That was the best period in the life of Nanaji. He was one of the initiators of the underground movement that finally exploded as the Janata Wave when in 1977 Indira Gandhi, with a view to securing mandate for her autocracy declared elections to Parliament, not knowing that, without her intelligence agencies having whiff of it, the underground movement had generated a political tornado against her. Nanaji was the architect of the Janata Party. He contested elections for the first time and won. He refused to join the ministry when Morarji Desai insisted he should be in the cabinet.

Later when the Janata Party split and the Bharatiya Janata Party was formed in 1980, Nanaji announced that he would like to retire from active politics as he was attaining the age of 65. A new role-that of a social worker-to lift moral and spiritual values and to promote economic and social wellbeing of the distanced people awaited him. He started his work first in the most backward districts of Gonda in UP and next in the equally drought-prone and poverty-ridden Beed district in Maharashtra and finally settled to do a more comprehensive work of socio-economic progress with moral values covering some 500 villages in Chitrakoot district. The President of India Dr Abdul Kalam visited Nanaji's Chitrakoot project praised and blessed it as the most suitable to India noting that almost 80 villages in the district had become litigation free! That was his final karma bhoomi even though the whole country was his karma bhoomi.

He once told me that when he was a child many days he had nothing to eat. But that did not turn him into a naxalite. But his introduction to the RSS at the right age, and association with the right persons, had turned him into a great nationalist who lived for his motherland's glory and nothing else.

Run for cover, you Sickularists! Now, taste your own medicine, which comes your way, through Internet.

Here we come!! The Internet Hindus

By Shachi Rairikar

FOR decades the English media, both print and electronic, has been dominated by the leftist elite who by virtue of their English education, articulate speech and degrees, scholarships and awards from abroad face little or no competition at home. A handful of such people occupy most of the media space, holding on to it firmly, forming a closed circuit, only allowing selectively new entrants to join their league. Resorting to rhetoric and imposing their views on the nation in a feverish pitch, has become a second nature to them. Clearly pursuing anti-Hindu agenda, their stand on any issue is almost predictable. All news and views are doctored to fit their ideological parameters.

To the common, average, educated Indian, especially the majority Hindus, this is a frustrating situation. He and his religion has become the object of ridicule and despise in the mass media. Yet he does not have a way to fight this malicious campaign. Neither are his letters to editors published, nor can his articles match the linguistic skills of the foreign-educated. He is not entertained on the talk shows on the television. Even his messages are not displayed during the TV programmes. His responses on the channel's website are also never published.

Rejected by the arrogance of this elitist creed, the internet comes with fresh breath of air, providing a breathing space to the common man choking with indignation. With the advent of blogging, web groups, chat forums, free websites and social networking sites he gets an opportunity to express himself, gives

vent to his thoughts which had been deliberately suppressed all these years. The voice that had been muted for so long is now vociferous. The right which had been granted to every citizen by the Indian Constitution – the right to freedom of speech and expression – is now coming out of the law books and becoming a reality. As more and more Indians become internet savvy, the web space is being filled with a new generation of activists.

The frustration and anger of the majority Hindus at the anti-Hindu stance of the secularist lobby, media, polity and intelligentsia included, is being expressed openly in the cyber space. Blogs, articles, discussion groups are all out to expose the fraud that the self-proclaimed saviours of secularism have been playing on the nation. Facts, views and opinions are being shared amongst Hindus across the globe. The wide gap between the grass roots and the newsrooms is being exposed. The authenticity, motivation and loyalty of the mass media are being questioned. With the growing number of Hindus on the internet, it is becoming evident that majority Indians do not endorse the pseudo-secularism and minorityism that is being imposed upon them.

The emergence of this new genre of Hindus comes as a rude shock to those who had been manipulating in their safe haven where no one could question them. The space which had hitherto been strictly guarded is no longer their monopoly. They now have to share it with the crude voice of the lowly masses coming from the grass roots; the masses which might not be apparently as sophisticated or articulate but have their own views and the right to express them. The debates and discussions, no longer restricted to the secure surrounds of the studio, have come out to the forums where all are equal and free to express. The voice of the common man has gone beyond the control of the traditional media and can no longer be ignored. Obviously, the elitist lobby loves to hate this new lot of activists which it calls the “Internet Hindus”.

It is interesting to see those who have been severely critical of others who do not fall in their line of thinking react when they get a taste of their own medicine. Those who had been propagating Hindu-hatred are now themselves receiving hate mails from Hindus. It is their turn now to be annoyed. Sagarika Ghose likens Internet Hindus to “swarms of bees” which “come swarming after you at any mention of Modi, Muslims or Pakistan!” Barkha Dutt is now considering the merits of regulating the cyber space. Ashok Malik calls the Internet Hindus “a collective of the intellectually inadequate, the professionally frustrated and the plain bigoted”.

Surely, this new generation of activists on the internet may not be as qualified as their counterparts on the television and print media in the sense of having degrees and awards, but it would be sheer elitist snobbery to write them off as “intellectually inadequate” or “professionally frustrated”. They are the educated middle class with valuable degrees in fields like technology and management, doing extremely well professionally in corporate, private banks, IT and MNCs, and are intellectuals in their own right. And the more important question here is what credibility the likes of Ashok Malik have, when all these years, outside of their close-knit circle, they themselves have been accused of intellectual bankruptcy. The leftists are bigots in their own way, intolerant of other contemporary ideologies.

Probably out of lack of better allegations, Ashok Malik writes “The Left has its universities, journals and institutional support system. It is a commentary on Internet Hindus that they only have multiple email accounts.” And Sagarika Ghose hints that they are an organised syndicate, all with false identities. It is true that the right thinking Hindus do not have an institutional support system but that is precisely because unlike their leftist counterparts they are not an organised syndicate playing key roles in a carefully designed strategy. They are simple men and

women who are just pouring out their heart. Also, their not so privileged routines cannot accommodate the luxuries of adopting the leftist propaganda tactics of multiple ids. It would be a grave mistake to undermine the wrath of eighty crore plus Hindus. With such a numeric strength, who needs multiple ids?

Seeing the wave going against them, an obviously disturbed Vir Sanghvi questions “is the Internet losing its sense of being a reflection of the views of society at large?” Would he have raised the same question had the majority on the web appeared to be on their side? Why should we presume that the conventional media with all its short comings is a true reflection of the society? Is it not true that the more equitable internet and not the biased traditional media is a better and more candid representation of the society?

It is fashionable to accuse the right wing of Talibanising Hinduism. Ashok Malik feels that the Internet Hindus represent the collapse of Hindu politico-intellectu al space into a caricature of the very Talibanism it opposes. Sagarika Ghose writes, “Internet Hindus want to `Islamise' Hinduism: they are enamoured of the extremist version of Islam..” It is nice to see some one from the pro-Muslim lobby at least acknowledge the existence of the “extremist version” of Islam which they so fondly promote as the religion of peace and brotherhood.

The resentment for the elitist media has been brewing up for a long time. All this time it had been deliberately muted. But the internet has allowed the long over due reprisal to surface. The mainstream which had been pushed to the fringes is now standing up to take its rightful position. The Hindus are rejecting those who had been rejecting them all this while. India is now ready to root out the enemy within. It is another war of independence, this time not with aliens but our own people who are still carrying the burden of the foreign yoke.

BHARATIYAS THE THIRD LARGEST IMMIGRANT GROUP IN THE UNITED STATES:

The US is home to about 1.6 million Bharatiya origin people, making them the third-largest immigrant group in the country after Mexicans and Filipinos, a Washington-based think tank has said.

Between 2007 and 2008, the number of Bharatiya immigrants surpassed the number of Chinese and Hong Kong-born immigrants for the first time since at least 1960, said the Migration Policy Institute in its latest report.

In addition, people with Bharatiya ancestry have also immigrated to the US from the Caribbean, East Africa, Canada and the United Kingdom, said the report authored by Aaron Terrazas and Cristina Batog

About one-quarter of Bharat-born men in the labour force work in the information technology industry. Nearly half of all Bharatiya immigrants resided in California, New Jersey, New York and Texas, it said.

Of the 2.3 million members of the Bharatiya diaspora residing in the US in 2008, 66.4 percent were born in Bharat, including individuals born in Bharat to at least one parent who was a native-born US citizen.

In terms of academic achievement, Bharatiya immigrants were better educated than other immigrants and the native born. In 2008, 73.6 per cent of Bharatiya-born adults age 25 and older had a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 27.1 percent among all 31.9 million foreign-born adults and 27.8 percent of all 168.1 million native-born adults.

MAHAKAVI SUBRAMANYA BHARATI

Subramanya Bharati (1882 - 1921), poet and mystic, inspired hundreds and thousands of the Tamil people to rise in revolt against the British. Inspired by the Indian spiritual tradition, he identified Bharat Mata with Parashakti, and glorified HER with his writings, both poetry and prose. He spent his life working for India's glory in all fields and walks of life, be it agriculture, science, industry or arts. Bharati lived during an eventful period of Indian history, his contemporaries including prominent leaders of the Indian independence movement such as Mahatma Gandhi, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Shri Aurobindo and VVS Aiyar. Though Bharati's compositions helped galvanize the independence movement chiefly in South India, however Bharati is fondly called as *Mahakavi Bharati* - the epithet Mahakavi means Great Poet in Sanskrit, and many other Indian languages - in fact, the great poetess, Sarojini Naidu, widely called as the "Nightingale of India", had this to say about Bharati, "Poets like Bharati cannot be counted as the treasure of any province. He is entitled by his work, to rank among those who have transcended all limitations of race, language and continent and have become the universal possession of mankind"

Bharati was born to Chinnasami Subramanya Iyer and Elakkumi Lakshmi Ammaal as "Subbayya" on December 11, 1882 in the Tamil village of Ettayapuram. He was educated at a local high school called "The M.D.T. Hindu College". From a very young age he learnt music and at 11, he was invited to a conference of local court poets and musicians for composing poems and songs. It was here that he was conferred the title

of "Bharati", or the "one blessed by the Goddess Saraswati, the goddess of learning.

Bharati lost his mother at the age of 5 and his father at the age of 16. He was brought up by his disciplinarian father who wanted him to learn English, excel in arithmetic, become an engineer and lead a comfortable life. However, Bharati was given to day dreaming and could not concentrate on his studies. In 1897, perhaps to instil a sense of responsibility in him, his father had him married at the young age of 14. After this early marriage, Bharati, curious to see the outside world, left for Banaras in 1898. The next four years of his life served as a passage of discovery. During this time he discovered a country in tumult outside his small hamlet. Bharati worked as a teacher in Madurai Sethupathy High School and as a journal editor at various times in his life.

During his stay in Banaras (also known as Kashi and Varanasi), Bharati was exposed to Hindu spirituality and nationalism. This broadened his outlook and he learned Sanskrit, Hindi and English. In addition, he changed his outward appearance. It is likely that Bharati was impressed by the turbans worn by many members of the Hindu society, and started wearing one himself.

It was his meeting with Sister Nivedita, the spiritual daughter of Swami Vivekanand, that transformed Bharati into a spiritual - nationalist. He dedicated the first compilation of his patriotic songs under the title, "Swadesha Geetangal" and also its second edition under the title "Janma Bhoomi" to Sister Nivedita, whom he adopted as his spiritual preceptor. After meeting her, he also became motivated to take a stand to recognize the privileges of women. The equality of women exercised Bharathi's mind greatly. He visualised the 'new woman' as an emanation of

Shakti, a willing helpmate of man to build a new earth through co-operative endeavour.

Through his poetry, Bharati espoused greater freedom and respect for women:

> "We will destroy the idiocy
> Of denigrating womanhood"

He was simultaneously up against society for its mistreatment of the downtrodden people and the British for occupying India. In fact, Bharathi also fought against the caste system in Hindu society. Although born into an orthodox Brahmin family, he gave up his caste identity. One of his great sayings meant, 'There are only two castes in the world: one who is educated and one who is not.' He considered all living beings as equal and to illustrate this he even performed *upanayanam* to a young Harijan man. He also scorned the divisive tendencies being imparted into the younger generations by their elderly tutors during this time. He openly criticised the preachers for misleading the scriptures, by mixing their individual thoughts when teaching.

During this period, Bharati also understood the need to be well-informed of the world outside and took interest in the world of journalism and the print media of the West. Bharathi joined as Assistant Editor of the *Swadeshamitram*, a Tamil daily in 1904. By April 1907, he started editing the Tamil weekly *India* and the English newspaper *Bala Bharatham* with M P T Acharya. These newspapers were also a means of expressing Bharati's creativity, which began to peak during this period. Bharati started to publish his poems regularly in these editions. From religious hymns to nationalist anthems, from contemplations on the relationship

between God and man to songs on the French revolution, Bharati's subjects were diverse.

Bharati was devoted towards his mother tongue, Tamil, which he considered as the sweetest of all the languages known to him. In one of his poems he wrote, "Of all the languages I know, I have not heard a sweeter language than Tamil". However, he was fluent in many languages including Sanskrit, Telegu, Bengali, Hindi, Kutchi and even foreign languages like French and English. He had a voracious appetite for learning ancient and contemporary Tamil literature, especially ancient poems.

Bharati became a pioneer in introducing a new style of Tamil poetry. Until then the poems had to follow the strict syntactic rules set down by the ancient Tamil grammatical treatise *Tolkappiyam*. Bharati broke this syntactic bond and created a prose-poetic style known as the *puthukkavithai* (modern poems).

Bharati participated in the historic Surat Congress in 1907, which deepened the divisions within the Indian National Congress between the hardcore wing led by Lokmanya Tilak and Maharishi Aurobindo on the one hand, and the moderate wing. Bharati supported Tilak and Aurobindo together with V.O.Chidambaram Pillai and Kanchi Varathaachariyar. Tilak openly supported armed resistance against the British.

Bharati immersed himself in writing, as well as in political activity. In Madras, in 1908, he organised a public meeting to celebrate *Swaraj* (independence) Day. His nationalistic poems, *Vande Matharam*, *Enthayum Thayum* and *Jaya Bharath* were printed and distributed free to the audience.

In 1908, he gave evidence in the case which had been instituted by the British against V.O. Chidambaram Pillai. In

the same year, the proprietor of the journal *India* was arrested in Madras (now Chennai). Faced with the prospect of arrest, Bharati escaped to Pondicherry which was then under French rule. From there he edited and published the weekly journal *India*, *Vijaya*, a Tamil daily, *Bala Bharatha*, an English monthly, and *Suryothayam*, a local weekly of Pondicherry. The British tried to suppress Bharati's output by stopping remittances and letters to the papers. Both *India* and *Vijaya* were banned in British India in 1909.

During his exile, Bharati had the opportunity to mix with many other leaders of the militant wing of the Independence movement such as Shree Aurobindo, Lala Lajpat Rai and V.V.S. Aiyar, who had also sought asylum under the French. His close relationship and association with Shri Aurobindo at Pondicherry, helped him to pick up the threads of Vedic studies that he left off at Banaras. Bharati's wife has recorded that not a day would pass in Pondicherry, without Bharati meeting Aurobindo for Vedic studies and discussions. He assisted Aurobindo in the *Arya* journal and later *Karma Yogi* in Pondicherry. Bharati considered the lives of Swami Vivekananda, Shri Aurobindo and Mahatma Gandhi as proof that love of God, included love of Bharat Mata, fellow human beings and a sense of equality among all living beings.

Bharati entered British India near Cuddalore in November, 1918 and was promptly arrested. He was imprisoned in the Central prison in Cuddalore in custody for three weeks from 20 November to 14 December. The following year Bharati met with Mahatma Gandhi. Even though Bharati was in jail for a short period of time, yet his movements were curtailed till 1920.

Bharati's health was badly affected by the imprisonment and the intense political struggles. He was also struck by a temple

elephant at Parthasarathy temple in Madras. Although he survived the incident, a few months later his health further deteriorated and he died on September 11, 1921. The last years of his life were spent in a house in Triplicane, Chennai. This house was bought and renovated by the state Government of Tamil Nadu in 1993 and named "Bharathiyar Illam" (Home of Bharathiyar). A Tamil film made on the life of Bharati, named Bharathy, was released a few years ago. This classic film was directed by Gnana Rajasekeran.

Bharati - the National Poet

Bharati is often called as the national poet of Bharat. But, he was more than a poet and patriot. In him, Mother Bharat found the culmination of the development of HER philosophical wisdom right from the ages of Vedic seers, to that of the renaissance philosophers such as Shri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda and Shri Aurobindo. In him, the mystic experience of countless sages and saints bedecking the glorious spiritual history of our great land found finest expression. In him, the nation found a great social reformer, who, though rooted in the ancient heritage of Bharat, brought forth a new social philosophy fitted to the needs and changes in the modern times.

Bharati wrote,

"The glorious Himalayas are ours and there is none to compare with it on this earth…The good river Ganges is our river and there is no river to rival its goodness.....This is the land of the Vedas. This is the land of great heroes. Worship this Akhand Bharat as God".

Bharati translated the immortal Vande Mataram of Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay into exquisite Tamil. He saw Mother

Bharat as the land of Ganga with Upanishads as the National Scripture. In this land, the airs of Narad's music and the grace of Buddha flourished.

He always identified Bharat Mata as the Parashakti, adorer of Lord Shiva, worshipper of Lord Vishnu, the spirit incarnate, with Vedas as HER voice.

Bharati strongly believed that patriotism must be a spiritual ideal. "In the service of the motherland, we are all of one creed, one community, one caste, one color, one principle and one ideal".

Bharati also sang the prosperity of Mother Bharat as

"Rich with hurrying streams, springs and cool breeze, great mountains, beasts and useful cattle, this is a prosperous land. Not only in material wealth, but she is rich in spiritual wealth too. This is the land that produced great thoughts in thousands"

Instead of merely being proud of his country, he also outlined his vision for a free India. He wrote, "When you say BHARAT, you will lose your fear of your enemies…We will make weapons, produce good paper, we will build big factories and create great schools. We will never rest, nor sleep; we will be truthful and excel… "

Bharati was very much distressed to see such a great and mighty nation suffering under slavery and political subjugation. To his poetic imagination, Bharat Mata appeared as Draupadi in the court of Kauravas where she was humiliated and dishonoured in the presence of her own husbands who were indeed noble by birth and great men of might and wisdom. So, was Mother Bharat suffering under the British imperialism, helpless and forlorn, her own

children standing as trees. Bharati however imagined himself as the great Arjun, who had taken a vow to wipe off the tears of Panchali and restore her honour. He aroused the people by reminding them time and again that Bharat is an ancient land, we are HER children and that we should never forget this.

The scholar, Professor P.Mahadevan has pointed out that it was the unique distinction of Bharati to overlay on the conventional outlines of the Mahabharat, both a political and mystical appeal. For not only is Draupadi in Bharati's *Panchali Sabatam,* the Bharat Mata in travail, but she is also Parashakti, the spirit of retributive nemesis purging everyone of us of our degenerate traits through the relentless operation of karma.

Besides his nationalistic poems, Bharati also produced such pieces as *Kannan Paattu* (Song of Krishna), in which Bharati sought to portray God as the source of all of humanity's passions in the most accessible of forms, including in the roles of a love-lorn lover, of a mischievous child, of an innocent child, and of a wise teacher. Actually, he was so enamoured of the nectar like words of Lord Krishna that he translated the Divine Poem into sweet Tamil.

Bharati considered it as a misrepresentation of the Advaita philosophy of Shankaracharya, to say that the whole manifested world, the country in which we live in and the people including wife and children around us, are mere illusions of Maya. He considered Maya as that which obstructed the vision of truth, of the unity behind all these manifestations, and not as the creator of illusions.

In his poems *Kannan Pattu, Kannama Pattu* and songs on Lord Muruga, we find the finest expressions of Bhakti as found in the Vishishtadvaita tradition and in the writings of the Alwars and Nayanmars, while we find the wisdom of

Advaitic realisation in his *Kuyil Pattu* and *Gyana Ratham,* a prose work.

However, undoubtedly Bharati's greatest source of inspiration ws Shakti worship, a uniquely Hindu concept. He accepted Parashakti as the Absolute and considered himself to be the blessed child of the Divine Mother. Just like Bankim Chandra before him, Bharati saw the motherland as Mother Parvati, Mother Lakshmi and Mother Saraswati.

Va. Ra., the reputed Tamil writer, says "Bharati was the only child of the Divine Mother to the last day of his life. A girl child born but yesterday is also a mother unto him. The age of a woman never counted much for him. Draupadi was a mother image. The country is Bharat Mata. Parashakti is the World Mother. Out of this intense feeling surged forth his poems on freedom of women, the tragedy of Draupadi, the rise and fall of the motherland, the glory of Bharat Mata, the power of Kali, her compassion".

Bharati was ever cautious to the designs of the Christian missionaries, who were attempting to convert the Shudras and Harijans. He was able to clearly distinguish between tolerance of all religions, and religious duplicity which was leading people to abandon their glorious Vedic heritage and get converted to Christianity. He wrote,

"The Alwars were drawn from various castes. Yet Ramanujacharya ruled that they be worshipped in the temples. The Christian priest does not know the truth. That is why he spins a yarn that in earlier times, Brahmins humiliated other castes as unfit for receiving spiritual wisdom - Ramanuj revered a Shudra, Tirukkachi Nambi as his Guru, and partook the food left by the latter. Ramanuj invited the humble people of the depressed classes, into the

temple, a tradition continued to date. All these, the Christian priest does not know".

Besides his famous and popular poems and writings, not many people are aware that Bharati also composed Carnatic music *ritis* in Tamil on love, devotion, etc. He set his songs to music and could sing them in a variety of *ragas*.. In *Bharata Deviyin Thiru Dasangam*, he used ten different ragas. His patriotic songs emphasized nationalism, unity of India, equality of man and the greatness of the Tamil language, set to folk tunes. He sang these himself at various political meetings.

While the vast majority of his songs were in Tamil, Bharati also composed two songs entirely in Sanskrit. Bharati set tunes for a number of his songs, however not all of them have been recovered. Some of the songs of Bharati that are currently very popular in the Carnatic music concert circuit include: *Theeratha Vilaiyattu Pillai*, *Chinnanchiru Kiliye* (tuned by him in Raga Bhairavi, but popularised in Ragamalika), *Suttum Vizhi*, *Thikku Theriyaatha*, *Senthamizh Nadenum* and *Paarukkule Nalla Naadu*.

Thus, Bharati distilled in his poems, the wisdom of the Vedas, the love of Lord Krishna and the maternal power and prosperity of Kali. He found in Mother India, an undying source of wisdom, power, love and prosperity. Divine Mother was his inspiration.

Encyclopedia of Hinduism launched

By Pramod Kumar

THE much awaited Encyclopedia of Hinduism is finally out. After the deep research conducted by about 2000 eminent scholars for about 20 years, it came in 6,600 multi-colour pages divided into 11 volumes. It is jointly published by India Heritage Research Foundation and Rupa & Co. and is first of its kind on Hinduism.

The first preview of this compilation was organised at the Vivekananda International Centre in New Delhi on March 25-in the presence of eminent scholars, bureaucrats, educationists and leading personalities of the country including former Deputy Prime Minister Shri LK Advani, former Union HRD Minister Dr Murli Manohar Joshi, Shri Arif Mohammad Khan, former Governor of J&K Shri Jagmohan and many others.

Three volumes of the Encyclopedia are ready and eight others will be ready within a few weeks. It is a comprehensive compilation of the vast ocean of knowledge, history and experience that constitutes Indian culture. The content has been divided into different sections like art, Hinduism in global context, history, historiography and geography, language and literature, philosophy, polity, religion and spirituality, science, special institutions and movements, spiritual disciplines, scholarship in Hindu studies and women in studies.

Talking to Organiser, Sadhvi Bhagwati, secretary of the India Heritage Research Foundation and a disciple of Swami Chidanand

Muni Saraswati who has been instrumental behind the publication of the compilation, said the Encyclopedia answers the questions people are often confronted with, like: What is Hinduism? Who is a Hindu?, etc. The historical details of Hinduism have been explained in various articles written by eminent scholars. More than 2,000 scholars have contributed in this publication.

A panel discussion was also organised on 'Hinduism in the Contemporary World' at the preview in New Delhi. Initiating the discussion, director of Vivekananda International Centre Shri Ajit Doval said that at the time when historicity and ancientness of Hinduism is being questioned by some westerners for the last few centuries, this Encyclopedia would address all the issues with full authenticity. "It will remove many misconceptions and will restore the eternal truth about Hinduism," he said. Editor in Chief of the Encyclopedia Prof. Kapil Kapoor, noted scholar and director of International Academy of Indian Culture Dr Lokesh Chandra, Sadhvi Bhagwati, Vice Chancellor of Swami Vivekananda University, Kolkata Swami Atmapriya-nanda and former Principal of Hindu College, New Delhi, Dr Kavita Sharma, also shared their views.

Second anniversary of Sydney Veda Pathshala

SYDNEY Veda Pathshala is a unique school of its kind in the world. Managed by the Vishva Hindu Parishad of Australia Inc. (i.e, World Hindu Council of Australia Inc.), the school is involved in preserving and promoting the "Vedic Chanting" which is considered as the outstanding oral cultural tradition and declared by UNESCO as "World Intangible Cultural Heritage".

Sydney Veda Pathshala, was started in 2008 under the guidance of Swami Vigyananand, Joint General Secretary, VHP. Now, there are three such schools in the suburbs of Baulkham Hills, Carlingford and Liverpool where over 75 registered students learn and practise the "Vedic Chanting" from traditionally trained Veda teachers.

The second anniversary of Sydney Veda Pathshala was celebrated in a grand manner at the Crestwood High School, Baulkham Hills, Sydney on April 17, 2010 where more than 200 people attended to hear, participate and appreciate the unique "Vedic Chanting" programme.

A traditional welcome was given to the chief guests, Swami Vigyananand, Clr. Wendy Waller, Mayor of Liverpool Council and Clr. Mike Thomas, Deputy Mayor of the Hills Shire Council. Smt. Subhashree Balachandar, Treasurer of VHP of Australia Inc, welcomed all the guests and participants. She highlighted the achievements of Sydney Veda Pathshala students over the last 12 months.

History was created on April 19, 2010 during the welcome ceremony of the Queen’s Baton relay for XIX Commonwealth

Games Delhi 2010 in Sydney (Australia). The welcoming of the baton began with auspicious "Vedic Chanting" by Sydney Veda Pathshala students invoking the blessing of the supreme divine for the successful completion of the Commonwealth Games.

While speaking on the importance of studying Vedas, Swami Vigyananand said "Pyramids have been eroded by desert wind, the marble broken by the earthquake and gold stolen by robbers while the Veda is recited daily by unbroken chain of generation travelling like great waves through living substance of mind."

He also said, "Precious stone or durable material gold, silver, bronze, marble and granite have been used by most ancient people in an attempt to immortalize their achievement no, so however the Hindu. The Hindu turned may seem most volatile and substantial material of all the spoken word and out the bubble of air fashioned a monument which for more than 60 century later stand untouched by the time or element."

Swami Vigyananand acknowledged the selfless commitment of the teachers in promoting and preserving this ancient knowledge and wisdom.

The Liverpool City Council Mayor, Clr. Wendy Waller praised the Hindu's contributions and stated that the Hindu Australian community has been an integral part of the Australian community for more than 150 years. The Hills Shire Deputy Mayor Clr. Mike Thomas stated that there are more than 5,000 Hindus living in the Shire Council. During his speech he said "I am impressed by the Hindu society initiative, and community participation in revival of this outstanding oral tradition.

Pooja Sashi, a student of Sydney Veda Pathshala, presented the scientific significance of "Vedic Chanting" and its potential in enhancing the memory and revitalising the neurons.

Another highlight of the programme was Bala Samskar Kendra (school). The school has been operating for over 10 years at Liverpool, teaching the "Hindu Dharma" for young children under the able guidance of Smt Saraswathi Sashi. Currently the school has 100 students with 12 voluntary teachers. Smt Saraswathi announced opening of Bala Samskar Kendra branch in the suburb of Toongabbie.

On this occasion, Smt Rani Sundar, coordinator of Hindu Dharma classes in New South Wales public schools, mentioned that currently under this programme organised by the Vishva Hindu Parishad of Australia Inc., more than 2,000 children are benefitting in over 40 schools in Sydney suburbs. As a part of the anniversary celebrations, the voluntary teachers and the teachers of Bala Samskar Kendra were felicitated by Swami Vigyananand.

This was followed by honouring of Veda Pathshala teachers (Shri Subramanian, Shri Ramarathinam, and Shri Narayanan), and certificates were given to students by Liverpool Mayor Wendy Waller and the Hills Deputy Mayor Mike Thomas in appreciation of their efforts in preserving this Heritage for Humanity.

The vote of thanks was proposed by Shri Vijayendra Rao. He mentioned that without the help of volunteers, and support from the community, such important initiatives and activities cannot be possible. At the end, the participants enjoyed a sumptuous vegetarian dinner, coordinated by Smt Subhashree Balachander and her team.

(FOC) **May 09, 2010**

A N-capable Agni-II test-fired successfully

After two successive failures last year, the 2,000 km plus range surface-to-surface nuclear-capable missile Agni-II was today test-fired successfully by Strategic Forces Command (SFC) from a site on Orissa coast.

Senior DRDO officials told The Indian Express that missile was fired from Launch Complex 4 from the Wheeler's off the Orissa coast at 9.18 a.m. DRDO sources said the missile achieved its full range and splashed down at the pre-designated target in the sea with high degree of accuracy after a flight duration of about 660 seconds. During today's test, the missile covered a length of 1395 km. Further data relating to various parameters of the mission's objectives were being analysed by scientists.

The officials said 2 naval ships deployed in Bay of Bengal tracked the vehicle homing on to the target, while a network of radars, telemetry and electro-optical instruments monitored the trajectory. "All mission objectives have been met successfully. With today's test, all the three variants of Agni have been successfully testfird within 3 months," the official said. In February this year, the 3,500-km plus range Agni-III and in March the 700-km range Agni-I were successfully test-fired.

The 20-metre long Agni-II is a two stage, solid-propelled ballistic missile. It has a launch weight of 17 tonnes and can carry a payload of 1000 kg over a distance of 2000 km. During

the November 25 test last year, the second stage of the missile did not operate resulting in failure. It was due to a quality defect in the missile, sources said. In May 2009 test also the Agni-II tumbled into the sea after losing its speed and deviating from its flight path, just before the separation of the second stage of the missile.

Agni-II was developed by Advanced Systems Laboratory along with other DRDO laboratories and integrated by the Bharat Dynamics Limited, Hyderabad, the sources said. It has a special navigation system to improve accuracy and a manoeuvring re-entry vehicle enabling it to change course during re-entry.

It is also equipped with anti-ballistic missile defence counter measures.

Agni-I has already been inducted and Agni-III is in the process of induction.

Debabrata Mohanty
Mon May 17 2010, 08:42 hrs
Bhubaneswar
http://www.indianexpress.com/news/ncapable-agniii-testfired-successfully/619859/

Sanskrit shlokas opened both Alaska Senate & House of Representatives

April 14, 2010
Chaitra Amavasya, Kaliyug Varsha 5112

Both Alaska State Senate and House of Representatives in Juneau started day's work with Hindu prayers on April nine.

Rajan Zed, Hindu leader, read the opening prayers from ancient Sanskrit scriptures before Senators and Representatives on this day after sprinkling Gangajal (sacred water from river Ganga of India). After Sanskrit delivery, he then read the English translation of the prayers. Sanskrit is considered a sacred language in Hinduism and root language of Indo-European languages.

Zed, who is president of Universal Society of Hinduism, recited from Rig-Veda, the oldest scripture of the world still in common use, dated from around 1,500 BCE, besides lines from Upanishads and Bhagavad-Gita (Song of the Lord), both ancient Hindu scriptures. He started and ended the prayer with "Om", the mystical syllable containing the universe, which in Hinduism is used to introduce and conclude religious work.

Reciting from Brahadaranyakopanis had, Rajan Zed said "Asato ma sad gamaya, Tamaso ma jyotir gamaya, Mrtyor mamrtam gamaya", which he then translated as "Lead me from the unreal to the Real, Lead me from darkness to Light, Lead me from death to Immortality. " Reciting from Bhagavad-Gita, he urged State Senators and Representatives to keep the welfare of others always in mind.

Zed is one of the panelists for "On Faith", a prestigious

interactive conversation on religion produced jointly by Newsweek and washingtonpost. com. He has been awarded "World Interfaith Leader Award" by National Association of Interchurch and Interfaith Families.

Rajan Zed also met Alaska Governor Sean Parnell, Lieutenant Governor Craig Campbell, Senate President Gary Stevens, House of Representatives Speaker Mike Chenault, Social Services Commissioner Bill Hogan, Education Commissioner Larry LeDoux, Catholic Bishop Edward Burns, Juneau City Manager Rod Swope, on the occasion and presented them with a copy of Bhagavad-Gita each. Priya Keane, who attended the prayer and whose mother is from India, described it as "wonderful".

Just before the actual prayer, Zed said in both Senate and House: "It is an honorable day for us when prayers from ancient Sanskrit scriptures are being read in this great hall of democracy of great state of Alaska." House Minority Leader Beth Kerttula and Representatives Max Gruenberg and John Harris personally thanked Zed for the prayers.

Meanwhile Bhavna Shinde of Forum for Hindu Awakening has thanked Alaska Legislature for opening Senate and House with wisdom from ancient Hindu scriptures.

Alaska Senate is composed of 20 members while House of Representatives has 40 members. Lonely Planet describes Alaska as "Big, beautiful and wildly bountiful" and its Mount McKinley is the highest mountain peak in North America. Hinduism, oldest and third largest religion of the world, has about one billion adherents and moksh (liberation) is its ultimate goal.

KNOW YOUR HINDI

This is our thirty fourth 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
Zevar	Farsi	Aabhushan / Gehna	Jewellery
Zanjeer	Farsi	Kadi / Baidi	Chain / Shackle
Zakhm	Farsi	Ghaav	Wound
Zid	Arabic	Hath	Stubbornness / Adamant
Ilzaam	Arabic	Aarop / Abhiyog	Blame / Accuse
Behuda	Farsi	Ashishht / Asabhya	Vulgar
Wahiyaat	Farsi	Buraa / Ashishht	Vulgar
Waah	Farsi	Dhanya	Praise (Exclamation to praise)
Kharab	Arabic	Buraa / Nikrishht	Spoiled
Tandoor	Farsi	Bhatti	Clay Oven

Children corner

JOKES TIME:

Teacher: Your handwriting is really horrible, Tarun. You must learn to write better
Tarun: If I write better, you'd immediately find out that my spelling is equally horrible
****

Aditi: Why does your brother sleep with his glasses on?
Jahnavi: Well, he says that he wears them to see his dreams more clearly
****

Teacher: Varun, correct the sentence, "The bull and the cow *is* grazing"
Varun: "The cow and bull *is* grazing"
Teacher: No, Varun. What change have you made?
Varun: LADIES FIRST.....
****

STORY TIME:

AKBAR - BIRBAL STORY : *HOW TO ANSWER FOOLISH QUESTIONS SMARTLY?*

The Mughal Emperor Akbar was known to ask strange and weird questions at a whim. Some of these questions were beyond logic. But, his trusted, intelligent and brainy advisor, Birbal always had all the answers.

As a result, the other ministers in Akbar's palace were envious of Birbal, as they could not match his knowledge or wittiness. They always tried to find opportunities where Birbal would lose favor of Akbar

One morning, Akbar was strolling the palace gardens with Birbal and his other important minister, and he enjoyed the sight of many crows flying around.

Just then a thought occurred in his mind, and he asked everyone present, "What is the total number of crows that are flying in Agra"?

The courtiers looked at each other in alarm. What a question? Some had information as to how many horses were there in Agra, others had information about the number of elephants. One had even kept statistics of the number of pet parrots.

But crows? How can anyone know how many crows there are?

But, the king's answer could not be left unanswered. Some of them began to pray desperately for a flash of divine inspiration. Others tried to hide behind their friends. A few began to examine the sky anxiously, wondering if they could make a quick count of all the crows they could see and calculate the total on that basis.

Seeing all his colleagues' nervous faces, Birbal smiled, and then calmly answered "There are ninety-five thousand, four hundred and sixty three (95,463) crows in your kingdom, Huzoor."

Everybody was completely stunned.

"How do you know that for sure?" the King asked. And he warned Birbal that he would not be able to bluff his way out of this one

Some of the jealous and angry ministers, who were mad that Birbal was able to reply when none of them could, suggested to Akbar to make a "head count" of the crows to be sure

that Birbal's figure was correct!!!!!!!!! Birbal immediately accepted that suggestion as a "good idea"

But, realizing the absolute foolishness of the suggestions of his other ministers, Akbar instead asked Birbal, "What if there are less crows than the number you advised"

Birbal immediately replied, "That means that the rest of the crows have gone on vacation to some neighboring kingdoms."

Caught in a trap, Akbar now asked, "What if there are more crows than you informed".

"Very easy, Huzoor, it just means that taking advantage of the beauty of the skies of your kingdom, neighbouring crows have come to enjoy their vacation over here", Birbal answered

Akbar was absolutely pleased with Birbal's replies, his confidence and smartness, and duly rewarded him

SANDESH BHARATI

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