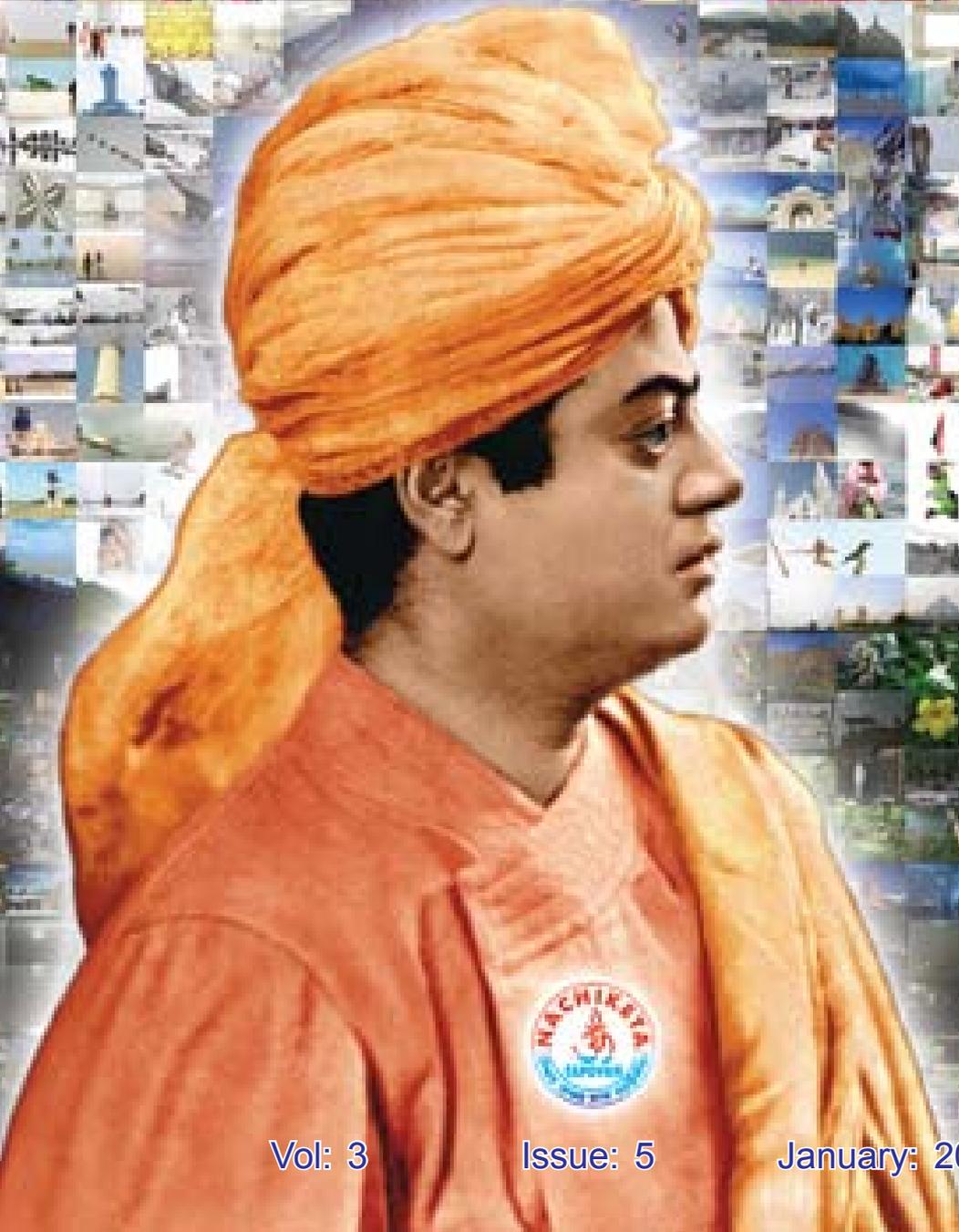


# *Nachiketanjali*

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# Nachiketanjali

...an offering for Spiritual Evolution



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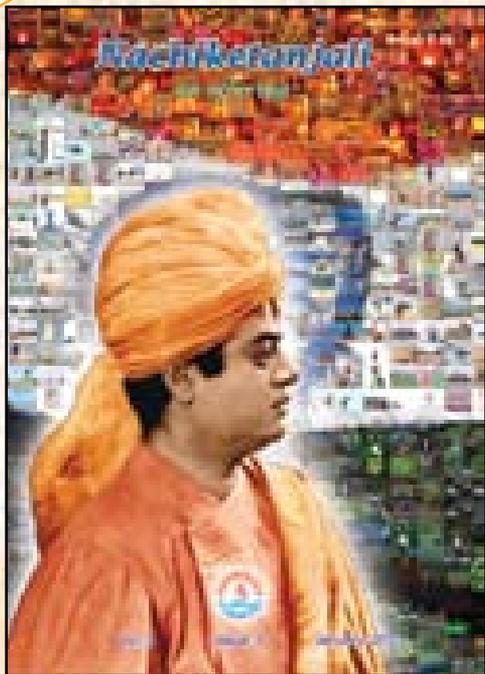
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## Uncover the Golden Vessel



Every child gives his/her mother moments of happiness and bliss but very few children make their mother and mother land as proud as Swami Vivekananda does. We all owe it to the pious couple Vishwanatha Datta and Bhuvaneshwari Devi for gifting Mother India her “greatest son” Narendranath Datta (Swami Vivekananda) on 12 January 1863. The Birthday of this intrepid saint and patriotic seer is celebrated as the **National Youth Day** in India. As Rabindranath Tagore suggested, “If you want to know India, study Vivekananda. In Him everything is positive and nothing negative.” Not only did He revive Vedanta and its relevance in daily life in India, but also became the spiritual ambassador of India and introduced the concepts to the Western World. It is beyond doubt that “the maker of Modern India” and “a role model for youth”, shall inspire many future generations!

**M**an is constantly in pursuit of happiness. But where does ‘True happiness’ really come from? Is it really so elusive, as so many believe it to be? Is our happiness dependent on external sources? The answers to these questions might be simple yet appear to be complex.

Primarily, happiness is not an external entity. True happiness exists within and has to be experienced by one self. We are all embodiments of the eternal SELF. If we can dive deep and touch the source, there is every possibility of floating in the ocean of Bliss. But are we serious in our search for happiness? Can anyone honestly claim to have found the source? One might get glimpses of the source but that will not suffice. When something is so important and desired in our lives why is it being ignored? And when someone makes serious attempts why does it turn out to be futile? Is it because we are searching for it in all the wrong places?

One might be happy with marriage, a new job or on acquiring wealth but very soon he realizes that this happiness is ephemeral which proves that happiness cannot be awarded by others. Instead of making futile attempts to search for happiness in the external world, let us pursue it within and strengthen our awareness that we are the source of true happiness. Clouds might cover the Sun making it invisible but can we say that the Sun does not exist? The existence of the Sun is revealed when the clouds disperse, so is our happiness. It is inherent within us. We just need to experience it.

What we perceive as problems are obstacles in our pursuit of happiness. The problems we face in life are like the flies on a lion’s body. The lion does not need to use its teeth or nails to attack the flies. It just swings its tail and the flies are gone. Let us look at our problems the same way. Drive them away with a mere glance and look within. There lies the SELF – the source of true happiness which is unwavering, precise, omniscient and omnipotent.

This New Year let us take a pledge to uncover the Golden Vessel of brilliant illusions and touch the SELF – the Source of True Happiness.

- **Subhadra K.**



# MAKARA SANKRANTI



**P**ongal, Lohri, Magh... called by different names, Makara Sankranti is a festival celebrated throughout India. Sankranti falls on the same date i.e., the 14th January every year (except every eighty years, the day of Sankranti is postponed by one day to compensate for the difference that occurs due to revolution of the Sun). This is because unlike other festivals, it is not dependent on the position of the moon, but it depends on the position of the sun.

The word *Sankranti* refers to the transmigration of the Sun from one *Rashi* (zodiac sign) to another. Since there are 12 *Rashis*, there are 12 *Sankrantis* in a year. However, two of these- *Mesha* (Aries) and *Makara* (Capricorn) Sankrantis are considered more important since they mark the commencement of *Dakshinayana* (southward) and *Uttarayana* (northward) movements of the Sun. The day of *Makar Sankranti* when Sun transitions from Sagittarius (*Dhanur*) to Capricorn, signifies the onset of *Uttarayana Punyakalam* and is celebrated all over India. Sankranti activities, like taking bath, offering *Naivedhya* (food offered to deity) to Lord Surya, offering charity or *Dakshina*, performing *Shraddha* rituals and breaking fast or *Parana*, should be done during *Punya Kaal*. Bheeshma the great grandfather of *Kauravas* and *Pandavas* who had the boon to choose the time of his death, was felled by Arjuna's arrow in the war of Kurukshetra. He chose to wait on a bed of arrows to depart only after the start of *Uttarayana* as it assures one of no rebirth.

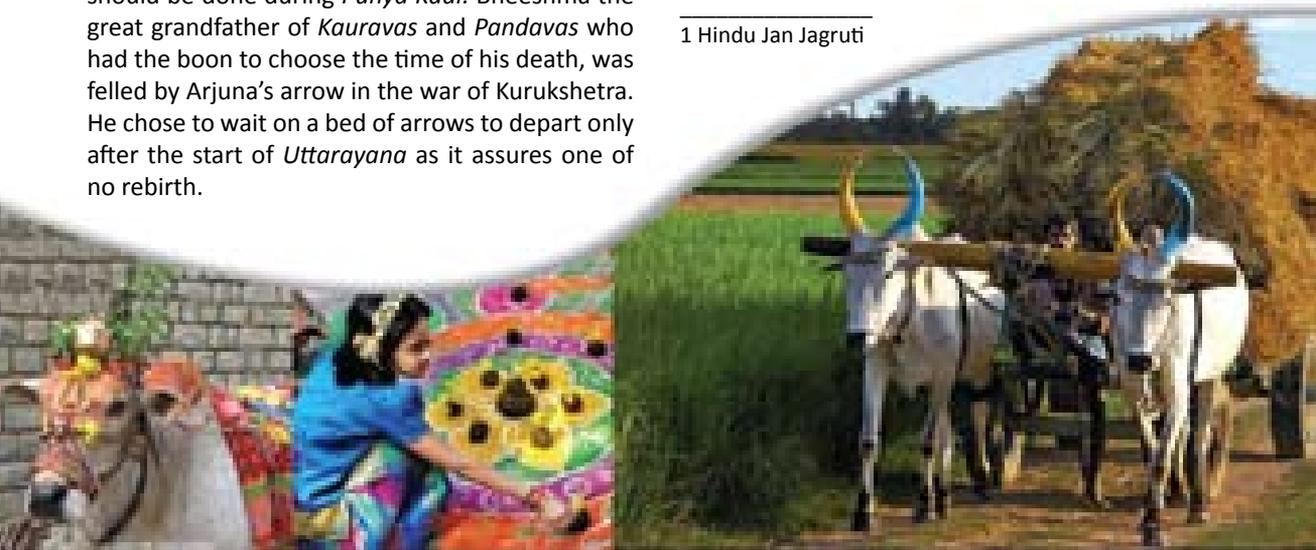
Makara Sankranti also coincides with one of the several harvest seasons in India. <sup>1</sup>It is also believed that on this day, from sunrise to sunset, the environment has more *Chaitanya* (Divine consciousness); hence those doing spiritual practices can benefit from this *Chaitanya*.

**Til** (sesame seeds) and **Rice** are two important ingredients of this festival. Paddy is harvested at this time and new crop of rice arrives at farmers' homes. Dishes made with rice and lentils such as Khichri, Savory Pongal and Sweet Pongal are partaken. Til is the star ingredient of this festival. Til is added to the water used for bathing, added to food preparations and drinking water, distributed among friends in the form of sweets, offered to Brahmins, offered in sacrificial fire, etc. Consuming Til during cold season is believed to be beneficial to health.

Decorating thresholds with *rangolis* (intricate designs around dots), *Ganga Snan* (Ritual bath in Ganga) flying kites, *bommala koluvu*, early morning bonfires, dances, fetes, jallikattus, decoration of ceremonial ox are just a few of the diverse traditions observed during this colorful festival.

- *Annapurna R.*

1 Hindu Jan Jagruti





# Rituals



**Swamiji, how can money and resources spent on rituals such as milk and ghee Abhishekams be justified in a country where many children starve every day?**

Dear Child,

I am glad to shed light on rituals that have been created by our ancient sages for the purpose of elevating the masses from slumber. But it does appear as wastage of time and valuable assets. I like your probing mind, bleeding heart and crying soul for the needy ones. Yes! I strongly feel that when hungry children are sleeping without a meal, thousands of liters of milk and other ingredients are being poured on idols everyday throughout the world. I am not only concerned about this ritual but there are numerous other rituals that puzzle and petrify me.

Dear child, but look at this entire issue from a different angle and you will realize that each and every act has some deeper meaning. Even your sneezing has got something to do with this universe and beyond. When nothing is without reason then how can we simply write off our rich culture and heritage? Electricity is there and can be felt but will never be seen; similarly Divine Mother's energy is felt but not Divine Mother Herself. Isn't it? The world might fail to substantiate it, but it doesn't cease to mesmerize the world with its own aroma.

The basic issue is whether all rituals are a waste of money and time or whether they have something to do with human psyche or higher planes of elevation? For this we need to go deeper and understand how important the structures of religious places are and the rites that are performed. They are not simply designed just like that! The structures are by-products of extensive research on human psychology and higher truths. To keep idols clean, neat, shiny and smooth, special *Poojas* are done using a minimal amount of ghee, honey, sugar, curd and milk (as in *Abhishekam*). One more aspect is that this mixture is very healthy when consumed moderately. Apart from that, rituals are performed to develop *Asana Siddhi*

(perfection in posture) and to channelize the mind. They say - one pointed mind can do wonders, if spiritually trained. If we look at the spiritual dimension of rituals, awakening the mind could be the intention. We live in the world of possibilities and one cannot simply reject something because one has not experienced. Please remember that the highest service to the world is that of spiritual service.

Dear Child! One can be spiritual without rituals but let me tell you, our religious philosophy is like a spiral, not like individual circles, separately placed. Everything is interconnected yet keeping individuality intact like circles in the spiral, seen separately but experienced as a whole, in totality. You are unique, so are the world and people around. But please don't forget that down deep we are all interconnected and one...! And that is the reason why your heart beats for the underprivileged ones... for downtrodden ones... for the hungry ones... for the needy ones...!

**Why did we build a temple when there is need for medical facilities, education etc. in the Ashram?**

There are many different ways to do the same thing and many things that can be done the same way. How we look at things is all that really matters. We all need to work out every activity according to our temperament and understanding. I may feel more elevated in somebody's company but others might not feel the same. Please look at the world from your angle but don't deny others as well. Yes! Let us begin something more profound and authentic that might appeal to one and all. Let us prepare something that might change the whole perception. Let us charge the world with our simplicity, profundity, wit and wisdom. I know I am not here to baptize anybody or change the world but I am here for one reason; to know the world within.

It is normal to feel that, instead of a temple project, health care or educational projects would have been ideal. I do feel the same but due to lack of technical assistance and funds, we had to



**Volunteers performing Abhishekam at Ma Yoga Shakti Peetham**

postpone these projects many times. I can get structure if I need but not the technical support. Out of M<sup>2</sup> (Money and Men), I can raise one not the other one. Remember! I strongly believe that Educational and Health projects are more intricate than spiritual centers. One has to have technical knowledge, experience and above all passion for the same. I do have passion but sometimes when I have money, I do lack men of caliber and courage and sometimes when I have men of caliber and courage I find myself without a penny, yet we are able to strike balance though we had to struggle even for a piece of bread.

Dear Child, don't you think that we should always find out our passion and area of work rather than finding out the comfort zone? That's what we have been doing! But one thing that I strongly feel is no matter what our passion or area of work is, our educational qualification reflects somewhere in our activities, then later on with more maturity, keeping society in the mind, slowly we scatter ourselves to many other areas. Isn't it? Remember, spiritual souls will never keep themselves in the comfort zone. The one who is found in a comfort zone is not a spiritual soul. Right now, what is more important, appealing and useful to the masses is taken care of by spiritual souls and that's what is seen in Kodgal area in the form of Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram. We had intense search for more than 7 years and lastly we found out this barren land surrounded by tribal Tandas in Kodgal Village, Jadcherla Mandal, Mahaboobnagar District, which is considered as the most backward district in the

state of Andhra Pradesh, where ground water is hardly seen, where lowest rain fall is measured and where there is no connectivity to the urban areas.

Dear Child! But today a barren land got transformed into a spiritual place and the credit goes to spiritual souls like Ma Vasundhara, Ma Subhadra, Reddy Garu, Prasad Garu, Vijay Garu, Our Education Team, Publication Team and all volunteers. This list is endless so is the energy that we experience here at the Ashram! Today, due to their blessings "Ma Yoga Shakti Peetham", the place of *Sadhana* is standing tall and catering to the needs of the society. They say 'seeing is believing' but I say 'experiencing is believing'! And for me it is one of the most happening places in the state which can be transformed into a great place, including an education and health hub, if each one of us can shoulder the responsibility.

Dear Child! Have no worries! Be happy! Be sensitive! Be passionate! Be your own signature! But at the same time be more balanced... more authentic... more precise... and above all more spiritual! I wish you all the best! You will remain in my prayers always! Hope this small token of love finds a very special place in your heart!

*- Swami Nachiketananda Puri*





# Kalpataru Day



The English New Year arrived and it was the first day of January, 1886. This was a special day in Sri Ramakrishna's *Lila*. It was Ekadasi also. Master had earlier declared, "Before I depart, I shall openly 'disclose' everything." That day had arrived and today was that day for this *Lila*. Listen with undivided attention how the 'disclosure' was done by the Master. Nobody knew how for it was quietly done. When a big ship in the water passes away no trace of any sound is left behind. So was the Master's great Divine *Lila* done secretly and there was no publicity.

On the New Year's Day He looked charmingly beautiful and appeared in the form of the Kalpataru. He wore a red-bordered cotton cloth. A green-coloured coat was on His body. He had a cotton cap which covered His head and also His ears. On His feet there were socks and slippers which had decorations of creepers and leaves on them. His face was shining and luminous. Though the body was emaciated by His terrible illness, His face was charming and rays of light were always

playing on it. Looking at Him once, His form cannot be forgotten. On that day, Harish Mustafi, a Brahmin devotee from East Bengal, presented himself upstairs before the Master. He called him near and gave His blessings which were earnestly coveted even by the Gods. What that grace was, one cannot describe in words. One who had received that grace could alone know its true nature and even then one would fail to describe it. The only external mark of that grace was that both the eyes would be overflowing with tears of joy. Harish could hardly contain his joy. He was beaming all over.

When it was about 3 o'clock, the Master came downstairs and walked towards the garden path. The devotees followed Him. All others, who were elsewhere, on hearing that the Master was walking in the garden, rushed there. I stood on one side, behind the Master. Two beautiful champa flowers were in my hands. The great devotee Girish was near the Master and was talking with Him. Suddenly, He stopped on the path and said to



Girish, "How do you all look on me? What do you all think of me?" Girish knelt at the Master's feet and with folded hands said, "I am not worthy of anything. How can I describe you when even Vyasa and Sukha felt themselves unworthy to talk about it?" Hearing the reply, the Master, the Lord of His *Lila*, fell into *Samadhi* while standing on the path. At that time, I walked forward and offered at His feet the two *Champa* flowers I had plucked earlier.

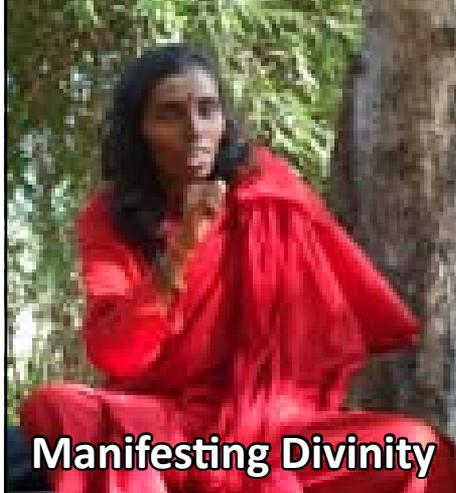
A little afterwards, the Master returned to external consciousness. He blessed the devotees and raising His right hand said, "May you have *Chaitanya*. What else can I say?" Then the Master returned to the path leading towards the house. I was standing some distance away. From there He addressed me, "Hello, my boy, what are you doing?" He then came near, touched my chest with His hand and recited something in my ear which, being a Maha-mantra, I shall keep secret. My heart's desire was fulfilled that day and I only wish to pass the rest of my days in singing the glory of Sri Ramakrishna.

After me, the Master blessed Navagopal. The Master became a Kalpataru that day. Upendra Majumdar then received the Master's touch and his iron body was converted into a golden one. After that, He blessed His nephew Ramlal. Then He bestowed His grace on Atul, Girish's brother. At that time the devotees became excited and loudly shouted cries of joy which seemed to tear asunder the sky above. Especially Ram, the great devotee, offered handfuls of flowers at the Master's feet. Haramohan was standing nearby. Ram brought Him before the Master who touched his chest but let him go saying that it was not the right moment for him. Meanwhile Girish was very much excited and ran in all directions seeking people. He saw the Brahmin cook, Ganguli in the kitchen and literally dragged him to the Master who bestowed His grace beyond that man's expectations.

Having poured out the boundless blessings upon the devotees the Master went upstairs. Downstairs, there was a mart of joy among the devotees. His grace was not money, not any kingdom, not any object of lust and pleasure, not for any delicate and tasty food, not any intoxicating drink, - none of these transitory pleasures. Yet, compared with all these worldly gifts, there was something in His grace that outshone everything.

Sri Ramakrishna later told Ramlal, "I have taken on my body all the sins of all those people..." Where have you seen such compassion? Use the name of Sri Ramakrishna in your *Japa* and *Tapa*.

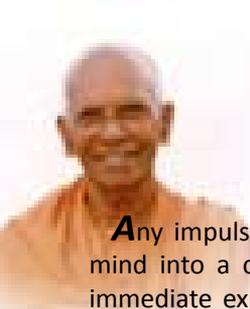
**Source: A PORTRAIT OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA**  
A Biography by Akshay Kumar Sen



Do you think the present education system can give strength to withstand the obstacles or difficulties of life? Dear Sadhakas, the aim of today's education is survival for livelihood.

It doesn't teach us how to balance our mind and body. Corruption and greediness have found place in every field whether it be political or the educational arena. Our sages and yogis had control not only on the body and mind, sleep and hunger but also life and death. Manifestation of individual cannot be learnt through present education. For that you need to follow the ancient vedic system.

**Paramahansa**  
**Swami Shivananda Puri**



# Between Action and Reaction

Any impulse arising in an animal throws its mind into a convulsion. Then it must find an immediate expression in an action. Then, that impulse dies away. That is the nature of animal behavior. But, in the case of a human being, when he or she has not started training the mind, very often this is the behavior; when we were primitive, we were doing like this. Though even then, a certain calmness had come to the human system, because nature had provided for it, that every sensory input will be observed, then passed on as a motor output. A little gap between input and output, even the most ordinary men have.

*Just put a little stop between input and output.*

Just put a little stop between input and output. Suppose, somebody abuses me; immediately I abuse back. Don't do so; that means you are an animal, an automaton, as we say. Always we say action and reaction are equal and opposite. That is the mechanical law. But in the case of

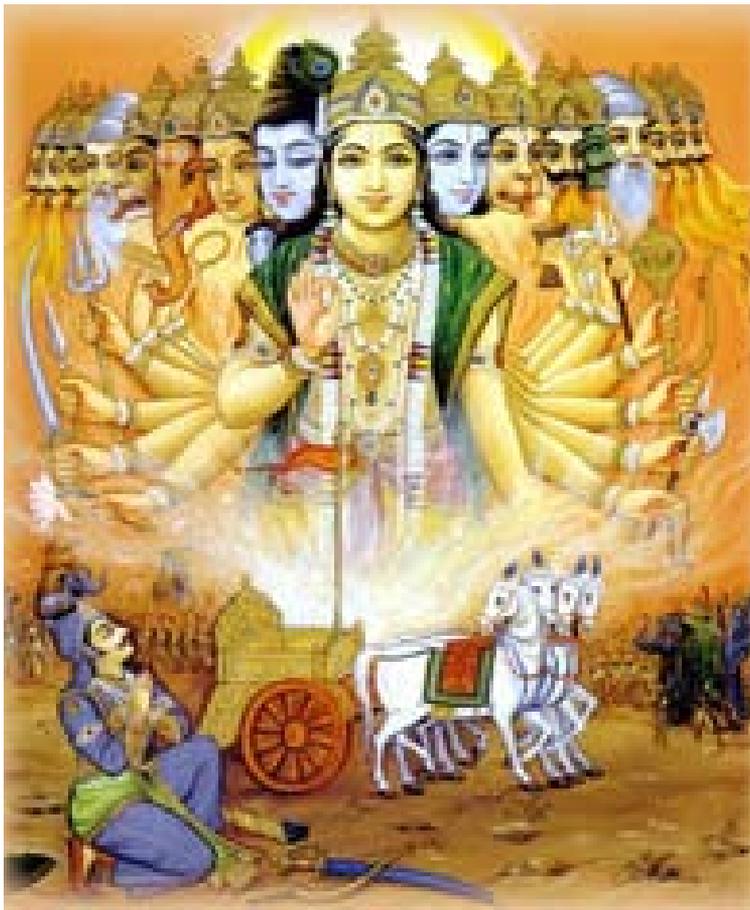
human beings, it can be altered. If the action is one unit, reaction can be ten units, or it can be no unit. That shows you are free. When life appears on the horizon of evolution, even in a very elementary form, freedom also

appears. There is no other definition of freedom. You are not merely a creature of some external circumstance. You regulate your reaction. As

soon as you start regulating your reaction, you have started achieving your humanness. Then the march inward is unique. You are handling your own mind. You are creating a sense of calmness within. Great achievements will come thereby. Human evolution begins with the achievement of this balancing of the mind between a sensory input and a motor output. That must be strengthened more and more. We shall come across this subject again and again, because the whole subject of the Gita is the training of this human mind for total human development by handling this world around it, and by handling oneself also in a masterly way.

Source: *Universal Message of The Bhagavad Gita*

- Swami Ranganathananda



# ARE WE COMPLETE INDIVIDUALS?

Recently, I got an opportunity to participate in an essay writing competition which was followed by a presentation of the essay before a distinguished panel. The topic for contemplation was 'Education in the Making of a Complete Education'. Each one of us differs in our approach to the topic. However, it cannot be denied that our environs make or break us. For instance, the son of a wife-batterer may himself become one or differently grow up to be one who venerates women.

Education need not mean only the formal education imparted in an institutional set-up. It is also what we learn from the people around us, for each of us has a lot to grasp from, as well as offer to others. In this context, let us take the example of a person X who is an established and wealthy member of the society leading a comfortable life. This Mr. X is a source of inspiration for many. He earns well and shares it too. He is socially sensitive and takes part in movements for amelioration of different classes of people by rendering financial support. However, there is a problem with Mr. X. He does

not treat the wealthy and the non-wealthy in the same manner. He has a giant ego which stops him from according with both in a similar fashion. While he has space to accommodate the rich in home as well as heart, he rarely interacts with the poor, and even if he does, it is in a perfunctory manner. Is Mr. X a complete individual?

**Education need not mean only the formal education imparted in an institutional set-up. It is also what we learn from the people around us, for each of us has a lot to grasp from, as well as offer to others.**

There are many Xs around us, and there is an X within us. We often falter in practicing what we preach. While the contribution of X cannot be discounted, it would definitely have more value provided he nurtures respect for a person not based on his social or economic standing but simply because he is a human being. Sarada Ma or Mother Teresa did not distinguish between the rich and the poor while showering love. A tree gives shelter to all those who seek without caring for their social standing.

It is hereby submitted that a person can become complete if he is willing to give up his unnecessary and unreasonable prejudices and practice the universal language of love based on equality. It is difficult to clear our mind of all the distinctions that we are taught and have learned to make as we grew up. Nevertheless, it is not impossible. What is needed is **conscious sensitivity** and **empathy** from our part. While wealth may come and go, it is our character alone which remains with us in all circumstances and Swami Vivekananda's immortal and electrifying words, 'cleaves through the adamant walls of difficulty'. Let us get back the purity of heart, like that of a child, and let us revel in our wonderful world. Together!



**Neetika Gogula**, Final year B.A. L.L.B. (Hons) has passion for writing articles on social issues.



# WORK AND ITS SECRET

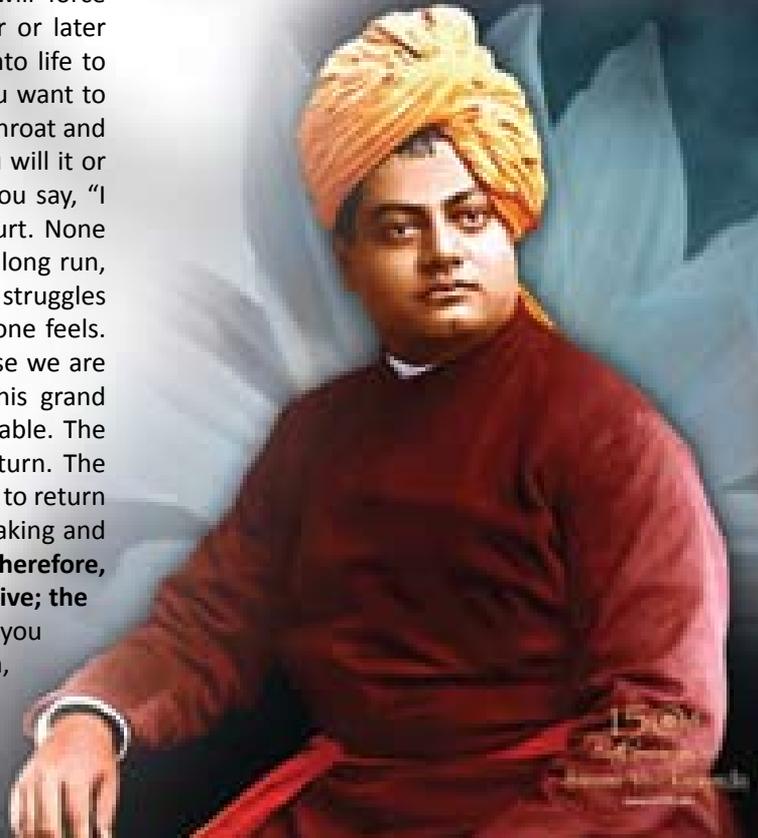
The great secret of true success, of true happiness, is this: the man, who asks for no return, the perfectly unselfish man, is the most successful. It seems to be a paradox. Do we not know that every man who is unselfish in life gets cheated, gets hurt? Apparently, yes. "Christ was unselfish, and yet he was crucified." True, but we know that his unselfishness is the reason, the cause of a great victory - the crowning of millions upon millions of lives with the blessings of true success.

Ask nothing; want nothing in return. **Give what you have to give; it will come back to you - but do not think of that now, it will come back multiplied a thousand fold - but the attention must not be on that.** Yet have the power to give: give, and there it ends. Learn that the whole of life is giving, that nature will force you to give. So, give willingly. Sooner or later you will have to give up. You come into life to accumulate. With clenched hands, you want to take. But nature puts a hand on your throat and makes your hands open. Whether you will it or not, you have to give. The moment you say, "I will not", the blow comes; you are hurt. None is there but will be compelled, in the long run, to give up everything. The more one struggles against this law, the more miserable one feels. It is because we dare not give, because we are not resigned enough to accede to this grand demand of nature, that we are miserable. The forest is gone, but we get heat in return. The sun is taking up water from the ocean, to return it in showers. You are a machine for taking and giving: you take, in order to give. **Ask, therefore, nothing in return; but the more you give; the more will come to you.** The quicker you can empty the air out of this room, the quicker it will be filled up by the external air; and if you close all the doors and every aperture, that which is within will remain, but

that which is outside will never come in, and that which is within will stagnate, degenerate, and become poisoned. A river is continually emptying itself into the ocean and is continually filling up again. Bar not the exit into the ocean. The moment you do that, death seizes you.

**Be, therefore, not a beggar; be unattached.**

*Source: From a lecture delivered at Los Angeles, California, January 4, 1900*



# Anger



I don't know why I didn't see it before... if you have been brought up in a typical Indian household and have had the good fortune of having spent many childhood years with grandparents, parents, uncles and aunts and an extended close knit social family, then growing up listening to quotes like the ones below was commonplace...

"Holding on to anger is like grasping a hot coal with the intent of throwing it at someone else; you are the one who gets burned."

- **Gautam Buddha**

"Anger is an acid that can do more harm to the vessel in which it is stored than to anything on which it is poured."

- **Mark Twain**

"Anger and intolerance are the enemies of correct understanding."

- **Mahatma Gandhi**

Perhaps because most of us have grown up listening to such things all our lives, we don't value them. We view it as sermonizing and lecturing and therefore, something that is not applicable to us.

These are things that we will deliberate upon and make an effort to imbibe only when we have 'lived our lives to the maximum' and have the time for such mundane philosophies.

However, to my good fortune, I had an extremely unpleasant and painful exchange with a friend recently, a very dear friend at that. Yes, I did

say 'good fortune' and I did mention 'extremely unpleasant and painful exchange'... confused? Isn't what I'm saying contradictory, if not completely absurd? Not at all... simply because if this unpleasantness hadn't happened, I wouldn't have seen it so clearly. If it hadn't been one of my best friend, maybe my response would have been far more judgmental and defensive.

It was not a big thing and even if it was a big deal for somebody, we always have an option to deal with it in a more balanced, mature and appropriate way.

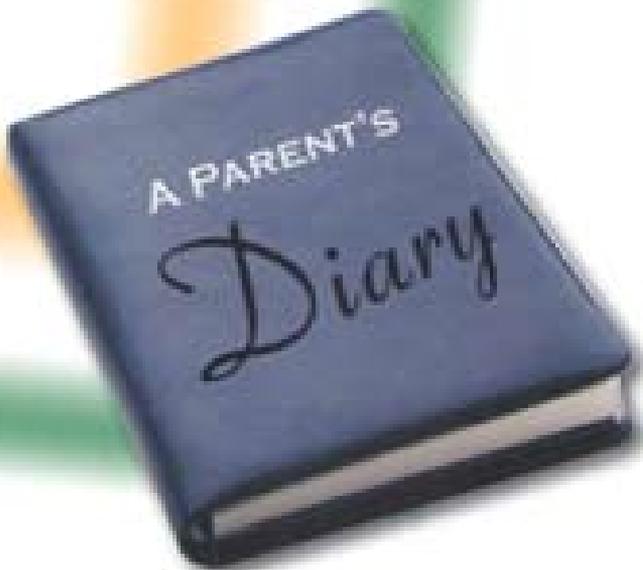
It was the viciousness of the allegations, the absolute disregard for the facts of case, the acrimony and the rancour in speech and thought, that caught me off-guard. I was stunned and it forced me to introspect, it prevented me from reacting. I did respond and tried to put my point of view across... but I failed to make peace. The only saving grace was that I didn't react with the same acrimony... I didn't get carried away by the sway of negative emotions.

And because it was such a dear friend, I did try and put myself in the other's shoes and look at things from her perspective... and for the first time, I realized that 'anger is 'indeed' one's greatest 'enemy'.

It isn't about who is right or wrong... it doesn't matter if the issue is small or big... it doesn't matter if you are on the same side or not... once we are not open, when we are not in acceptance, when we are blinded by our rage and anger then our senses cannot prevail... things will not be dealt with in an appropriate way... and chaos and broken relationships will be the order of the day.

With folded hands I apologize for the hurt or pain that I may have caused to anyone by my words or actions or thoughts... with folded hands I thank the people who have helped me grow and learn (and unlearn)... with folded hands I bow down in gratitude to my Guru, for helping me see things this way.

- **Gautam Vir**



### TWO MONTHS BACK:

A friend of ours had come from Mumbai. Both our families went for dinner. Manish, my husband, was driving the car and our friend was sitting next to him. At a signal, Manish took a left turn thinking it was a 'free left'. The moment he took a left turn, a cop asked him to stop the car. Obviously it was not a free left turn.

"Oh, mistake! Now we have to pay the fine," Manish said feeling bad for his rush.

"Not at all," a voice came from behind. It was our friend's thirteen-year-old daughter. Kids were sitting at the rear seat of the car.

"You don't have to pay the fine uncle, just tell the police 'my daughter is unconscious and I am rushing her to the hospital'," and within a fraction of a second, she lied down horizontal on the seat.

I was stunned. Not because of what she said and did, but because our friend laughed at her appreciatively and applauded, "Smart Mumbai girl! Manish, though I have jumped signals, I've never paid any fine because of her smartness!"

### LAST MONTH:

We had been to the hill station, Mahabaleshwar for the long weekend. We were a group of 14 adults. As we were trekking towards a point, we heard a young voice from behind, "Do you want a guide?" He was a 12 to 13 year old boy, wearing an oversized shirt, perhaps to look older.

"Are you a guide? You should be going to school and not be working at this age!" One of us enquired with concern and gave a piece of advice to that young lad.

"I study in eighth standard. My father is a guide and so on holidays I go to some point and be a guide to tourists" he said softly.

Something about him was enthralling and so Sunny became our guide for the day.

It was almost a 2 km walk. He was on like a radio, every information stored in him like a record. Till then I had only seen my kids grumbling and cribbing and mugging history. For the first time I saw some kid loving and enjoying history. As Sunny spoke about the history of Mahabaleshwar, his eyes would shine up. There was a tone of pride in his voice as he spoke, just as he was speaking about something that belonged to him.

It started drizzling and he immediately drew his umbrella for ladies. Each one of us had a camera but the photographs which Sunny took came out at par with any professional photographer. He was very well-informed and smartly answered all the queries related to the current situation of Mahabaleshwar.

As we came down from that point, all of us had only admiration and love for Sunny. We handed him whatever was his fees [which he had specified before we started the trek]. We tried giving him something extra.



“No Madam. Baba [father] has told me not to take anything extra than what I have worked hard for. He says since I am a kid, people will give me more than what is decided, but I should only take what I told you before”, said Sunny, suddenly going beyond the size of his oversized shirt.

Each one of us immediately wanted to fly and reach our kids, to tell them about Sunny.

I think of those initial days, where I have spent sleepless nights, till my kids got admission in the best school. I felt so relaxed, as my responsibility transferred to school. The first question anybody asks kids is, “Which school do you go to?”

My friend’s daughter goes to one of the best International School and is mentored by best names in various fields. Of course she has also learnt how to fool a cop and dodge a system at such a young age, from her dad.

On the other hand Sunny goes to an ordinary vernacular school, but his mannerisms and behaviour were laudable. Above all his attitude and character which his Baba has shaped is unparalleled; even in not so favourable circumstances.

#### **TODAY:**

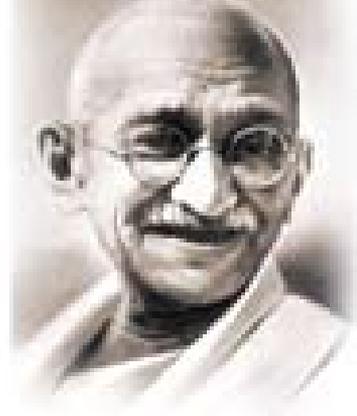
Just sending the kids to big schools, renowned institutes, won’t relieve me of my responsibilities.

As Mahatria says, “For our children, we are the only Koran they will read in their lifetime; the only Vedas they will see; the only Bible they will experience.

I know it is an awesome responsibility, but how else can you explain why you came into this planet before them?”

Someday, somewhere they will be questioned, who are your parents? But for what reason... I have a choice to decide... TODAY.

**- Anjana Chandak**



## GANDHI

Gandhi was born on October 2nd in Porbandhar in Gujarat. His full name is Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. He fought for our country’s freedom. With the two weapons called non-violence and *Dharma*, he fought against the English and got us independence on 15th August, 1947 at midnight. He did many good things for our country. He went to prison, he was shot in his heart for our country. Although he has made all those sacrifices, now-a-days very few people are following him and his path of non-violence. We remember him only few times: on the Independence Day, Republic Day, and his Birthday. On 15th August, 2012, in Ananthapur district one MLA hoisted Indian national flag without Ashoka Chakra on it. Police saw it but they did not take any action on that MLA and the surrounding people. This is a shame on all Indians. After the Independence, they named the Capital of Gujarat as Gandhi Nagar. We hear many states, cities, and villages named after Gandhi. It is not enough to remember Gandhi by merely naming cities and places after him.

Gandhi used to say that, “Satyameva Jayate” and “an eye for an eye will make the whole world blind”. If you want to remember and respect Gandhi, build your heart with his ideals and follow his path of non-violence. Please remember these two sentences in your life. Vandemataram!



**Madhu**  
Class VIII  
Nachiketa Tapovan Vidya Mandir

# YOUR BODY, YOUR TEMPLE



***“You will be nearer to Heaven playing football than studying the Bhagavad-Gita”***

*- Swami Vivekananda*

Baffling, isn't it? What was the Great Master trying to say? Here is a context. The Swami was addressing a young, sickly looking lad who wanted to acquire spirituality by studying the immortal classic 'The Bhagavad Gita' and had come to Swami Vivekananda to guide him. And guide, he did!

“Our young men must be strong.” said Swami Vivekananda. “Religion will come afterwards. Be strong, my young friends; that is my advice to you.” This one casual remark carries in it enough wisdom to unravel the very core of the message of Swami's life.

He believed in all-round development of the human body, in all aspects of human life- body, mind and soul. What use is a spiritual mind if the body is sickly and unable to house the mind? What use is a strong, healthy body if it houses a worthless mind indulging in the lowliest of human thought and action? This simply was his message.

Before reaching enlightenment, Gautama subjected himself to various bodily tortures and went to the extremes of human endurance. He went days without food and water, refrained from human contact and communication and wandered about in the forest in search of the truth. A number of

times, he was on the verge of death by starvation and self-torture but to no avail. It was when he reached *Nirvana* and attained salvation he turned into the Buddha and taught the middle path- a path of moderation.

Osho, the 21st century enlightened master prescribed over 112 different meditation techniques. He said that “Meditation is one of the most misunderstood practices. It does not mean leaving the world and retreating to the mountains. It is not a complex or difficult practice. It is the simple act of awareness. Anything can be meditation when done with full awareness and consciousness- reading, eating, sleeping, working or exercising.”

So when you think about it, all the Masters of the past were pointing in the same direction. And this is exemplified when they said, “The body is a holy temple. Your mind is the caretaker of that temple. And your soul is the Divinity that resides inside it.” The food you eat reaches your insides and makes the body what it is. The work you do exercises that energy and puts it to use. And it is your mind that controls the work you choose to do.

So what will it be? The Gita or a Game of Football?

Not a tough choice, really. For, all roads lead to the same place.

***- Avinash Agarwal***





# WHAT CAN I DO TO IMPROVE MY COUNTRY



**I**NDIA! The biggest democracy in the world. This is the greatest democracy in which most citizens misuse their freedom.

The main objective of a democracy is to let people be free, voice their opinions, choose their leaders and in the end, of course, live "happily ever after".

But this is NOT the case in our country. Almost every citizen uses his or her rights to the maximum, sometimes crossing their limits and then they forget their duties.

Our Govt. who is supposed to be the rule enforcer, itself breaks the laws. Our leaders are money hungry and power hungry. Right from our public sector employees to our leaders seem to be corrupt.

The first and most important thing on the path of progress is a good Govt. To achieve this, firstly, candidates who stand for election should be worthy and secondly, we should vote for those who are responsible and loyal and not power-hungry men/women who can take this country above all others. We are in the need of leaders, who can bring back the title of "The Golden Bird" (Sunahari Chidhiya) back to India; leaders who can take India beyond anyone's imagination.



Next, we need to enforce laws; very strict laws against littering, throwing things, spitting etc. in places of public utility. We should charge rule breakers with fines as is enforced in other countries. We need a proper sanitation system especially in metropolitan cities like Chennai, Kolkata etc. Proper storm water drains need to be built in all major towns and cities.

As citizens of this country, it is our duty to spread awareness for the welfare of the people and the country itself. We too can make people aware of things happening in the country. We can tell them not to pollute, litter or do any other such anti-social activities.

I believe that progress begins from the roots. Thus we should develop our rural areas more. We should introduce them to new technologies. We must help to industrialize our villages.

As I said previously, we need a proper Government. When this happens everything else will fall into place.

One step for Indians (by each of us),

One giant leap for India!

- **Rohan N.**  
8<sup>th</sup> Class,

GT Aloha Vidya Mandir, Chennai



*We are extremely thankful to  
**Smt. & Sri C.K. Ram Karthik** from USA for  
donating Rs. 1 Lakh towards  
Vidyadanam Corpus Fund. Let them be a source  
of inspiration for many such souls.*



## THE WITNESS CALLED LOVE

Love, a multidimensional operator  
Eternal silent witness of it all  
Nothing escapes Her memory  
No place where one can hide

One may ignore the power of Love  
And treat the rest with disdain  
The meek will shed their fears  
Once She announces Her grand plan

The chosen hour shall reveal all  
If our friends are those that speak  
Of the unreal world as grand and true  
They will abandon us someday soon

The moment is not far from now  
Real friends serve us in silence  
Sathya, Dharma, Shanti, Prema, Ahimsa  
They will soon announce their loyalty

Love transforms us ever so subtly  
It would be wise to choose seclusion  
The healing happens in the silent moors  
Awaits the singular Sat Chit Ananda

If we long for Love in sweetness  
If we accept Her Will as ours  
If we seek Her and nothing else  
She will appear in a Form just for us

Our foolish hearts need to feel You  
Slow our minds down to a final halt  
Please allow us to reflect Your Glory  
Love, our Divine Mother, bless us  
Gratefully,

- Abir and Anisha



## Guru Gobind Singh's Bani

“Without the support of the One Name, Consider all religious ceremonies superstitions.”

“Karta (The Creator) and Karim (The beneficent) are the names of the same God. Razak (The provider) and Rahim (The merciful) are also the names given to Him. Let no man in his error wrangle over differences in names. Worship the One God who is the Lord of all. Know that his form is one and He is the One light diffused in all.”

“The Khalsa is my own image. I shall always manifest myself in the Khalsa. The Khalsa is my body and soul; The Khalsa is the life of my life. The Khalsa is my perfect leader. The Khalsa is my brave friend. I say nothing untrue and to this; Guru Nanak, united with God, is my witness.”

“Why impress false religion on the world? It will be of no service to it. Why run about for the sake of wealth? You cannot escape from death. Son, Wife, friends, disciples, companions none of those will bear witness for thee. Think, O think, you thoughtless fool, you shall have in the end to depart alone.”  
(Swayya 32)

**Guru Gobind Singh was the Tenth Sikh Master, son of Guru Tegh Bahadur. His Jayanthi is observed on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2013**

Source: Bani of Guru Gobind Singh



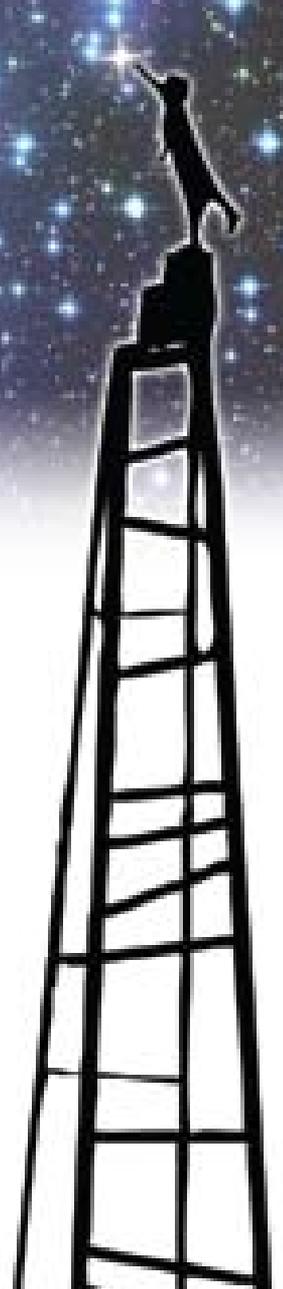
# REACH FOR THE STARS

Tiny innumerable specks and  
Sparks of life, that glitter and glimmer  
In the vast expanse  
Of your precious existence  
The stars that dispel forever  
The dark canvas of ignorance

The stars of intuition and wisdom  
Which light up the inner path  
In the journey to the Source  
A tug to the image of the self  
To look within, to live from within  
The stars that twinkle and wink for  
A reminder of being the Truth  
You are that life, you are the being and all that you are  
Reach for those stars  
Not that much high above, or far away  
Not beyond your comprehension  
Not unattainable or unreachable  
Not impossible or unimaginable  
Not in a separate cold space

Not out of you or around you  
Reach for those stars  
Those infinite and eternal forms  
Within you, deep in the centreless centre  
Where not only will you reach the stars  
You will then know, quite effortlessly  
You are indeed the star!

- *Mallika Sastry Chandrasekhar*





The World Celebrates

Swami Vivekananda's 150th Birth Anniversary

Starting from 12<sup>th</sup> January 2013

## OWNERSHIP IS BUT VANITY

### Swamiji at Kshir Bhavani Temple

Upon the request of a disciple, Swami Vivekananda, on His return from Amarnath and other places in Kashmir was narrating about His stay in Kshir Bhavani when He said that- He went to visit Kshir Bhavani Devi and staying there for seven days worshipped the Devi and made Homa to Her with offerings of Kshira (condensed milk). Every day He used to worship the Devi with a mound of Kshira as offering. One day, while worshipping, the thought arose in Swamiji's mind: "Mother Bhavani has been manifesting Her Presence here for untold years. The Mohammedans came and destroyed Her temple, yet the people of the place did nothing to protect Her. Alas, if I were then living I could never have borne it silently." When, thinking in this strain, His mind was much oppressed with sorrow and anguish, He distinctly heard the voice of the Mother saying, "It was according to My desire that the Mohammedans destroyed this temple. It is My desire that I should live in a dilapidated temple, otherwise, can I not immediately erect a seven-storeyed temple of gold here if I like? What

can you do? Shall I protect you or shall you protect me!" Swamiji said, "Since hearing that Divine voice, I cherish no more plans. The idea of building Maths etc., I have given up; as Mother wills, so it will be." The disciple, speechless with wonder, began to think, "Did He not one day tell me that whatever I saw and heard was but the echo of the Atman within me, that there was nothing outside?"-- and fearlessly spoke it out also --"Sir, you used to say that Divine Voices are the echo of our inward thoughts and feelings." Swamiji gravely said, "Whether it be internal or external, if you actually hear with your ears such a disembodied voice, as I have done, can you deny it and call it false? Divine Voices are actually heard, just as you and I are talking."

The disciple, without controverting accepted Swamiji's word, for His words always carried conviction.

Source: *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Vol. 7*



Birth place of Swami Vivekananda- Gour Mohan Mukherjee Street, Kolkata

Swami Vivekananda at Kshir Bhavani Temple

Swami Vivekananda with fellow disciples

# A YATRA TO REMEMBER



**The magnificent Shiva Linga at Bhojpur**



**Sharing experiences with Mataji**

**T**he heart of Incredible India... Madhya Pradesh is home to many spiritual treasures and is indeed an incredible journey for any sadhaka to undertake. Our yatra started off by visiting the famous temples of Ujjain and Omkareshwar, two of the twelve Jyothirlinga shrines of Lord Shiva.

We visited many other important places like Sandipani Ashram, where Lord Krishna, Balarama and Sudama received their education from Maharshi Sandipani and also Mandu and Maheshwar. The 'philosopher-queen' Ahilyabai Holkar's palace at Maheshwar is an architectural gem and a befitting tribute to this erstwhile ruler who ensured peace and prosperity for her people.

We reached Pachmarhi on the 4th day; it is a serene hill station tucked away in one of the highest peaks of the Satpuras. The mystic quality of this town cannot be summed up in words. Whether you take a dip in its silvery waterfalls or trek up to the hilltops to catch a glimpse of the sunset, the Divinity, which this place emanates, is palpable. The cave shrines of Bada Mahadev and Guptha Mahadev transport us to another *Yuga* where Lord Shiva sought sanctuary from the demon Bhasmasura.



**Lord Varaha at Udaigiri caves**





Of these, the cave of Jatashankar was a revelation to many of us who had a chance to meditate under its shade. The tranquil atmosphere, surrounding the cave and the vibrations emanating from this naturally formed Linga kept us spellbound and glued to our places. The gentle waters cascading down the walls of this cave gave all of us a chance to perform abhisheka to the Lord. None of us wanted to leave this natural wonder where we could feel the Supreme bliss enveloping us from all sides. The beautifully formed 'Om-shaped' tree was a symbol to the purity and sanctity of this place. Those who have visited this place will surely agree why it is difficult not to slip into Nirvana here.

The last leg of our journey took us to Bhojpur where we had darshan of Lord Shiva at the Bhojeshwar temple. The next day we visited the Udayagiri caves and Sanchi Stupa which was commissioned by Emperor Ashoka and as our trip came to an end all of us had heavy hearts as we geared up to say goodbye.

Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take but by the number of moments that take our breath away. We are all grateful to our Swamiji and Mataji for organizing such an enriching trip filled with many such moments.

*- Swaroopa*



**Beautiful sculptures at Sanchi**



**Narrow entry to Gupta Mahadev at Panchmadi**



**Roopvathi Mahal at Mandu**



**Our group at Ahilyabhai Fort**

# Humility

I was fortunate to be part of the annual Yatra taken by the Nachiketa Tapovan. This year it was to cover places in Madhya Pradesh and included places like Indore, Ujjain, Pachmarhi, Bhopal etc. Swamiji, Mataji and other tour regulars were part of the team. This was my first tour experience with them.

The itinerary included places of both tourist and spiritual significance, much to the like of the team. The incident related below happened on the last day of our trip while we were having lunch at one of the restaurants near Sanchi.

It was late afternoon and everyone was looking forward to indulge in the gastronomical delights. As the team is large consisting of 19 members, we sat in two different groups around two large circular tables. Everyone was happy and enjoying the food. Swamiji was as usual at his best; cracking jokes and pulling the legs of the team members. It was fun and frolic all around and above all, the food was very tasty. Everyone was relishing every moment of it along with the food. I sat next to Swamiji and was enjoying the events while filling the tummy. In due time, everyone on my table had completed their food and at the end, it was only Swamiji and me left, yet to finish our lunch. I completed my lunch and returned after washing my hands. I saw my food plate was still lying there while Swamiji was still having lunch. I thought, "The waiter will come to take away my plate".

I was waiting for the waiter to come and clear it off, although it looked odd on the table especially next to someone who was still having lunch. I considered for a while taking the plate myself and putting it in the collection tub. But my bloated ego did not let me do that and the plate was lying there. Swamiji finished his lunch and took his plate in the hand to put it in the plate collection tub and it immediately struck me that I should have done the same with my plate and cursed my ego for not letting me do that and prepared myself to pick up my plate.



Swamiji and Krishna at Bee Waterfall

Immediately to my utter surprise Swamiji took my plate in the other hand and started walking towards the collection tub. The act looked so casual and he walked away with a smile on his face and there was not even a trace of strained expression on his face. It was calm and composed as ever. It was a shocker for all of us. Everyone wondered why Swamiji carried someone else's food plate. It was a slap on my face in particular and I was speechless and did not know what to say or how to act. The onlookers were equally surprised by Swamiji's act. I was crestfallen, didn't know how to react, tears rolled down and I was ashamed of myself.

The act performed by Swamiji made me realize and understand the term "Humility". I realized that spirituality is not about Yoga and Dhyana but begins by changing our very basic nature and developing traits like simplicity, humility, love, compassion etc. It needs slaying of our tiny egos in the first place before we move forward. This requires a lot of self-introspection and each and every action of ours shall pass through a watch gate. It involves complete transformation of ourselves.

The above incident might look trivial to some and can be debated about the waiter's mistake for not taking away the plate and so on, but it has taught me a lesson for the life time. I'm fortunate to have the good company of Swamiji and Mataji and other highly evolved spiritual souls from whom I can learn a lot and can make efforts to change my personality. The journey is on...

- Krishna P.



# Annual Quandary – New Year

It is time to welcome another New Year. Freshness is in the air, and the morning mist of winter is setting up a perfect scene to embrace the occasion that everybody enthusiastically waits for, once in 365 days. We close the diary of current year and open a new leaf in the new one. The year may change but the gusto and mood remain the same, the best part is that if we happen to check the first few pages of theirs, they all sing the same lyric in the same tune, as the poet remains unchanged and so his zeal. It may sound odd but the reality will make us accept this fact as it showcases itself before us in the mirror called *introspection*.

Swami Vivekananda used to say- ‘all expansion is life’. Here our predicament is that we make the same resolutions time and again and that leads to stagnation in our thoughts. It is simply because we never allow them to mature. I even took the liberty and made this New Year as an excuse to analyze exactly where most of us are going horribly wrong in keeping up the promise that we make to ourselves at the annual moment. As I tried to dig deeper, startling facts took the form of spirit; appeared before me and laughed at me. My own resolutions of previous years just put me in point blank and shot a string of simple questions;

**Resolution - 1** : Do you keep cool under all circumstances?

**Resolution - 2** : Do you have patience?

**Resolution - 3** : Do you grow spiritually?

**Resolution - 4** : Do you exercise regularly?



**Resolution - 5** : Do you act and not to procrastinate?

**Resolution - 6** : Do you have a positive attitude?

**Resolution - 7** : Do you listen patiently?

**Resolution - 8** : Do you follow traffic rules?

**Resolution - 9** : Are you punctual?

**Resolution - 10** : Do you judge people?

Oh my God! I don't believe this. I couldn't answer even one honestly. Instead I tried my best to persuade them with reasons. They took pity on me and gave one more opportunity, went back saying "dear friend, here is pack of 365 days for you to put your best to realize what you promised to yourself and remember to unpack just one a day". Suddenly I woke up from the sleep. It was already noon. New Year hangover struck me hard, as I partied till late last night with my friends. I opened a page in my diary and found the first page is half full with slumber already. But happy to know that still 364 and 1/2 pages are left for me to go on an adventure that will surely defeat the fiend, that played tantrums with me on this New Year day. What is your resolution for this year? Don't worry, I am sure you didn't have the same dream as I!

- Koti Rajasekhar M.

# *Making a difference in many ways!*

**An Interview with Sri G.K.Kabra**

The Magnetron Therapy Center in Ameerpet, Hyderabad, imparts computer controlled PEMFT (Pulsed Electro Magnetic Field Therapy) with a vision to provide permanent cure for all chronic ailments and is available at an affordable cost.

The founder Sri G.K.Kabra, in his eighties, is a man with a mission – to provide non-invasive low cost therapies, especially for seniors, through his public charitable trust. After retiring from a top position in Alwyn and establishing the Kabsons Industries, he has been devoting most of his time in extending help to improve education and Primary health.

**Q: Please tell us about your childhood and how you came to settle in Hyderabad**

A: My family is from a small village in Aurangabad District in Maharashtra. We were 7th generation Rajasthanis settled in Maharashtra. I was 13 when I first attended school! I was the first person in our family to pursue college and as a result moved to Hyderabad. To pay for my engineering in Osmania University, I tutored 4 students regularly after college hours. It was difficult to make my ends meet but I worked very hard. Gradually, I was able to secure a job in Alwyn, India and moved all of my family (parents, siblings and their families) to Hyderabad. Gradually, with hard work and persistence, I grew to the position of No 2 in Alwyn.

**Q: Please tell us about your career life and success**

A: I left Alwyn in 1976 and started my own enterprise of 'Direct Vapor Pressure Appliances'. They are essentially small LPG cylinders with a stove. I had stumbled on a similar product during one of my visits abroad and envisioned the need to make it available in the Indian market. It was first sold in the Hyderabad Industrial Exhibition in a small stall in 1977. The stall attracted so much crowd that year that I was awarded the 'Most popular Stall' that year!



**Sri G.K. Kabra**

The KABSONS Group has since expanded into various areas in the Gas based fields and emerged as one of the largest Groups in the LPG Industry of India. I owe my success to the many good souls who have supported me along the way. I resigned from industry work at the age of 65.

**Q: What has your journey been like post retirement?**

A: I have handed over KABSONS Group to my children. Having experienced the value of education and recognizing the need for more quality institutions, we founded a school in my parents' name in a village called Tembhorni, in Solapur, Maharashtra. In the city of Hyderabad, 1000 students of industrial workers go to Kabsons Zilla Parishath School. We have also undertaken projects across seven districts in AP to improvise existing schools, for example, converting a tin roof to a normal roof etc.

**Q: Please tell us about your foray into Alternate medicine.**

A: A few years back I suffered from heavy bleeding. The ensuing colonoscopy did not shed any light.



I know from deep within that this body of ours has the ability to cure itself. I initiated mind body healing. Positive thoughts and intention go a long way in healing the body. I followed a normal diet with food supplement like Amla juice, Stevia, green tea etc. I recovered from the bleeding with no other medical intervention. This body is a clock and a great aid to recovery is time discipline, exercise and regular sleep routine.

My family suffers, from generations, of severe heart ailment. Apart from that I have also suffered severe hyperacidity since 21 years of age. A great doctor whom I consider as a wonderful teacher wrote down just three things to help my anxiety with respect to my health - reduce girth, do yogic exercises and meditation.

Four years ago, my knees could not be operated on because of poor blood flow. I started seeking Alternate therapy PEMFT. The therapy has really helped me with my condition. The underlying principle for PEMFT is- every cell in the body pulsates with a voltage of -70 to -90mv. This weakens when the body is diseased. PEMFT strengthens this force, takes about 3 months to improve the condition and can treat up to 70 different ailments of the body.

I had the desire to contribute to public health by establishing the Magnatron Center. We have state of the art equipment and heal at the cellular level.



This is something I want to give back to the society with. Those who can afford the fee pay for it and for those who cannot, we do not ask. We also actively try to employ technicians who have the necessary skills and who are from needy families.

**Q: Please share with us the ‘Guidelines’ and underlying philosophy that have driven your life?**

A: I take things the way they are. Energy least spent on negativity contributes to greater success and health. We have a problem in the body only when the energy produced is expended in worries and anxiety. When worry becomes a habit, reducing the habit takes a lot of energy. Practicing meditation as concentration on existence is greatly helpful in reducing this habit.

I have learnt to be immune to outside influences by developing detachment and that keeps my body active and healthy at the age of 81! When I was young I suffered financially but never felt control or attachment for money. Success came on its own. I supported a big family. I tried to empower others to sustain themselves.

Lastly, looking back there will be people who turned you away and those who have extended help. Be ever grateful to those who have helped you and also to those who turned you away, have no bitterness.

**- Harini N.**



# Generosity

In my Dusshera holidays, I read a book on Karna and his generosity. Karna was born to Kunti with the blessings of Sun God with Kavacha and Kundalas to protect him. As Karna was born to Kunti Devi before her marriage, Kunti was frightened and left the baby in a wooden box which floated away in water. A childless charioteer called Athiratha saw the basket and took it home. From that day, the child was called Karna. Karna was very generous. When anyone came to him and begged for something, he never thought twice before giving it to them. One day Indra, the father of his enemy Arjuna, came to Karna in the guise of an old Brahmin and requested Karna to give away his precious Kavacha and Kundalas. Karna knew that the armour and earrings were his protection; still, he gave them away.



Karna is a real-life hero in my heart. I questioned myself that day “why should I not be generous to others too?” Please everyone, question yourselves, “How can I be a generous person?”

Before I came to Vidya Mandir, I was a poor small child with two sisters and a brother. I used to work in a house and play under trees in dirty places. I used to wear dirty clothes. Then I met Swamiji, Mataji and Vasamma and my life has changed. I love these three people more than my parents. They were the Gods who helped me with good education, good food and clothes.

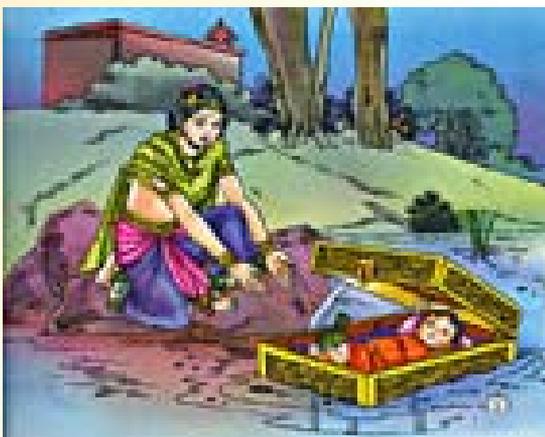
Swamiji, taught me how to speak English, behave with others and also how to help others. Mataji taught me Yoga and when she comes to school from the Jadcharla Ashram, she shows us how we can be generous to others. When Mataji takes a class I feel, “ah, I too must help others”.

Luckily through our school, I got a chance to help. On Sundays, I come to help with the “Balsamskar classes” that are taken on our school premises, to help other poor children like me. I also help at the Tapovan’s Free Dispensary. I am grateful for this chance and I would like to continue helping in this way throughout my life.

- A. Shailaja

9<sup>th</sup> Class,

Nachiketa Tapovan Vidya Mandir





# Green Resolutions

As the custom goes, this is the time of the year when we ask one another about the resolutions we made for the New Year. They could be for Personal development, Spiritual development or Social development, but let's begin this New Year with the kind which is all-encompassing and that is **Green Resolutions!**

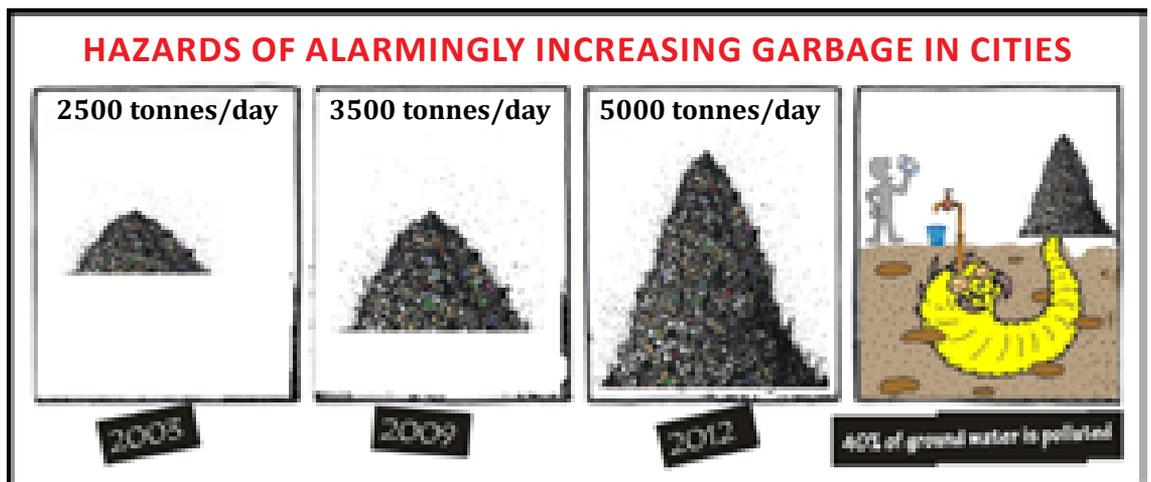
Recently, I was talking to a friend of mine from Bangalore who was lamenting about the garbage spilling all over the city and how a 'Garden city' has turned into a 'garbage city'. This could be the fate of every city, not just Bangalore! **Segregation of waste material** would be the first step towards **green sense and sensibility**. By doing this we can considerably reduce the amount of trash that goes into landfills and remember, every single household counts. If the municipal and city systems can extend a network to encourage and support this kind of initiative from citizens, it would no doubt be great, but until then, we need to clean up our dwelling place, our only home – the Earth. Law makers as well as citizens can take a clue from Sweden for being exemplary in this regard. If Sweden can do it, why can't we do it before waste management becomes an acute problem?

<sup>1</sup>Sweden's superefficient waste segregation and recycling systems have made sure only about 4% of the country's waste ends up in landfills.

How did Sweden do this? Firstly, Sweden started putting effective systems in place from the early 1990s and took a holistic approach, through policy changes, engagement with industry and awareness programs, to reach out to all stakeholders of Swedish society. Producers were made responsible for dealing with several categories of waste. By law, companies are responsible for collecting the entire waste-stream stemming from their products, either on their own or through public or private contractors. Landfill bans and taxes were introduced, and targets set for increased recycling. More than 90% of household waste in Sweden is recycled, reused or recovered. In 2005, Sweden made it illegal to landfill organic waste. Instead, the waste is biologically treated to make compost, biogas and fertilizer. Surely, Sweden is showing Asia's growing cities how to make a clean sweep.

<sup>2</sup>First step towards reduction of waste going to landfills is to segregate waste into different types of waste: **wet waste, dry waste, e-waste and rejects**. In typical Indian households-

1. **Wet waste** forms almost 60% of the total waste generated. Wet waste comprises of vegetable peels, fruit peels, leaves, flowers, food remains etc. Once segregated, wet waste can be composted to make fine manure or allowed to mulch to enrich the soil.





**2. Dry waste** forms about 20% of the total waste. It comprises of the dry recyclables such as plastic waste: dried milk covers, plastic covers, plastic bottles, plastic cups, spoons; paper waste such as dry papers, envelopes, letters, cartons, paper plates, invitations etc.; and metal waste such as aluminum cans, metal caps, aluminum foils, metal cans etc. Once collected, dry waste can be collected and given to Raddiwallahs or to dry waste collection centers.

**3. E-waste** forms about 10% of the total waste, includes more than a thousand hazardous and non-hazardous ingredients. Among hazardous ingredients are elements like lead, mercury, arsenic, cadmium, chromium and selenium which pose maximum risk to health if dumped in landfills or thrown out without proper handling (fig.1). E-waste can neither be subjected to incineration. E-waste like calculators, cameras, cables, tube lights, CFL lights, batteries, adapters, mobile phones, DVD, audio/video cassettes, printer cartridges, etc., should be stored separately and given to e-waste recyclers.

**4. Rejects** like biomedical waste, sanitary napkins, diaper, inert waste like sweep dust, hair, nail etc. form about 10%. Following the above steps will leave us with only 10% of the **rejects** which absolutely need to be thrown out of the house.

Dumping the waste from inside of our homes indiscreetly to the outside is merely postponing the imminent. Let's start sorting the mess out right away! If each household can cut down its waste output by at least 50%, by the end of this year we would be doing a great favor to ourselves and our future generations.

**REDUCE -REUSE-REPAIR-REUSE-RECYCLE**

**OM SHANTIH SHANTIH SHANTIH**

**- Annapurna R.**

1. "Why you can never find garbage in Sweden" from Times of India

2. Adapted from 'Reduce your Waste line' by Youth for Seva

# इवालङ्कारो दिङ्ङण = प्रोङ्गु प्रोङ्ङ

## Past Tense

So far, we have been using only present tense. We said रामः वनं गच्छति. We should have said रामः वनं गतवान्. This is a usage in Samskrit which is easy for the beginners. The word 'गतवान्' is not a verb. It is an adjective meaning 'a male who went'. Accordingly, the true translation of our sentence would be 'Rama (is) a man who went to forest', which essentially means 'Rama went to forest'. There is a verb form also which is difficult at this stage. In the sentence रामः वनम् अगच्छत्, the last word is actually a verb in past tense. We will look at this usage later at the appropriate time.) As गतवान् is not verb, it is the same for all the 3 'persons'. So, in the case of first person, it would be अहं वनं गतवान्. However, we would say सीता वनं गतवती. So, the usage is dependent on the लिङ्गम्. If the speaker is a lady, then she would say अहं वनं गतवती. Look at the following examples. The corresponding present tense verb is given in brackets.

१. आधुनिक-मानवः नैतिक-विषये अधः पतितवान् । (पतति)
२. अहं रामायणं पठितवान् । (पठामि)
३. पुत्रः मम वाहनं नीतवान् । (नयति)
४. बालः क्रीडाङ्गणे क्रीडितवान् । (क्रीडति)
५. देवः अमृतं पीतवान् । (पिबति)
६. व्यासः भारतं उक्तवान् । (वदति)
७. गणेशः तत् लिखितवान् । (लिखति)
८. हनुमान् सीतां दृष्टवान् । (पश्यति)
९. अहं प्रातः पञ्चवादने उत्थितवान् । (उत्तिष्ठामि)
१०. भवान् तं मिलितवान् । (मिलति)
११. तरुणः धूम्रपानं त्यक्तवान् । (त्यजति)
१२. रामः अयोध्यां आगतवान् । (आगच्छति)
१३. अहं गणितम् इष्टवान् । (इच्छामि)

Now a few feminine gender examples:

१. शिक्षिका आसन्दे उपविष्टवती । (उपविशति)
२. बालिका पाठं सम्यक् श्रुतवती । (शृणोति)
३. माता पाकं न कृतवती । (करोति)
४. मम सखी पुष्पं प्रेषितवती । (प्रेषयति)
५. कर्मकरी वस्त्रं प्रक्षालितवती । (प्रक्षालयति)
६. भगिनी पायसं खादितवती । (खादति)
७. सा संस्कृतं ज्ञातवती । (जानाति)

८. पत्नी उत्तमम् अल्पाहारं दत्तवती । (ददाति)
९. भवती तत् कुत्र स्थापितवती? (स्थापयति)
१०. सा मम नाम सम्यक् स्मृतवती । (स्मरति)
११. अहं तस्य नाम विस्मृतवती । (विस्मरामि)

Translate the following into Samskritam:

1. He drank water.
2. I (male) forgot pen.
3. You (male) got up.
4. She went home.
5. Teacher (male) said.
6. Today she did not come.
7. Why did you (female) forget homework (गृहकार्यम्)?
8. You (female) did not like the sari (शाटिका)?
9. I (male) knew Ramayanam.
10. My father gave money.
11. I (female) got up at 5am.
12. When did you (male) get up?
13. Servant (कर्मकरः) saw the thief.
14. My daughter did not drink milk (क्षीरम्).

(To be contd in the next issue)

- **Krupalu Ogeti**, Samskrita Bharati, Hyderabad  
email:okrupalu@samskritam.net





We thank Smt. Prema Bansal for gifting a cow and calf, Kali and Nandi to the Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram on the eve of Diwali. They have enhanced the beauty of the Ashram.



Nandi seeking Swamiji's attention as Kali grazes

## DIWALI CELEBRATIONS

Diwali on 13th November and Karthika Pournima on 28th November were celebrated with spiritual grandeur at Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram.



The Full Moon of Karthika



The resplendent Yoga Linga

On 26th November, Madhukar, a volunteer of Nachiketa Tapovan celebrated his daughter's birthday at the Ashram. We thank him for performing Annadanam to the tiny tots of Veda Vyasa Vidya Mandir and their parents.



Chetana Chinmayi receiving blessings from Mataji



Children enjoying the birthday feast served by Madhukar



# Events and Celebrations



Smt P Vasundhara's house in Jubilee Hills was the venue for a Satsang that took place on 30th October. Satsang was attended by members of Nachiketa Tapovan family. The occasion was graced by Swamiji and Mataji who gave spiritual discourse followed by a session of meditation.

A satsang was held by Swamiji and Mataji at Smt. Navitha Bagaria's House on 22nd November, 2012. Swamiji gave his Divine discourse and enlightened the gathering with concentration techniques on body, mind and soul.



## Diya Sales

On 31st October, there was a Diya sale at Fortune Towers, Madhapur. Crafts made by Nachiketa Vidyamandir children: diyas, rangoli, bandanwar, gift items, bags, stationery for all age groups of children were some of the items on sale. The response to the sales was very encouraging. Through mid-November there were a handful of Diya sales held in different places.

- 3/11/2012 Indu Fortune Fields;
- 5/11/2012 Near Hitech MMTS, KPHB;
- 8/11/2012 at Orchids International School, Madhapur;
- 6/11/2012 Amazon, Gachibowli;
- 7/11/2012 Krithika NGO at Jubilee Hills;
- 8/11/2012 and 9/11/2012 at Inteli Group Gachibowli;

Besides the on-site sales, Tapovan also accepted orders for diyas from Jubilee Hills Club, IGate Company, Hitech City and Oakridge International School, Bachupally.



Creativity of Vidya Mandir Students



Ms. Anisha Tandon

## Art of Flower Decoration

On 5/11/2012 there was a demonstration class of Ikebana offered by the International Hyderabad Chapter no. 250 by Ms. Anisha Tandon. The children of Nachiketa Tapovan Vidya Mandir enjoyed the demo very much besides learning the basic aspects of the Japanese art of flower decoration.



Vidya Mandir Students

## A Trip

On 10th November 2012, 35 senior students of Vidya Mandir, accompanied by teacher Jyothi made a trip to Birla Planetarium. We thank our volunteers Smt. Swathi and Rohan for accompanying them. Our special thanks for 24 X 7 travels for providing free transportation.

## Children's Day Celebrations

On 10<sup>th</sup> November, 2012, we celebrated Children's Day at Nachiketa Tapovan Vidya Mandir. Our children had fun games like sack race, lemon and spoon race, frog race, etc. Not only children but teachers also had great fun by participating in the Glass balancing race. After that sweets and chocolates were distributed to all as a tribute to our Chacha Nehru's birthday.



Students enjoying the Sack race

### SUBSCRIPTIONS:

#### WITHIN INDIA

Single copy	₹ 10
1 year	₹ 100
3 years	₹ 280
5 years	₹ 450

#### OVERSEAS

1 year	₹ 1500 (only in INR)
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### NACHIKETA'S GO GREEN CLUB...

*We convey our thanks to all the participants of WOW initiative. You helped us earn Rs 7,995 in the month of November and saved Mother Earth by recycling about 1599 kg of plastic and paper waste material.*

## Nachiketanjali ...an offering. Yes, I would like to

Subscribe / Renew \_\_\_\_\_ subscriptions to Nachiketanjali for 1 year/3 years/5years

My Subscription No. for renewal **NTSC** \_\_\_\_\_

Donate ₹ \_\_\_\_\_ to Nachiketanjali corpus fund as patron

Amount of ₹ \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed herewith by Draft/MO/Cheque/Cash (Add ₹ 30 for outstation cheques, drawn in favour of "Nachiketa Tapovan").

**Bank details to transfer funds: State Bank of India, Jubilee Hills Branch, Hyderabad.**

**IFS Code - SBI N0011745, Acct No. 30985314026.**

Please confirm wire transfer through email to [nachiketanjali1@gmail.com](mailto:nachiketanjali1@gmail.com)

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# HOW YOU CAN HELP

*Anna daanam maha daanam; vidya daanam mahattaram.  
Annena kshanika trupthihi yaavajjeevanthu vidyaya.*

Vidya Mandir at Nachiketa Tapovan is currently able to accommodate a family of about 230 children who receive all-round nourishment from man-making education to milk-n-meals and basic health-aid in an atmosphere of genuine love. Kind-hearted Well wishers have been the unseen force behind this offering to God. We thank you for your continued support.

## Donations towards operation costs

Sponsor a Teacher (Dance & Music)	₹ 5000/Month
Vidya Daanam (Education)	₹ 5700/year/child
Anna Daanam (Mid-day Meals)	₹ 4700/day
Alpa Aharam (Snacks)	₹ 700/day
Vastra Daanam (Uniforms)	₹ 800/2 pairs
Stationery Supplies (Copier Paper)	₹ 5000/term
Medicines (For needy people)	₹ 5000/month
Sponsor a Festival in temple	₹ 3000

## \*Corpus Fund Options

Sponsor a child	₹ 1 Lakh
Anna Daanam (Mid-day Meals)	₹ 50,000/-
Alpa Aharam (Snacks)	₹ 10,000/-

\* With the accrued annual interest the following will be achieved every year, respectively.

- One child's education annually.
- Mid-day Meals for the whole school for one day annually.
- Snacks for the whole school for one day annually.

## Donations within India- Details

Donations can be made directly by cheque or DD in favor of "Nachiketa Tapovan". The donations in India are exempt under the U/s 80G of IT Act, 1961. PAN No. AAATN2406K

Donations can be also directed through bank account as below

Bank Name : Bank of Baroda  
Branch Name : Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad  
A/c Name : Nachiketa Tapovan  
A/c No : 18090100004093  
IFSC Code : BARBOJUBILE

(Note: IFSC code contains the number "zero" not letter "O")

## Overseas Donations- Details

Donations can be made directly by cheque or DD in favor of "Nachiketa Tapovan". Nachiketa Tapovan has permission to receive donations from abroad under FCRA act

### Bank Information

Bank Name : State Bank of India  
Branch Name & Code : Kavuri Hills-12655  
A/c Name : Nachiketa Tapovan  
A/c No : 30953215793  
IFS Code : SBIN0012655  
SWIFT Code : SBININBB214

(Note: IFS code contains the number "zeros" not letters "O")



Born: January 23, 1897

## Salute Netaji on his Birth Anniversary...

*One individual may die for an idea; but that idea will, after his death, incarnate itself in a thousand lives. That is how the wheel of evolution moves on and the ideas and dreams of one nation are bequeathed to the next.*

**Griha Constructions, Chennai**

# *Nachiketanjali's* LIBRARY SCHEME

**Nachiketanjali** is a monthly magazine, published by Nachiketa Tapovan, a non-profit organization. The content of the magazine is a good balance of various aspects that could contribute to well-rounded development of individuals including youth and children. The pages come alive with articles on yoga, Indian culture, inspiration, youth expressions and insights on practical spirituality.

Nachiketanjali's Library Scheme aims to reach youth especially in schools, colleges, universities and other centers of learning.

Sponsoring one library costs only Rs 450 which will enable subscription for 5 years! Sponsors can choose the libraries or Nachiketanjali can select the libraries on the sponsor's behalf. The names of the Sponsors and the libraries sponsored by them would be published in Nachiketanjali magazine.

We await your positive response which will significantly contribute to this noble cause and will also help 230 needy and underprivileged children who are obtaining character-building education, totally free of cost at Nachiketa Tapovan!

Please send your sponsorship through cash, check or DD (in favor of 'Nachiketa Tapovan') to:

**Nachiketa Tapovan**  
Plot No. 70, Phase I,  
Kavuri Hills, Madhapur,  
Guttalabegumpet, Serilingampally,  
R.R.District. A.P. 500 081

Bank details for NEFT:

**State Bank of India,**  
**Jubilee Hills Branch, Hyderabad.**  
**IFS Code - SBI N0011745,**  
**Acct No. 30985314026. Please confirm**  
**wire transfer through email to**  
**nachiketanjali1@gmail.com**



“The gift of spirituality and spiritual knowledge is the highest. The truths of the Upanishads are before you. Take them up, live up to them, and the salvation of India will be at hand.”

– Swami Vivekananda



# Invitation



We cordially invite you to attend our celebrations



## Sharada Ma Birthday

4th January 2013 (as per *Thithi*)

At Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram  
Kodgal Village, Jadcherla,  
Mahaboobnagar Dist.



## Vivekananda Birthday

12th January 2013 at 10:00 am



## Republic Day & Annual Day

26th January 2013  
from 9:30 am onwards

*Venue:*

## Nachiketa Tapovan

Plot No. 70, Phase I, Kavuri Hills, Madhapur, Hyderabad.

## Festivals & Events of January 2013



1

Kalpataru day



1

New year



12

Vivekananda Birthday



13

Lohri



14

Makara Sankranti



18

Guru Govind Jayanthi



23

Subhas Chandra Bose Jayanthi



25

Milad-Un-Nabi



26

Republic Day



28

Lalalajpathi Rai Jayanthi



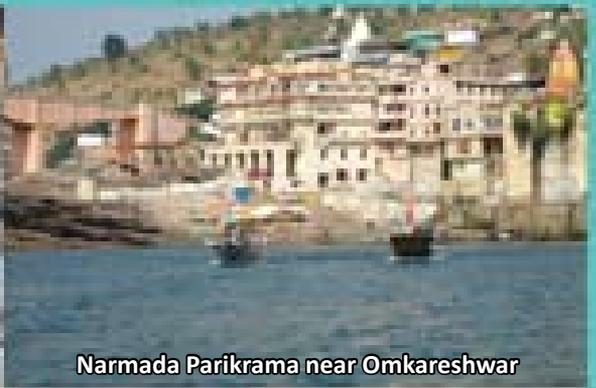
30

Gandhiji Vardhanthi





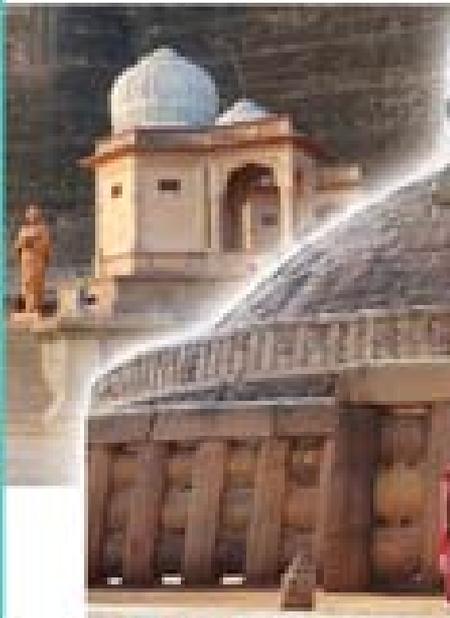
Apsara Falls, Panchmadi



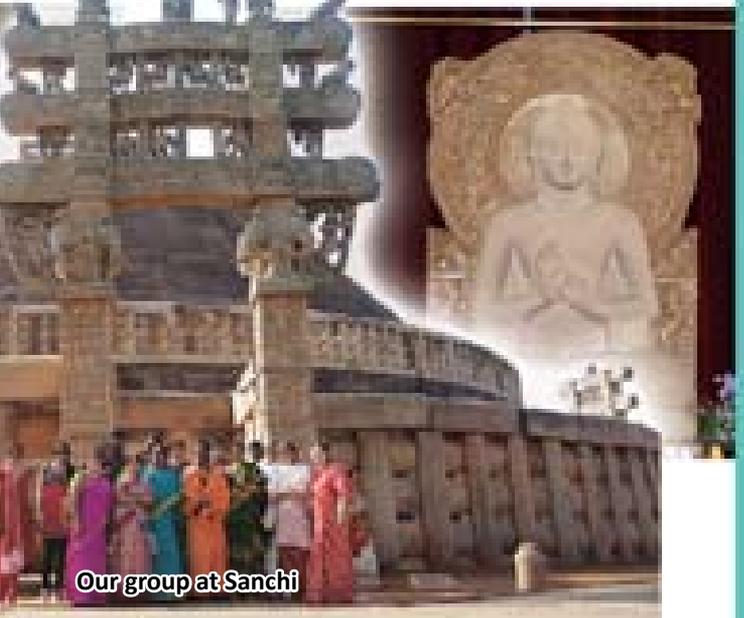
Narmada Parikrama near Omkareshwar

## *Madhya Pradesh Yatra 2012*

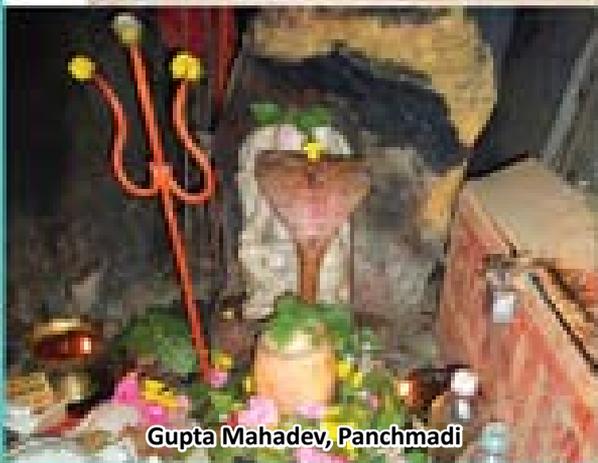
Ahilyabai Fort



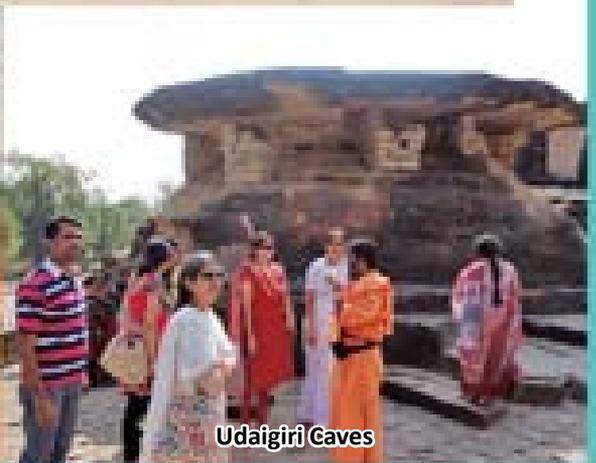
Buddha at Sanchi



Our group at Sanchi



Gupta Mahadev, Panchmadi



Udaigiri Caves

**Hotel Sri Brindavan**

Nampally Station Road, Hyderabad



Swami Vivekananda Rock Memorial at Kanyakumari

*We salute Eknathji Ranade a great visionary and the dedicated life-workers of Vivekananda Kendra who built this Swami Vivekananda Rock Memorial at Kanyakumari.*

