

# *Nachiketanjali*

*...an offering*



*Protect the environment today!*

*Because tomorrow could be too late!*



**Vol: 3**

**Issue: 10**

**June: 2013**

**Price: ₹ 10**

# *Srirama Navami Celebrations*

## *@ Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram*



*Devotees throng the Ashram to watch the celestial wedding of Sri Sita Rama*



*Sri P. Suryanarayana Reddy & Smt. Vasundhara perform wedding rituals*



*Mataji & Swamiji seek blessings from the celestial couple*

## Contents

	Editorial	2	The Moments...	20	
	Sanctity of the Rivers	3	Reminiscences of our Ashram Visit	21	
	Letter from a Mother	4	Knowledge & Wisdom	22	
	If not for the sake of your mother...	5	The Rocks that Move	23	
	Sri Ramakrishna's Amrita Dhara	6	Power of Prayer	24	
	The Three Cities	7	Do our names symbolize...	25	
	Inner Peace	8	Love Food - Hate Waste	26	
	Vivekanjali	10	Encroachment	27	
	True Homage	11	Symbolism in life	28	
	The Genesis of Upadesa Saar	12	Sanskrit Lesson - Thirty Eight	29	
	Blank	13	Ashram News	30	
	The Journey	14	Stars of Nachiketa Tapovan	32	
	A true citizen of the world	16	How you can help	35	
	Highlights of Eventful 2012	18	Creative Corner	36	



### Seek the Creator in His Creation

We all live in this glorious scientific age. Yet we have our limitations. We may fly like birds, swim like fish, set foot on the moon and claim the patent rights for many discoveries. But are we capable of creating blood that flows through our system? Or can science prove what happens to the mind and soul after death?

Is it possible to understand the true essence of God's creation? We are thrilled on seeing the beauty of a rose, beautiful hues of the butterfly, synchronized flight of the birds, so on and so forth. But can we create these wonders?

God doesn't dwell only in our altars. He is everywhere, all around us, in all forms, in all His creation – Sun, Moon, Stars, Rivers, Trees, Flowers, Human beings, Birds, Insects and so on. In fact if we see through our inner eye, He is there, right within us.

Once, a Nobel laureate travelling in a train was enjoying the beauty of nature through the glass window. Within no time he was identified and surrounded by fellow passengers who admired and sang praises of his achievements. He stopped them with a wave of his hand and said "Why do you praise me? Look at nature; have you ever praised the Creator for His creation? My achievements are only a fragment in His vast creation. Please stop praising me and instead try to explore His creation and seek the Creator..."

If we observe, we will be surprised to see nature functions according to a set pattern. And even a slight disturbance creates an imbalance. It is only because of the systematic functioning of the five elements, Air, Water, Fire, Earth and Space that we are alive today.

So, instead of intervening and invading the creation it is high time we realize that nature is at its best with its own devices. As an alternative if we start exploring the secrets of nature, it is highly possible to encounter the Creator. Then the egoistic 'I' will disappear and our search changes its course and will lead us to the inner 'I'. We will be amazed to witness the entire creation of the Creator existing within us too.

- Subhadra K.

Founder & Managing Trustee  
**Vasundhara P.**

Adi Praneta  
**Swami Nachiketanananda Puri**

Adhyatmik Praneta  
**Paramahansa Swami Shivananda Puri**

Editor-in-Chief  
**Subhadra K.**

Executive Editors  
**Annapurna R.**  
**Harini N.**  
Design & Layout: **Shyam R.**

Young Columnists Team  
**Avinash A. Neetika G.**  
Advisory Team  
**Rajasekhar M., Muralidhar M.**  
Sale and Operation Team **Laxman M.**  
Promotion Team  
**Vandana M., Mamta A.**  
Software Team  
**Krishna P., Purvvi B.**

#### Editorial & Publication Office

#### Nachiketa Tapovan

Plot No. 70, Phase I,  
Kavuri Hills, Madhapur, Guttalabegumpet, Serilingampally,  
R.R.District. A.P. 500 081, Tel: 9849168937  
email:nachiketanjali1@gmail.com  
website:www.nachiketatapovan.org  
www.facebook.com/nachiketatapovan



# Sanctity of the Rivers



**D**uring the recent Kumbh Mela several questions were raised about the sanctity of rivers. It has been an age old practice to have a dip in holy rivers if not every day at least on all auspicious occasions. This practice has led to many pilgrim places blossoming along the course of holy rivers.

It is interesting to note that each river is unique in its characteristics. Water is not the same in all rivers and differs in its properties. In some rivers bacteria forms frequently while some rivers have no bacteria at all. Taste of the water differs and there is a lot of variation in the texture of the sand on river beds.

According to legend, Manasa Sarovar on the west of Himalayas is unique in its sanctity and it is here that the wish fulfilling tree, *Kalpa Vriksh* existed and is the place where God resides. In ancient times the present states of Himachal Pradesh, Kashmir, Uttaranchal, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Bengal were all submerged under water. It was only later with the changes in earth's atmosphere that these places have surfaced and it was at this time that River Ganga started flowing on earth. In a way all other rivers

have their origin in Manasa Sarovar alone. Rivers Sindhu, Saraswathi, Brahmaputra, Yamuna are all part of Manasa Sarovar.

River Ganga flows over mountains and rocks and touches the plains at Haridwar. The water here retains its sanctity and is not infested by bacteria. Small pieces of stones and rocks are found in the water at this point. It is stated that it was here that Sage Vishwamitra, through his power of penance showed the departed *Kauravas* and other warriors to their kith and kin. As the river courses along, Ganga joins River Saraswathi and Yamuna at Allahabad and is called the *Triveni sangamam* or the holy Prayag. Our ancient sages, seers and kings have performed severe penance and austerities at holy Prayag thereby enhancing its sanctity. This has led to the celebration of *Kumbh Mela* and *Maha Kumbh Mela*.

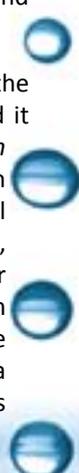
Kasi or Varanasi is another pilgrim town that was constructed on the banks of Ganga. Many devotees have experienced immense peace on entering Kasi and having a dip in the holy Ganga. Such is its sanctity!

River Yamuna is home for Sri Krishna's Janma-bhoomi and a silent witness to His Divine *leelas*. River Narmada is also considered to be holy and the tedious Narmada Parikrama performed by many bhikshus and *sadhus* stands as proof for its sanctity. Legend states that Mother Ganga takes her bath in River Narmada.

River Godavari takes birth in Nasik and many pilgrim places like Trayambakeshwar and Shirdi that surfaced in this region have been home to many a spiritual seeker.

Hence it is not without reason that these rivers are considered to be holy and our sages have accredited great merits to those who take a dip in these holy rivers.

**Source: A study from Vedic literature**





*Letter  
from a  
Mother  
to a  
Daughter*



**“My** dear girl, the day you see I’m getting old, I ask you to please be patient, but most of all, try to understand what I’m going through.

If when we talk, I repeat the same thing a thousand times, don’t interrupt to say: “You said the same thing a minute ago”... Just listen, please. Try to remember the times when you were little and I would read the same story night after night until you would fall asleep.

When I don’t want to take a bath, don’t be mad and don’t embarrass me. Remember when I had to run after you making excuses and trying to get you to take a shower when you were just a girl?

When you see how ignorant I am when it comes to new technology, give me the time to learn and don’t look at me that way ... remember, honey, I patiently taught you how to do many things like eating appropriately, getting dressed, combing your hair and dealing with life’s issues every day ... the day you see I’m getting old, I ask you to please be patient, but most of all, try to understand what I’m going through.

If I occasionally lose track of what we’re talking about, give me the time to remember, and if I can’t, don’t be nervous, impatient or arrogant. Just know in your heart that the most important thing for me is to be with you.

And when my old, tired legs don’t let me move as quickly as before, give me your hand, the same way that I offered mine to you when you first walked.

When those days come, don’t feel sad ... just be with me, and understand me while I get to the end of my life with love.

I’ll cherish and thank you for the gift of time and joy we shared. With a big smile and the huge love I’ve always had for you, I just want to say, I love you ... my darling daughter.”

*- Sergio Cadena*



# If not for the sake of your mother... at least for the sake of the unseen umbilical cord...

The whole day, I was witnessing people getting in and getting out. I was peeping into their minds, into their hearts, weighing their gestures, sometimes just feeling them through their talk ... their smile ... their excitement ... their gossips. Youth were busy with their phones, internet, and face book, sending and receiving messages to those whom they have just left or soon going to meet. Some of them were reading books and few were simply engaged in watching the outside world.

Sun was setting slowly, bidding farewell to all, making promise to come back soon. And I was silently moving with the setting sun, witnessing various destinations, watching fort, schools, parks, industries, parliament, police station, and at times even the red light area and the lustful eyes ... And I was also witnessing light but dark night ... royal but empty paths ... and youth but without hearts. No one knew what was going to happen the next moment ... and suddenly I was thrown on the road without any destination ... simply moving, spinning non-stop for 2 hrs ...! And then that happened, that I never wanted to be part of... never ever wanted to witness.

A young girl who was dreaming that one day she will become a doctor and will go to her village to serve the needy and provide a good life to her parents, who sold their property to educate her, was planning her future very meticulously,

spending every rupee properly and organizing every minute religiously but never knew that her dreams are going to be shattered that very next moment. I was also not aware that something very terrible is going to happen and I would be a helpless witness to this whole tragedy. Suddenly, 6 to 7 lustful youth started abusing and beating up this young girl and her boy-friend for no reason. They did not stop there, they pulled the girl down and mercilessly raped her again and again ... non-stop for 2 hrs ... shattering her dreams, plans ... everything!

She cried ... she begged ... she shouted for help ... she pleaded ... but everything went in vain. That crying soul was asking "... At least for the sake of your mother ... at least for the sake of this womb ... at least for the sake of the unseen **umbilical** cord ... please leave me ..." But the youth, the so called children of immorality were engaged in the act of brutality, forgetting that sooner or later criminals are bound to be punished.

That cute girl was making her plans ... future plans ... thinking that one day everything will be alright. She will give the best to the society and take extreme care of her parents and everyone around. I am that BUS who unfortunately knows carrying but not caring. This brutal incident left me completely wounded, paralyzed, and shocked and that girl...???

*I don't know what to say to those youth but I want to know where have we lost Ahalyabai Holkar, who gave death punishment to her son? I don't want to blame lost parenting but want to know about the lost parents. It is unfortunate that we are still considering thick blood but not the unseen umbilical cord. How many parents will show that guts? I think we have not only lost the parents but also lost humanity. Don't we feel ashamed when we here that piercing cry ... bleeding heart pleading for life ... that crying soul shouting for help ... ???*

- Swami Nachiketananda Puri



Back to School!





# Surendra Nath Mitra



When a person does something wrong his conscience begins to bite him and a mist of shame covers his face. At that time it is extremely difficult to stop the momentum of his bad tendencies. He loses discrimination, self-esteem and even his family members do not trust him. Some people then, out of desperation try to take their lives. Others go to a holy person and surrender themselves to him. Surendra nath Mitra tried both. Surendra was born in 1850. Surendra seemed to be a typical young man of his day – open minded, carefree and indifferent to religion. Most of his friends were of the bohemian type, and like them, he often got drunk and was promiscuous. His licentious conduct was ruining his mental peace. Ramchandra Dutta was a neighbour of Surendra's, and wanting to help him asked him to accompany him to visit the Master at Dakshineswar. From the very first meeting with the Master, Surendra became extremely devoted to Him and went to Dakshineswar almost every Sunday. What happens when God holds a person? First his sensitive ego is crushed and he becomes humble. Second he does not enjoy mundane things and his mind dwells in God and third he feels an irresistible attraction for God and Holy Company. Master had taken responsibility for Surendra. He knew that Surendra was a gem covered with worldly mud. Master never scolded Surendra for his bad habits. By pouring out His love and affection on this disciple, He conquered his heart.

Surendra used to make arrangements for the food and bedding for those devotees who spent nights with the Master at Dakshineswar. In a conversation with Surendra, Master told the following things:

- \* ***Come here every now and then. A brass pot must be polished everyday otherwise it gets stained. One should constantly live in the company of holy men.***
- \* ***The renunciation of 'women & gold' is for sanyasis. It is not for you. Now and then you should go into solitude and call on God with a yearning heart. Your renunciation should be mental.***

\* ***The disciplines to be practised are kindness to living beings, service to the devotees and chanting the name of God.***

One day in 1881, Surendra approached the Master with a garland and wanted to put it around His neck. But the Master took it in His hand and threw it aside. Surendra's pride was wounded and his eyes filled with tears. He felt God cannot be bought with money; He cannot be possessed by a vain person. Why should He accept my worship? In the meantime, listening to the bhajans, the Master began to dance in an ecstasy of joy. He put around His neck the garland He threw aside. Seeing this Surendra's joy was unbounded and said to himself, "God crushes one's pride, no doubt, but He is also the cherished treasure of the humble and lowly".

Surendra was one of the Master's suppliers, one of the most important householder disciples and also has many firsts to his credit. He was the first to inaugurate the birthday festival of Sri Ramakrishna at Dakshineswar. It was through Surendra that Swami Vivekananda first met the Master. Surendra also had the first oil painting of the Master made. When the Master passed away, some of His young disciples had to return to their homes against their wishes while others had no place to go. The Master appeared to Surendra and said, "My boys are roaming about, without a place to live. Please attend to them." Accordingly Surendra rented a house at Baranagore and provided food and other necessities to the monastic disciples of the Master.

Surendra died at the age of 40. Before his death he set aside one thousand rupees for purchasing land for a monastery dedicated to the Master. When Belur Math was built, this money was used to purchase the marble flooring for the original shrine.

**Source: They lived with God  
by Swami Chetanananda**





## The Three Cities

Three Asuras had obtained a boon that enabled them to build three flying cities. These cities travelled between the three worlds, causing havoc. Desperate, the Devas turned to Brahma. Brahma revealed that the cities could be destroyed only if they were struck with a single arrow. This could happen only if the cities were aligned in a single line and the arrow was shot by a Divine archer. Shiva was the chosen archer. Meru was the shaft of his bow and Sesa his bowstring. The earth was his chariot; the sun and the moon were its wheels. Brahma was the charioteer and the four books of the Veda were his horses. Shiva waited for the cities to align in a single line. But the cities kept flying in different directions; such was their will to survive.

Vishnu then took the form of a monk and visited the three cities and taught the Asuras the doctrine of renunciation. Eventually the Asuras lost all interest in worldly life. They did not bother to fly their cities in different directions. The cities aligned in a single line. At that moment, Shiva drew his great bow. Vishnu served as his arrow. Shiva released the arrow and Vishnu pierced all three cities, destroying them in an instant. Shiva smeared his body with the ash of the cities - three horizontal lines. (Shiv Purana)

Ash is the symbol of the soul: that which survives even when the three worlds are destroyed. Vishnu as Shiva's arrow liberates the soul of the Asuras entrapped by their demonic bodies. Shiva uses this ash to smear his body.

Source: Myth = Mithya

- Dr Devdutt Pattanaik

## Master of the Mind



*The one who is a slave of the mind is an ordinary human being. The one who understands the nature of the mind is called human being. The one who directs and harmonizes his mind is an extraordinary human being. The one who conquers his mind is the Master of the mind. Master of the mind enters realms of higher consciousness and always dwells in samadhi (Absolute or Brahman) at will.*

**Paramahansa  
Swami Shivananda Puri**



*Back to School!*



# Inner Peace

Calmness is the state in which we should receive all life's experiences. Only those who experience harmony within their souls know the harmony that runs through nature.

The mind in chaos finds chaos all around. But he who has inner peace can abide in this state even in the midst of outer discord. God's song is the song of calmness. Calmness is the life breath of God's immortality in us. Peace is the best medicine for our body, mind and soul. Peace is the Altar of God, the condition in which happiness exists.

We have to keep a secret chamber of silence within ourselves, where we will not let moods, trials, battles or disharmony to enter. In this chamber of peace, God will visit us.

We should pattern our life by a triangular guide. Calmness and sweetness are the two sides; the base is happiness. Whether we act quickly or slowly, in solitude or in the busy marts of men, our center should be peaceful, poised.

It is a well-proven fact, that the milk of an angry mother can have a harmful effect on her child. Indulgence in constant thoughts of fear, anger,

melancholy, remorse, envy, sorrow, hatred, discontent or worry and lack of necessities for normal and happy living, such as right food, proper exercise, fresh air, sunshine, agreeable work and a purpose in life, all are causes of nervous disease.

The nervous system was not made to withstand the destructive force of intense emotion or persistent negative thoughts and feelings. The sufferers must be willing to analyze their condition and remove the disintegrating emotions and negative thoughts that are little by little destroying us. The victims of nervousness must understand their cases and must reflect on those continual mistakes of thinking which are responsible for their maladjustments to life.

As soon as our mind becomes restless, give it a whack with our will and order it to be calm. Lack of proper distribution of nerve force is the sole cause of nervousness. Our body that is relaxed and calm invites mental peace. Feel the energy vibrating there, energizing and revitalizing. Feel that we are not the bodies but we are that life which sustains our bodies.

When we have peace in every movement of our bodies, peace in our thinking and in our will power, peace in our love, and peace in our ambitions, remember, we have connected God with our life.

We should not make a fuss about anything. Fear of failure or sickness is cultivated by turning over such thoughts in the conscious mind until they become rooted in the subconscious mind and finally in the unconscious.

We have to uproot them from within by forceful concentration upon courage and by shifting our consciousness to the Absolute peace of God within. We have to have faith in Him. Why suffer now when the malady has not yet come?



The healing will be instant. Mentally surround ourselves with spirit ... we will feel his wonderful protection. Fear comes from the heart; if our heart is truly quiet, we cannot feel fear at all.

The past and the future loads are too heavy for the mind to carry, so we must restrict the amount of the load. Why continue to carry it in the mind? A swan eats only the solid content from the liquid it scoops up in his bill; similarly we should keep in mind only the lessons we have learnt from the past and forget unnecessary details.

When we have too much to do at one time we become discouraged. The clock cannot tick 24 hours away in one minute and we cannot do in one hour what we can do in 24 hours. We have to fully enjoy the wonder and beauty of each moment. The more we do that, the more we will feel the presence of that power in our life.

But isn't it better to live simply without so many luxuries and with fewer worries? More security and peace will be found in simple life?

So it is with our life. We will become bankrupt- emotionally, mentally, physically and spiritually. No matter how busy we are, we should not forget now and then to free our minds completely from worries and all duties ... try to remain for one minute at a time without thinking negatively, fixing the mind on the peace within, especially if worried. Following that, think of some happy incident; dwell on it and visualize it. Mentally go through some pleasant experience over and over again until you have forgotten your worries entirely.



*Silence is all, say the sages  
Silence watches the work of  
the ages  
In the book of silence the  
cosmic scribe  
Has written his cosmic pages  
Silence is all, say the sages*

**- SRI AUROBINDO**

If we can do that, we will find upon awakening that the mental tension has been relieved and the worry has loosened its grip. Life is entertaining when we do not take it too seriously. One of the best characteristics of the American people is their ability to laugh.

Knowing that we are all children of God, we should make up our mind to be calm, no matter what happens. Quiet the outgoing mental restlessness and turn our mind within. Then we will see the underlying harmony in our life and in the nature. The beauty and depth of Yoga lies in its bestowal of this invariable tranquility.

Flashes of Divine joy will come with this realization. Sometimes a deep illumination will pervade one's being, banishing the very concept of fear. The delusion of matter, the consciousness of being only a mortal body, is overcome by contacting the sweet serenity of spirit, attainable by daily meditation.

The moment we are restless or disturbed in mind, we will retire to silence and meditation until calmness is restored.

**- Siluveru Sudarshan**



*Back to School!*



**Nachiketanjali** June 2013

**9**



## Quotes by Swami Vivekananda

*First, believe in the world—that there is meaning behind everything.*

*Fill the brain with high thoughts, highest ideals, place them day and night before you, and out of that will come great work.*

*We are what our thoughts have made us; so take care about what you think. Words are secondary. Thoughts live; they travel far.*

*“Face the brutes”. That is a lesson for all life- face the terrible, face it boldly. Like the monkeys, the hardships of life fall back when we cease to flee before them.*

*“Comfort” is no test of truth; on the contrary, truth is often far from being “comfortable”.*

*This is the first lesson to learn: be determined not to curse anything outside, not to lay the blame upon anyone outside, but stand up, lay the blame on yourself. You will find that is always true. Get hold of yourself.*

*Even the greatest fool can accomplish a task if it were after his or her heart. But the intelligent ones are those who can convert every work into one that suits their taste.*

*Don't look back—forward, infinite energy, infinite enthusiasm, infinite daring, and infinite patience—then alone can great deeds be accomplished.*

*... Those who work at a thing with their whole heart receive help from God.*

*“The earth is enjoyed by heroes”—this is the unflinching truth. Be a hero. Always say, “I have no fear.”*





“Amul Girl weeps for first time to pay homage to Dr Verghese Kurien”, read the title of a news item in one of the reputed national newspapers. The advertisement by a famous dairy brand, Amul thanked its founder Dr. Verghese Kurien, the man who pioneered the White Revolution in India, thereby making us self-sufficient in the dairy sector and enabling millions of rural women’s self-dependence. The love and respect the advertisement showed for the man was moving. Similarly, everyone from young kids to working professionals was united in grief when Steve Jobs, the man without whom many technological products would not have seen the light of the day, passed away. We love people, we love even those with whom we are not remotely linked to by any familial ties. Most of us are filled with gratitude for the people who did something which touched our lives. Captain Anuj Nayyar died fighting on the borders for us. March 23 was the day of martyrdom of the trio of Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru. As we all know, they gave up their lives for freedom of our Motherland. They did not preach anything but set an example for us to emulate by leading a life of courage, sacrifice and selflessness. Not just those who passed away, we even feel specially connected with living legends.

Seen from a different per-spective, men may come and go but institutions go on forever. The institutions these ‘ordinary people in extraordi-

nary ways’ built and the values they upheld are for the present as well as for posterity. They stand out as beacon lamps, guiding the way out of dicey situations. Sometimes, it seems as though the institution would not survive further without their champions. For instance, when Dr. E. Sreedharan retired, as the Managing Director of the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation, the question which many raised was, “What about the Metro now?” These stalwarts stand synonymous for us with the institutions they built. The right homage that we can pay to them is perhaps nurturing the establishments they made and furthering their cause, making it our own, rather than issuing giant advertisements in newspapers or observing a holiday on their birthdays or death anniversaries.

The common thread which runs through all successful professionals and leaders is immense love for what they do, compassion towards their Motherland and empathy towards the feelings of their people. Undoubtedly, as said by someone, ‘a single instrument cannot create a symphony; it takes an orchestra to play one’. It is our duty to strengthen the hands that work and serve, and support the foundation that the illustrious have laid, be it in any field.

In the social sector, Nachiketa Tapovan is a young, energetic and enthusiastic institution working its way up to touch more and more lives. In its own modest way, it is helping many of the less-fortunate children and troubled minds to create their own destinies. While it is more than a blessing to be part of such an endeavour, we should all understand that the success of any of its activities depends on us in the end. Let us all hold hands and move together, praying and working for the needy and doing our ‘mite’ for the betterment of our Motherland.



**Neetika Gogula,**

B.A. L.L.B. (Hons) has passion for writing articles on social issues.



# The Genesis of

## Upadesa Saar

An old legend has it that a group of *Rishis* known as 'Mimamsikas' living in *Darukavana* practiced many rites and rituals devoutly with meticulous care in accordance with the scriptural injunctions pertaining to the "Karmakanda" of the Vedas. Consequently, they acquired a measure of inner integration which in its turn gave them certain supernatural powers. This acquirement of psychic powers made them too egoistic, proud and arrogant. They came to entertain a very strong false belief that actions (Rituals) are supreme and independent in giving fruits of their choice and hence even spiritual liberation could be attained through actions (*Karma*). Blinded by this belief which is moored to their fattened ego, they failed to reckon with the fact that action can only breed more and more action in a cause-effect sequence. Strict adherence to *Karma Kanda* might bestow on the subject some "Siddhis" or psychic powers but, they do not contribute to the attainment of ineffable peace of spiritual enlightenment.

Spiritual illumination is the result of a mutation in the depths of consciousness, which takes place when all action, however, noble and divine may it be, comes to a cessation as a result of profound enquiry and insight. After all, the acquisition of supernatural powers, more often than not, deludes the mind, strengthens the ego, puffs up pride and vanity and drifts the aspirant away from the pursuit of Truth. This is exactly what has happened to these *Rishis* of *Darukavana*.

The All-merciful Bhagavan Shiva took pity on the erring ascetics of *Karmakanda* and wanted to correct their false belief in exclusive *karma* as a redeeming force. He desired to bring them to the path of true devotion and knowledge and save them from the imminent fall from the scale of evolution attained by them after arduous efforts. Lord Shiva, therefore, made His descent

in the guise of a handsome, young, wandering monk. Simultaneously, His inseparable friend, Lord Vishnu made His appearance in the form of a young damsel with bewitching beauty. The *Rishis* who beheld her enticing charm and beauty found themselves caught in the coils of delusion. The vivacious maiden with her mesmerizing song and dance lured them away from their 'Naistic karma' or ritualistic worship. When they were in the thick of infatuation, the celestial maiden quietly disappeared to their utter surprise. With a sudden jolt as it were, they came to their senses and began to realize their foolishness. Sense of loss of merit on one hand and fear of adverse reactions on the other gripped their hearts.

Meanwhile, something else was in store for them to add to their discomfiture and ignominy. When they came back to their place of worship near their cottages, they discovered that their wives had disappeared. Overpowered by love for the handsome, young *sadhu* they ran after him. The *Rishis* were enraged at this. They used their hard earned supernatural powers and conjured up a wild elephant and a ferocious tiger and set them on to kill the *sadhu*. The Lord of Yoga and the Source of all powers and strength behind the world, in no time slew the animals. He took the elephant's skin for a robe and the tiger's for



a wrap. Bewildered and flabbergasted at the unexpected turn of events, the *Rishis* began to realize that they were up against someone more superior, more powerful than themselves. Immediately they surrendered to the Lord and asked Him to reveal His true form. Lord Shiva admonished them for their egoistic vanity and lack of understanding about the place of action in the scheme of spiritual life. The *Rishis* begged the Lord to enlighten them on the right path of redemption. The Lord granted their wish and began to teach them what all they should learn.

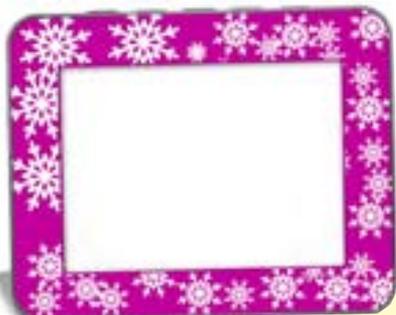
It was this legend that the poet-disciple Sri Muruganar was writing at that time in Tamil verse. But when he came to the portion where Bhagavan Shiva was to impart the teaching to the *Rishis*, he felt diffident, incapable and unfit to give expression to the redeeming knowledge of the Self that Shiva taught them. He sought Maharshi Ramana to handle the task, as he

believed the Maharshi to be an incarnation of Shiva. The Maharshi obliged him. He wrote out the teaching in thirty Tamil verses. Later on, he himself translated them into Sanskrit. This Sanskrit version was daily chanted before him together with the Vedas. This practice continues even today at his shrine in Ramana Ashram.

Thus, this simple, tiny text in 30 verses was seemingly elevated to the status of a scripture by the Maharshi. The various paths of liberation are enunciated here grading them in the order of their efficiency, efficacy and excellence. Finally, it was held that the path of self-enquiry is the singular, direct means par excellence for spiritual consummation.

OM! OM!! OM!!!

*Reflections of Upadesa Saram of  
Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi  
by M. Bhimasen Rao*



## Blank

I have heard of an inspirational story. This will help in learning how to keep people happy.

In a hospital there were two sick people. Gopi who could not move at all but could see and hear very well. The other man is Ramu who cannot see at all but could walk and talk properly.

Ramu spent some time with Gopi everyday and he described the beautiful nature. He would say, "Today is very cloudy, there are two blue birds flying and the garden is full of flowers." Everyday he would describe something new. Gopi really enjoyed the company of Ramu.

One day Ramu did not come. So Gopi asked the nurse about Ramu and she told him that he passed away the previous night. Gopi was extremely sad. He requests the nurse to shift his bed by the window. And, guess what? The nurse says that there is no window in the room. He was shocked to hear the news. So he feels very sad and cries because Ramu has kept him happy and made him feel good for so many days. He was extremely thankful to Ramu.

The moral of the story is that we have to go out of our way to make people happy.

**- Eshita K.**

Studying 7th grade in Indus International School



*Back to School!*



# The Journey

**F**or the past many weeks I have made several attempts to write but it wouldn't flow ... some thoughts would come out nicely but then after a while, the flow would stop abruptly ... and then it is a blank.

I have lost 3 dogs in the past 2 months. As anyone, who has grown up with these beautiful creatures, would know, it is a very painful experience. The unconditional love that dogs give you is incredible, one can actually learn so much from these beautiful animals ... to see your beloved dogs pass away one after the other, right in front of your eyes is very painful ... and if you actually saw them come out of their mother's womb, then it is even more difficult.

As I write these lines, I can picture the entire process as if it happened just yesterday and it has actually been 14 years ... time flies. But I didn't start writing because of this ... I started writing because of what has happened in the past few months and the realization I have had, owing to these happenings.

I came back home one day and I called the dogs to me and they didn't twitch a tail in response ... their sad eyes looking at me as if I was a friend they had lost, a friend they once knew, but not anymore, and I felt remorse ... because I was at fault. I hadn't spent time with them and I would often feel guilty about this fact but I was always

too busy rushing in and out of home and when I wasn't going anywhere, I wasn't in a mood to get my hands dirty because, now, these dogs were old and were either always drooling or had small hurts which kept festering and so to play with them wasn't the most pleasant experience.

I felt ashamed and decided that I wanted to make amends and so every day, from that day on, I have played with them after coming back from my run, I would spend a few minutes with them and every once in a while, feed them something from my breakfast ... within a week, they were back to their old selves again ... we were friends again and I was greeted with an energetic wag of the tail, a small trot and then a very affectionate rub against my legs ... it filled me with happiness ... I had found a way back to my best friends and we connected the way we used to.

Only one remains now, she is the youngest in the litter and also the most perceptive ... if I sit in the lawn and don't want to play or talk, she knows it and comes and sits quietly at my feet and if I were to talk to her, she listens and has an expression, which gives me the feeling that she understands. She will also go one day and so will I, as we all will ... **but what matters is, how we live the time that we have.**



In these past few months, much has happened in my life, in my relationships with people, people I call my best friends and perhaps family ... in this fast paced life. World is changing too quickly and people who are not centered and have gone through some very tough things in life, if not guided appropriately, tend to get lost ... lonely ... sad ... angry ... empty ...

It has happened with many people I know, including myself, that till we don't learn to channelize our energies and emotions, things remain in chaos. The outside is almost always in a constant state of change and in today's world, is in a constant state of chaos, primarily because of us, because of our lack of sensitivity for others, our disrespect for nature that sustains us, our callousness in our relationships, which should have actually been a source of strength and comfort to us.

Some people have come out better/stronger human beings from their tough phases ... they have learnt to put things in perspective and put a distance between themselves and the world around them ... themselves and their emotions ... themselves and their minds.

Others, have done even better than that, they have learnt from their pain and failings and have helped others figure out a thing or two for themselves.

Some are still struggling ... they are making things very tough for themselves ... and for me ... because it is very painful to see them in so much pain. I can feel their pain, because I have done this to myself so often and continue to do this to myself every now and then.

I pray that they find their way ... figure things out. These people are, in fact, the most wonderful and capable people ... they are also the ones I care for and love most. But because they have been through so much, handled so much and they know that they have handled a lot before ... it is difficult for them to accept that they are feeling so lost and lonely and vulnerable today.

I feel I can help them and would gladly take their pain upon myself ... I feel that it is my privilege to be of help and support to such wonderful people ... but it needs trust ... if you can trust someone more than yourself, if you can put your life in their hands ... then it can happen in a moment, just like that, it would seem like magic ... but it is actually how life is. This is how life was always meant to be.

But too many people have been hurt, whose trust has been broken and so now people don't trust easily and instead of breaking down walls, we build them higher and stronger. It doesn't help. It is a self-defeating way of being.

My lovely dogs have taught me this ... by their love, with their kindness, through their warmth and ironically by their passing away, this fact is so much more clearer today, than ever before. We are throwing away our lives instead of growing, we are destroying our relationships instead of making them stronger and we are making our lives empty, instead of making them fuller.

I want to work towards making my life and the lives of those who I touch, more beautiful, safe, fuller, magical, purer and centered. It is possible, possible to make this magic happen in the lives of everyone ... I know this from my personal experience, because there have been many wonderful and amazing people who have played this role in my life.

It only requires some openness ... openness in listening to what people have to say ... to notice the beauty around us. It also requires a great deal of trust ... to be able to trust someone else when we don't know the way, to trust the beauty and divinity in the world to guide and protect us ... and it requires us to be in acceptance ... acceptance of whatever there is ... the beauty and the ugliness within ... then magic is just one step away.

- *Gautam Vir*



*Back to School!*



# A TRUE CITIZEN OF THE WORLD

The day Esther Ebeuwah walked into our Tapovan office I noticed the positive energy and easy charm she exuded. Having volunteered to help out with the organizational modalities of an upcoming event, I was busy drawing up a list of “to do’s”, when Esther’s magnetic personality drew me out of the job at hand. Esther is not the kind of regular visitor that we, at Tapovan, are accustomed to. To begin with, she is a foreign national- a Nigerian, by birth and citizenship. Strangely, that did not prove to be any sort of deterrent to our conversation. I had already warmed up to Esther and before long she was telling us about why she had come to India.

Esther is on a fellowship with a social enterprise called Idex and has been working for the last six months at a subsidized school for underprivileged children at Ramanthapur. She lives in an apartment at Himayatnagar with 3 other Americans, who are also here on fellowships. Being a Saturday and her off day from school, Esther had come to Tapovan along with one of our volunteers of her acquaintance. Esther wanted to broaden her spectrum and seek out more schools working to empower underprivileged children, which is why she had stopped by at our school.

What possessed this Captain Courageous to leave her native land, her ethnic roots, people dear to her, her comfort zone and cross a continent and some oceans, to serve children from an alien continent with whom she had no cultural or emotional connect? Were there not enough needy children to serve in her, own country? Undaunted, this daughter of Africa, smiles and comes up with a ready story to answer my naïve query.

“Flying across continents and being up there in the sky made me realize several things. Firstly, at that altitude, you do not see any geographical boundaries- there are no nations, no states, no territories- just one unified world. Borders and countries are all figments of our creation. Secondly, I realized another thing. All human beings the world over have the same needs. At 6 am in the morning, when I needed to use the restroom on the plane, I discovered 20 others like me who had queued up for the same reason. As human beings, we all have the same needs and same wants the world over, irrespective of caste, creed or nationality. So how does it matter if I serve a child in Nigeria or India- all that matters is that I be of service to somebody.”



Esther with Vidya Mandir Students





What Esther said that day touched a chord in my heart.

It also gave me room to introspect- who then is the real foreigner?

A Nigerian who has the courage to leave behind her country and continent to serve the children of our nation, who feels most at home in Hyderabad, who spouts endearing half baked telugu instructions while navigating our gallis in dented yellow autos, who dons a colourful polyester salwar kameez and red Laad Bazaar bangles, who adores our fiery food, (Biryani, most of all), who quizzes her students not on Nigerian cities but Indian ones, and who humours little Khaja like an indulgent older sister while he amazedly tugs at her countless braids. Is she the foreigner?

Or, are we the foreigners?- We Indians, most of whom live insulated lives in our selfish little self created cocoons, oblivious to the countless hungry, homeless, illiterate, desolate children who dot our crowded streets. By our callous indifference and disconnect from our own people, have we not turned ourselves into aliens in our own land?

True belonging then, my friends, does not come from sporting a passport, an Aadhaar card or waving the Indian flag. True belonging comes from a state of giving and empathy, from being able to openly embrace a nation and its needs, a people and its problems, a country and its concerns till it seeps into your pores and becomes part and parcel of your persona.

Today, I do off my hat to Esther Ebinuwah, my large-hearted sister from Nigeria, an enlightened citizen of the world, who has taught me that true compassion has no borders.

- Swathi

## *Destiny plans ...*

*“We plan our lives according to a dream that came to us in our childhood, and we find that life alters our plans. And yet, at the end, from a rare height, we also see that our dream was our fate. It’s just that providence had other ideas as to how we would get there. Destiny plans a different route, or turns the dream around, as if it were a riddle, and fulfills the dream in ways we couldn’t have expected.”*

- Ben Okri



*Back to School!*





## G.K. Quiz

Kids were quizzed on Indian-mythology, states, festivals, culture and we were amazed at the accuracy and promptness of each one of them.

# Highlights of Eventful 2012 of Nachiketa Tapovan Vidya Mandir



## Science Fair

"The Scientific study of natural forces"- does sound difficult and boring but the kids converted these bookish theories to interesting practical experiments.

KUDOS to such a great learning experience.



## Go Green Club

The WWF initiative of recycling plastic and paper waste material is truly voicing the golden rule of REDUCE- REUSE- RECYCLE.



## Art & Craft

Kids at Vidya Mandir have a secret power that leaves our imagination way behind. Their little fingers know the ART too well! ... Creating rakhis, diyas, paper bags, jute stationery, clay idols, potpourris ... The list is too long and our words for appreciation are not enough.

The icing on the cake was when these kids started to teach craft at Suma Niketan School in Gandipet.



## Karadi Path

A Karadi Bear in a Classroom?  
Yes, that is true!

He was making English learning easy, enjoyable and effective. Kids at Vidya Mandir can read English faster and earlier. Can speak better English. Quick LEARNERS.



# The Moments...

Each of us experiences various emotions every minute of our life. These emotions get etched in our memories as good or bad, happy or sad moments. Often, we are so overwhelmed with emotion, we miss out on the essence of these moments- to realize, to learn, to nurture and to admire the reason of creation.

I experienced such a moment recently while socializing with my friends. As it usually happens, we were up all night chattering away about everything under the sun. In a flash, it occurred to us all, as if meant to be, that each of us had a dry patch in our lives, a rough trail which we had, and may be, were still walking on. Yet, we were so relaxed, in each other's company, talking about trivial matters, sharing experiences that were life altering. One such story was about an acquaintance who worked as a door-to-door electrician, in his formative days. Today, he is an attorney at law, running his own law firm, leading a successful life. Fortunately for most of us, he was present and narrated his story of struggle. Amazed at his achievement, I complimented him and found him smile with contentment and happiness.

That moment made me think, how often do we meet people who inspire us? Everyday. Each of us has his/her own journey to

accomplish and a story to share, inspire and motivate. I realized, the more life denies or rejects us, the more determined we could become to make each day better, richer, and fuller. As humans, we have the advantage of growing if we allow the possibility of it. And this is the real treasure, our learning and knowledge of our capability. We need to remember, deep inside the pain lives our greatest teacher. We need to allow the pain to flow away, to cleanse us of our impurities and burdens we have accumulated over the years. We need to realize that pain is good because beyond the pain is a new moment, a new beginning. Being in acceptance of the current moment to welcome the new moment is the mantra to a richer, fuller life.

Seeing life in this new light is only a beginning. It's when we start living this way we become an inspiration. Each of us has the seed to be a catalyst. Once we realize this we continue to inspire and be amazed by what we learn from others. At this moment, let's recognize our capability to inspire, motivate and be a life changing factor in the lives of others and admire the knowledge that you too can give somebody; the wings to fly in ecstasy, bliss and love.

- Suruchi Singh

*We thank Sri E.V. Padmanabhan Charitable Trust for donating Rs. 50,000/- towards Vidyadanam Corpus Fund.*



# Reminiscences of our Ashram Visit

Since 2006, we have spent several weeks each year with our Rotary friends in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu looking at our various projects and ways that we may be able to help new ones.

Val was first introduced to the school run by Nachiketa Tapovan in Hyderabad by our close friend Vandana Murarka about three years ago. Val is an experienced teacher and she was immediately impressed by Mrs Vasundhara Reddy and the staff. We have visited many schools of all kinds but this one really caught our imagination!

Construction workers generally live on site, often with their families, and the nature of their work moves them from place to place. The children suffer as a result by not going to school and we all know that these days education is vital and the way out of poverty. These children really want to learn and they are like sponges soaking up the things that they are taught. Clearly this school and dedicated staff is providing good quality education as shown by the results and this is appreciated by the children and their parents.

In January this year, 2013, we were delighted to be able to spend time with our good friends Ravi and Vandana Murarka in Hyderabad and this enabled us to visit the school again and meet Swami. We took along some cricket equipment which had been given to us by Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club and it was well received by the children. Swami also proved that he is an effective spin bowler and we all had a great time!

We were invited to go to the Ashram and later in our trip we spent a day at Kodgal village which proved to be one of the most memorable visits of time in India. Again we were met by Swami



**Val interacts with Vedavyasa Vidya Mandir Children**

and we were treated to a VIP tour of the entire Ashram and school. I am a retired detective and bank manager so I am always curious and like to ask searching questions! It is very obvious that Swami has a clear vision of how the Ashram must develop in order to provide the maximum benefit and satisfy the needs, of the local community and the many expected visitors from further afield. I am often sceptical about ambitious schemes and believe that success is very dependent on the business acumen and dedication of the people running them. I have no worries about Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram as it is a perfect example and I can visualise that in a few years time it will be a role model for others. The school Vedavyasa Vidyalaya for tribal children is the best of its type that we have seen. The children and staff are delightful and the building and fittings are of a high standard which is essential for longevity.

We look forward to returning and renew our friendships with you all and wish you well in your endeavours which deserve success. You certainly have our support.

However, before we do come back we will have to improve our cricket skills to make sure that we bat longer against Swami!

**Terry and Val Leivers, Nottingham UK**

**Val & Terry Leivers with Swamiji & Vidya Mandir Children**

*Back to School!*



# Knowledge & Wisdom

*“Knowledge is knowing that a tomato is a fruit*



*Wisdom is knowing not to put it in the fruit salad”*

“Knowledge is knowing that the tomato is a fruit;

Wisdom is to not put it in a fruit salad.”

Well that’s not just the difference between knowledge and wisdom. We all know the short story about Svetakethu. For those who don’t, this is my version of it.

Very long ago, there lived a wise man in his hut with his son, Svetakethu. The latter wanted to go out of their small village to seek knowledge and become a scholar. So, his father found a very renowned and knowledgeable Guru, and sent Svetakethu to his ashram. After 10 years, Svetakethu returned home at the age of sixteen, having studied the Vedas and the Puranas and other scriptures. This knowledge for some strange reason, made him arrogant. So, one day when Svetakethu was relaxing under a tree and going through his chemistry textbook like we would go through a boring novel, his father saw him and asked him a question in that subject. He answered it with such ease, as though it was the one question that he had been practicing his whole life. Then his father asked him, “Who is God?” Svetakethu immediately perked up and said, “Who doesn’t know this? God is the Supreme being. He is our Creator. He is omnipotent.” After hearing this, his father asked, “Where is he?” Svetakethu was dumbstruck. He had come across a question to which he did not know the answer. His father saw the change in Svetakethu’s

expression and smiled and asked Svetakethu to bring a cup of water with salt dissolved in it. The cup was brought. Now, Svetakethu’s father asked him to take a sip of the water from the right edge of the cup. He did so. Then his father asked him how it tasted. He answered that it was salty. He repeated the same exercise on the left, the back, the front and center of the cup. The result remained the same. Then his father explained that when salt is dissolved in water, it makes every drop of water salty. Similarly, God is present in every person, animal, thing, plant and whatever else you can name. He is present in every molecule of every being. He is present in you and in me. Svetakethu asked his father forgiveness for his arrogance.

This is the difference between knowledge and wisdom. Life is a quest to gain knowledge, but also to be wise at the same time. Especially, to be wise as to the use of the knowledge that you have obtained. For knowledge in the wrong hands can sometimes be disastrous. So basically, use your knowledge wisely. It is also usually seen that wise people are usually very witty. This is obviously because they know when to say, what to say and how to say.

There is a great saying,

“ Wise men speak because they have something to say.

Fools speak, because they have to say some-thing.”

So now it’s all up to you to decide whether to be knowledgeable or wise or to be knowledgeable and at the same time, wise person.

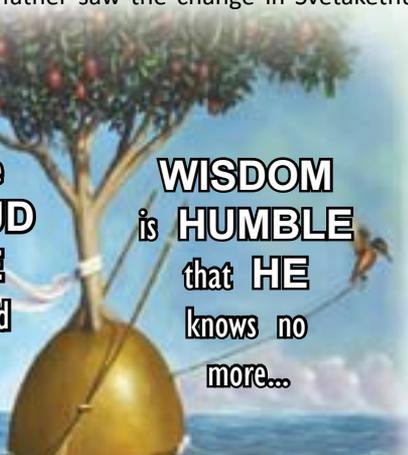
Wisdom out!

**Rohan Govind N.**  
8<sup>th</sup> Class,  
GT Aloha Vidya Mandir, Chennai



**Knowledge**  
is **PROUD**  
that **HE**  
has learn'd  
so much

**WISDOM**  
is **HUMBLE**  
that **HE**  
knows no  
more...



# The Rocks that Move

**On a dry lakebed in California's Death Valley, stones weighing up to 300kg zip across the surface without human intervention. Despite 60 years of study, geologists are still unsure why.**

Ever since the first scientific paper on it was published in 1948, the Racetrack Playa, a smooth desert floor in Death Valley National Park, has had geologists scratching their heads. With irregular frequency, sometimes every third or fourth year, giant rocks travel inexplicably across the surface; some in straight lines, others in zigzag patterns; others, again, across a certain distance, before turning 180 degrees and continuing in another direction. The evidence is there to see; each rock leaves a deep trail along the desert floor. But no one has ever seen them move.

- An excerpt from a post in Eco Traveller

The above piece of information stunned me and set me thinking ...

I feel unnerved when such fundamental laws are defied - For one thing, I need to think twice before comparing display of sluggishness or lack of motion by a person or object, to a stone. And for the other, I have been observing that stones are non-living and hence motionless, what now? I have



always been taught that there are nine planets in solar system and about a couple of years ago, one fine morning it was declared that there are only eight planets. Pluto ceases to be a planet from that day! Did Pluto have a say in this re-classification or is it just a part of our circus to gain mastery over the knowledge of creation?

Should I be stubborn and refuse to relearn the changes in classification, nomenclature or properties? Is it accepted if I continue to hang on to the principle that there are nine planets in Solar System? Do I want to be adamant and outdated, or adaptive and relevant?

There is nothing that is impossible. There is nothing that is unchangeable or immutable. The facts and doctrines of the physical world that we have cognized and established as truths have been prolonged observations but not absolute truths. At some point of time in existence, they flex and fluctuate and tease us. We would be at greater ease with ourselves and rest of the world if we learn to accept that there is no one particular way of looking at things. Differences, deviations, aberrations and anomalies are the embellishments of existence. The more accepting we are, the more beautiful our perception will be of this awe-inspiring universe.

- **Annapurna R.**



*Back to School!*





Have we ever noticed how a small gesture before any attempt, any wish, any sport or for that matter any art form, pays rich dividends to the performer. Yes, I am referring to Prayer that has become part of our lives. It is like a wish yielding tree – *Kalpavriksha*. It requires nothing but total surrender to the almighty; selflessness, a moment of oblivion wherein we forget our self and think of others in the same sense as we think for ourselves. Prayer is a media through which we can reach God and commune with Him. The results are bountiful. It is the prayer of Holy Mother Sarada Devi that made the Ramakrishna Order stand on its own in the initial days of its inception. It was Her earnest prayers to Sri Ramakrishna, to look after the welfare of the monks who renounced everything for the sake of realization. The rest is history.

Power of prayer is tremendous. In any field of our lives, the work that begins with prayer will show its greatness and works wonders. Prayer helps us reach a level of maturity, where we understand our own limitations and learn the greatness of the Divine power. What we can't accomplish as humans, with Divine intervention we can. It is the situation in which we honestly seek the presence of the Lord and invite Him to be present and be a part of our activity. Moreover, we wish He be the witness to our attempts/acts/works.

In prayer, we surrender ourselves, handover all our burdens and fears to Almighty, and lift up our hearts to God in quiet communion. In prayer, contact is established with Him who is the Source of our very lives. Through this contact, untold blessings flow into us, and, through us, to all who come into contact with us. And though we walk through tough situations we shall neither fail nor get discouraged.

The secret of such a life is - repeated and continuous effort to keep in contact with the All-Blessed one, from whom comes the life-currents which cleanses our body and soul. He is blessed who makes God the nucleus of his life. Wherever he may be, his contact with God remains unfazed. His life is rooted in prayer, and he works wonders. The man who believes in power of prayer provides an unending resource of blessing to his family. The belief is so infectious that it creates ripples in his community, his town, and his country at large. Believe in the power of prayer, it turns our surroundings Divine. A continuous and sincere effort in no time makes us realize the presence of God at our place, silently convincing us that He is Omnipresent.

- **Koti Rajasekhar M.**



# Do our names symbolize our persona?

**I**t was a hot sunny day. I ventured out to buy some fruits and my car was parked outside a grocery shop. My chauffeur went to the fruit-shop to get the fruits packed, while I waited in the car. Something caught my attention as I looked out of the window. A middle-aged gentleman came out of the grocery shop with a small tin of grains. He threw the grains on the pavement and I was surprised why he was wasting all those grains when so many went without food. Could he not donate those grains to someone in need? Then to my amazement, a hundred pigeons flew down from nowhere and started feeding on those grains. As they were eating, the gentleman came back with another tin and threw more grains. Other pigeons flew in. He repeated the action quite a few times and each time more and more pigeons joined the flock to get their share.



The man stood there at the entrance of the shop, with the empty tin in hand. He was contently watching the birds eat. What was going on in his mind, I wondered? What led him to do this kindly act? Was it a Divine call or benevolence? Was he happy that he could fill their hungry bellies? After a while, he went inside the shop and only then I realized he was the owner of the shop and not a customer as I had initially thought. He was busy with his customers, making bills and collecting payments but I noticed his eyes were roving in the direction of the birds every now and then. His eyes were moist as he saw more birds joining the group. The scene was really touching. Probably it was a daily act which he performed out of compassion for it was not an act which would gain him recognition.

I felt happy to see that there were still people who understood the hunger of animals and birds. I felt ashamed for assuming he was wasting the grains. Instead of just witnessing what was

happening I gave in to my mind's play and under its influence drew my own conclusions. If I had been a little more patient, I would have entirely enjoyed his action but I allowed my mind to take over and missed the quintessence of the act. If only we are ever conscious of our inner witness our lives would change for the better.

My focus shifted to the birds and I was amused to see them pecking at the grains in an orderly way. There was no jostling or clamoring. Every pigeon was having its fill and I admired their patience. This is in stark contrast to what happens with us human beings, in our daily lives. We push each other and break long queues, whether it is in reservation counters, theatres, billing counters or in religious places. No one has the patience to wait. We expect our browsers to load, the moment we click 'Enter'

on our computers. We crave for fast food, quick service and most of us don't have the patience to wait for the green signal while we are driving. We either honk or try to find some place to squeeze in causing chaos and traffic jams. Leave alone the illiterate, this behavior comes mostly from the educated. We have seen many street squabbles and heard frenzied voices in public places. And here are these pigeons which are patience personified and successful in getting their share of the feed. I wish we could learn a lesson or two from our lesser species.

My thoughts were interrupted as my chauffeur returned with the fruit packets. I happened to look at the sign board of the shop- 'ANANDA General Stores'. I was fascinated. Does the name have any role to play in that gentleman's personality or is it a mere coincidence? Ananda ... happiness, wasn't that what I witnessed in the shop keeper's face? I was all at sea as my car steered off the pathway.

- **Subhadra K.**



*Back to School!*





The theme for this year's World Environment Day celebrations is, **Think. Eat. Save.** Roughly one third of the food produced in the world for human consumption every year — approximately 1.3 billion tonnes — gets lost or wasted. A report submitted by Rabo India Finance, a private consultancy firm, in 2007 to the government of India, estimates a whopping 58,000 crores worth of rupees are lost due to agricultural food waste, alone. 1 in every 7 people in the world go to bed hungry and more than 20,000 children under the age of 5 die daily from hunger.

The impact of food waste is not just financial. Environmentally, food waste leads to wasteful use of chemicals such as fertilizers and pesticides; more fuel used for transportation; and more rotting food, creating more methane — one of the most harmful greenhouse gases that contributes to climate change. Methane is 23 times more potent than CO<sub>2</sub> as a greenhouse gas. The vast amount of food going to landfills makes a significant contribution to global warming.

In fact, the global food production occupies 25% of all habitable land and is responsible for 70% of fresh water consumption, 80% of deforestation, and 30% of greenhouse gas emissions. It is the largest single driver of biodiversity loss and land-use change.

Water needed to grow or produce products we use is called its water footprint. If food is wasted, it means that all the resources and inputs used in the production of all the food are also lost. How much water does it take to make or grow?

- 1 litre of milk: 264 gallons
- Bread, 1 slice: about 10 gallons
- Coffee, 1 cup: 37 gallons
- Corn, 1 pound: 110 gallons
- Eggs, 1 egg: 400 gallons
- 1 Orange: 13 gallons
- 1 Potato: 100 gallons
- Wheat: 110-250 gallons

**LOVE**  
**FOOD**  
**hate waste**



- Chicken, 1 pound of meat: 500 gallons
- 1 hamburger: 4,227 gallons

Food waste is an enormous drain on natural resources and a contributor to negative environmental impacts. This year's campaign rallies you to take action from your home and then witness the power of collective decisions you and others have made to reduce food waste, save money, minimize the environmental impact of food production and force food production processes to become more efficient. It encourages you to become more aware of the environmental impact of the food choices you make and empowers you to make informed decisions, for example-

- Buying organic foods that do not use chemicals in the production process
- Choosing local produce thus conserving fuel and saving on emissions
- Thinking twice before shopping
- Donate left overs
- Helping yourself to multiple small servings than one big one
- Composting food scraps

So **think** before you **eat** and help **save** our environment! With some thought and few simple changes we can turn this into a hopeful scenario.

**“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed individuals can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”**

*- Margaret Mead*

Sources: United Nations Environment Programme, Ken Foundation, Water footprint Network



# ENCROACHMENT



Where my house now stands, was once a jungle- a haven for the many lives it hosted. I stand, barefoot, upon the ruins of the earth. While my heart longs to feel the moist ground beneath my feet, only disappointment follows. My mind recognizes the cold, hard marble instead.

In this technologically advanced age, we are certainly moving forward as pioneers in our respective fields. Even more evident than our progress however, is our negligence towards the planet. Living in big cities, we live comfortable lives and in spite of being born into environmentally conscious world, we pay no heed to the anguish of Mother Earth. She has borne us upon her ample bosom for many a millennium, and we've returned to her, ignorance and recklessness.

In the last few decades, we've been so focused on economic development and advancement of the masses, that we've hardly taken note of the burden weighing down upon the planet.

It took the human species, combined with every other organism that has ever walked this planet, close to 5 billion years to create what we have around us. But we and we alone, have single-handedly managed to begin the annihilation of life and its many sources in just over a century.

The very ground is crumbling beneath our feet. The very rivers that quench our thirst are drying up, only to be replaced by garbage and waste. The soil we stand upon is eroding as we continue to build a grey landscape, a concrete jungle that signals the advent of an apocalypse. Life on earth is hanging by a thread while we are consumed with our everyday lives. It is time we stopped investing in real estate and started investing in the future of Planet Earth.

It is imperative that we keep abreast with the pitiful state of the planet and take into account the need for sustainable development and resource management.

We must instill in ourselves, a feeling of community and the sense to conserve that which is not lost and protect that which may soon be lost. In the words of Margaret Thatcher, "No generation has a freehold on this Earth. All we have is a life-tenancy- with a repairing lease".

**- Sanjana Chevalam**

Graduated 12<sup>th</sup> from Chirec Public School.

A Go Green enthusiast, wants to pursue higher education and career in Environmental Sciences



*Back to School!*



# Symbolism in life



Today, when man seems to have lost his identity in a wilderness of ideologies, movements and slogans, it is time to pause for a moment to review the past, assess the present and go forward into the future, with the evaluation, the rejection and the assimilation of experienced norms. To look back is to contemplate what has been. For this, knowledge of a heritage that is more than 5000 years old has to be acquired.

Much of literature and art speaks in terms of symbols and it is through these symbols that the human mind understands language and communication. Symbols show us the structure of a world gone by and the values that crested that structure. The depth of the seeking of those poets of the Upanishads, who delved into the profoundest sources of the mysteries of life, enlighten us in the wisdom they gained in all aspects of human existence. They tried and perhaps succeeded in unveiling and integrating the truths in the great declarations of the *Sastras* and taught us that we are part of that Supreme Unity which we call "Brahman". "There is a Spirit which is pure and which is beyond hunger, thirst and sorrow. This is *Atman*, the Spirit in man. It is this Spirit that we must find and know: man must find his own soul. He who has found and knows his soul, has found all the worlds, has achieved all his desires."

But these words are difficult for the common man, so the artists, dancers, painters and writers become the revealers of the meaning of life to the society around them. They studied the symbols that guided the mind towards Eternal Truths and through them India's wisdom was wafted through the centuries through stories and fables enacted in dance and drama, depicted in painting and sculptures, that brought into the focus the patterns of life that men should follow for lasting happiness.

First, there was Dharma, the right way of living, of fitting oneself into a proper pattern.

There were duties to be performed, a value-oriented mode of conduct in all conditions of life and it was in acquitting oneself of these duties that one was sanctified.

Dharma a scholar tells us, is what gives us Hinduism in all its phases, the flavor of a thirst for righteousness in an unrighteous world and a constant yearning for truth wherever it may be found.

As the fisherman said in "Shakuntala", when he was mocked for his lowly status: "However reproachful one's calling us, cherishing each other, let us achieve our common goal of supreme welfare."

A drawn symbol has a conscious meaning. It is visual and immediately creates a response in the viewer. The wheel of Dharma for example, was shown as the symbolic axis of the cosmos, a concept of continuous change.

Through the centuries, creative intellects in India turned every manifestation in nature into a symbol and these symbols were the nucleus of study for understanding the world, both inside and outside.

India used the logic of symbolic form in aesthetic thought making man alive and alert to the problems of the world he sees around him and also the unknown world, illuminating every detail of life, understanding and aesthetic beauty.

Extracts from an article by **MRINALINI V. SARABHAI**

**Source: SYMBOLISM IN HINDUISM**

compiled by **Swami Nityanand** (Central Chinmaya Mission Trust)



# इवलङ्करो इङ्ङण = तीरुपु दङ्गेत

Krupalu Ogeti, Samskrita Bharati, Hyderabad  
email:okrupalu@sanskritam.net



## The beneficiary

Janaka gave Sita to Rama. जनकः रामस्य कृते सीतां दत्तवान्। Here, 'Janaka' is the subject, 'Sita' is the object and 'gave' is the verb. What about the beneficiary 'Rama' who received the object? In Sanskrit, this can be indicated with the word 'कृते'. निमित्तम् (the reason) is also indicated this way sometimes. Look at example (6) below.

Similarly,

- 1) Teacher gave chocolate to the student. शिक्षकः छात्रस्य कृते चाकलेहं दत्तवान्।
- 2) Husband gave ornament to Rama. पतिः रमायाः कृते आभरणं दत्तवान्।
- 3) Girl gave water to the creeper. बालिका लतायाः कृते जलं दत्तवती।
- 4) He brought food for his sister. सः भगिन्याः कृते भोजनम् आनीतवान्।
- 5) She gave Rs.10/- for the pen. सा लेखन्याः कृते दश रूप्यकाणि दत्तवती।
- 6) The woman went for the water. महिला जलस्य कृते गतवती।
- 7) He does anything for his friend. सः मित्रस्य कृते किमपि करोति।

The word 'कृते' is simple to use following a षष्ठी word. However, there is a direct विभक्ति to combine these two words into one. It is चतुर्थी विभक्तिः.

रामः - रामस्य कृते (कृते-प्रयोगः) - रमाय (साक्षात् चतुर्थी विभक्तिः)

छात्रः - छात्रस्य कृते - छात्राय

रमा - रमायाः कृते - रमायै

लता - लतायाः कृते - लतायै

भगिनी - भगिन्याः कृते - भगिन्यै  
लेखनी - लेखन्याः कृते - लेखन्यै  
जलम् - जलस्य कृते - जलाय  
मित्रम् - मित्रस्य कृते - मित्राय

Here are a few more examples:

Prostrations to Rama. रामाय नमः।

(yajna) Offering to Surya. सूर्याय स्वाहा।

Good for people. प्रजाभ्यः स्वस्ति।

With नमः, स्वाहा, स्वस्ति, etc., we use this vibhakti.

What is the meaning of the following:

- 1) मानवजीवनाय शुद्धं जलं अत्यन्तम् आवश्यकम्।
- 2) आरोग्यस्य पुनः प्राप्तेः कृते औषधं स्वीकरोतु भवान्।
- 3) आधुनिक मानवः धनस्य कृते धर्मं त्यजति।
- 4) रामः सीतायाः कृते युद्धं करोति।
- 5) भवान् भगवतः कृते हृदये अन्वेषणं करोतु।

Answers:

- 1) Clean water is very essential for human life.
- 2) Take medicine for getting health back.
- 3) Modern man gives up 'dharma' for money.
- 4) Rama wages war for Sita.
- 5) Search in your heart for the God.

(To be contd in the next issue)



Back to School!





## Sri Rama Navami Celebrations



The celestial couple - Lord Sri Rama & Goddess Sita  
at Ma Yoga Shakthi Peetham

On 19th April 2013, Sri Rama Navami was celebrated at Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram. Festivities started right from the early hours with *Abhishekam* to Lord Rama, His consort Sita, Lakshmana and Beloved Hanuman. *Panchamruta Abhishekam* was performed to the deities and a *homam* was performed by Paramahansa Swami Shivananda Puri. Devotees from the neighboring *Tandas* started streaming in and Pandit Gopalakrishna performed the ritualistic puja. Sri P. Suryanarayana Reddy and Smt P. Vasundhara performed the wedding rituals.

Swamiji and Mataji conceptualized Ma Yoga Shakthi Peetham at the Ashram, with the aim of having a systematic and scientific way of *puja* and *sadhana*. It is their vision that everyone should be given the opportunity of performing rituals to the deities, irrespective of caste, creed or community. Right from the day of consecration of Ma Yoga Shakthi Peetham, their vision came

into reality and ever since, everyone had a share of performing rituals at the Ashram. Religion is never given importance and the emphasis is always on the spiritual aspect.

Devotees from the *Tandas* were overwhelmed as they touched the deities and performed wedding rituals. The outpour of their joy and emotions was depicted as they hugged the volunteers standing nearby and shed tears of joy. This was what Swamiji always aspired for and his joy knew no bounds as he witnessed these scenes.

Mataji explained the significance of Sri Rama Navami. Many devotees were seen lingering at Ma Yoga Shakthi Peetham even after completion of the austerities and receiving *prasadam*. The reason – they were attracted by the celestial beauty of Lord Rama and Goddess Sita and also the Divine vibrations that pervaded, all around in the Ashram.



# Hanuman Jayanthi



On 25th April 2013, Hanuman Jayanthi was celebrated at Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram with a spiritual flavour. Abhishekam was performed to Sri Hanuman along with Homam and puja. Mataji gave a talk on the spiritual significance of Hanuman Jayanthi. Maheshwari, sadhaka of Tapovan performed special *Arati* to Lord Hanuman. There was a large turn out from the surrounding tribal areas who had an active participation in the celebrations. Prasadam was distributed.



**Maheshwari performing Aarti to the deities**

## Residential Summer Camp



**Brimming with confidence- Tejaswi talks as swamiji watches**

A Residential Summer Camp was held at Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram from 21st to 28th April 2013.

Smt. Veena, Founder of Uday Memorial School, Jadcherla visited the Ashram along with Dr. Vijaya Lakshmi during the camp and gave a very impressive talk on the values of education. Students of spoken english classes and the campers were enlightened with her talk.



**Mataji with the campers**

*We the girls of Nachiketa Tapovan of classes 6 to 10 attended a Residential camp conducted by Swamiji and Mataji at our Ashram in Jadcherla. The camp was called "Learn to Live" and was conducted from the 21st of April till the 28th of the same. We want to share our experiences with all of you. On the evening of 21st April we reported at the Ashram. The next day started with yoga, after which we did pooja in Ma Yoga Shakthi Peetham. After this we had breakfast, lovingly prepared by our Swamiji. Then we were engaged in karmayoga, followed by bhajan session by Swamiji. We had group discussions regarding discipline, devotion, self confidence and friendship. Maheshwari Akka taught us pooja vidhi. Swamiji played indoor and outdoor games with us. We attended evening Arathi in the temple. We were happy to be there on the auspicious day of Hanuman Jayanthi and take part in all the puja rituals.*

*Our days would start at 5 in the morning and end at 10 in the night. Everyday Swamiji would give us talks on moral values and the importance of nature. We also had craft classes to bring out the talent in us. Time flies when you have fun; especially with Swamiji. Swamiji took care of us more than our parents. He cooked delicious food for us. Ashram had in itself become our world. We had everything that we needed over there. This camp was a turning point in our lives. We came with empty hands, but left with Swamiji's blessings, his love and his values.*

- Nagamani and Shravani  
Class X, Nachiketa Tapovan Vidya Mandir



*Back to School!*



## *Stars of*

# **Nachiketa Tapovan's Vidya Mandir**

*Nachiketa Tapovan congratulates our students Shiva and Anand who were sent to Vignan Vidyalaya for studying Intermediate, with the help of sponsors. We are happy to announce that they have demonstrated excellent performance in 1st year Intermediate. We are extremely thankful to all the donors who have supported their education.*



*Shiva*

<u>Marks</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Marks</u>
<b>96</b>	SANSKRIT	<b>93</b>
<b>95</b>	ENGLISH	<b>81</b>
<b>64</b>	MATHS-1	<b>71</b>
<b>75</b>	MATHS-2	<b>71</b>
<b>58</b>	PHYSICS	<b>58</b>
<b>57</b>	CHEMISTRY	<b>52</b>
<b>445</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>426</b>



*Anand*

*Twinkle Twinkle Little Stars,*

*We all adore you for what you are,*

*Up and Up you have climbed so high,*

*Gaining Vignan as you fly...*

*Congratulations!*





**Turn around their future!**

**For ₹ 1 Lakh**

**Your donation will last a lifetime**

**Appeal for Sponsor-a-Child Corpus Fund**

Nachiketa Tapovan runs a free Vidya Mandir for 230 children from poor families. They receive all-round, holistic academic education in English medium (LKG to 10th std.), including **arts, crafts, spiritual and culture lessons.**

Sponsoring a child is a great opportunity to help protect a child in need whilst seeing in return the real effect that your support has. Make a difference in a child's life- the chance to form a lasting, meaningful relationship with a child. All your kindness will add up to a bright future.

- ✓ *Nachiketa Tapovan is working hard to build a CORPUS fund to meet the ongoing expenses and expansion needs at a consistent pace. Donating to a Corpus Fund is a great way to sustain our efforts.*
- ✓ *Interest accruing from the investment made out of the Corpus donations, is only used without touching the principal itself. This way your DONATION remains forever, strengthening the cause and the organization.*

✓ *Being a charitable institution, we earn an interest of 9.25% annually from a Govt Bank. The annual interest on 1 Lakh will fully support one child's education for one year.*

✓ *Your donation will come a long way by meeting our expenses that include Teacher's Salaries, Uniforms, Educational material, Building Maintenance and Housekeeping, Salaries for support and administration staff, Field trips and Excursions, Celebrations and Extra Curricular activities.*

✓ *At present, we only have 29 corpus sponsorships, help us reach all of our 230 children!*

✓ *Bring hope and light into their lives – as a group or individual or in the name of a loved one.*

✓ *Donors receive annual report card and are welcome to interact with our children.*

✓ **We express our thanks to Corpus Donors by permanently inscribing their names on our recognition board in the school.**



**Students of Nachiketa Tapovan Vidya Mandir**



*Back to School!*





## *Inviting writers for Nachiketanjali!*

**A** humble and ardent endeavor of Nachiketa Tapovan is our monthly magazine, “Nachiketanjali”. The magazine offers an arena to showcase reflections and expressions of truth, values, spirituality, viewpoints and concerns of every day existence.

We’re looking for true, original, personal essays or poetry that befits the pulse of the magazine. Articles can also relate to topics on Philosophy, our cultural heritage, great Indian personalities and our great epics.

This is a wonderful opportunity to discover and share your positive ideas, dreams and reflections. As they say “Pen is mightier than the Sword” and is a great medium for motivating others, affecting positive change and building self-confidence.



### **Please note ...**

- Articles selected and published will receive a gift subscription of Nachiketanjali for one year. They can keep it or gift to a friend
- Please encourage your friends or children to write too
- We particularly encourage young writers to participate
- Please keep the article under 300 words for one column and 500 words for one page
- Any number of Articles are accepted
- Please include your full name, address, date of birth and contact info
- Please send your articles to **nachiketanjali1@gmail.com**
- The Editor does not accept responsibility for the author’s views.
- If you would like to mail in, our address is:

#### **“Inviting Writers-Nachiketanjali”**

**Nachiketa Tapovan**

Plot # 70, Phase 1, Kavuri Hills,  
Madhapur, Guttalabegumpet,  
Serilingampally  
R.R Dist, Andhra Pradesh.



# 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)	₹ 6000/year/child
Anna Daanam (Mid-day Meals)	₹ 5200/day
Alpa Aharam (Snacks)	₹ 800/day
Vastra Daanam (Uniforms)	₹ 900/2 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")

## SUBSCRIPTIONS:

### WITHIN INDIA

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

### OVERSEAS

1 year	₹ 1500 (only in INR)
--------	----------------------

## NACHIKETA'S GO GREEN CLUB...

*We convey our thanks to all the participants of WOW initiative. You helped us earn Rs. 23,812/- in the month of April and saved Mother Earth by recycling about 2967 kgs of plastic and paper waste material.*



*Back to School!*



# Creative Corner

## Our Students' Creativity



**M. Anitha,**  
Class VI  
Nachiketa Tapovan  
Vidya Mandir



**K. Sai Ganesh,**  
Class VI  
Nachiketa Tapovan  
Vidya Mandir



We are thankful to **Hope Abides,**  
Folsom, CA, USA for donating  
Rs. 66,357/- towards  
Vidyadanam Corpus Fund.

We thank  
**Sri Chunduri Ramakrishna**  
for donating Rs. 75,000/-towards  
Vidyadanam Corpus Fund.

## Festivals & Events of June 2013

5	World Environment Day
6	Shab-E-Miraz
18	Ganga Dusshera

20	Sri Koorma Jayanthi
23	Netrotsav of Puri Jagganath Swami
23	Vata Savitri Vrat
29	Feast of Saints Peter and Paul





*Smt. Veena & Dr. Vijaya Lakshmi interact with the campers*

*Interaction with Swamiji*

# **RESIDENTIAL SUMMMER CAMP**

*@ Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram*



*Yoga Session*



*Tuning with the Divine*



*Craft Class*

**Hotel Sri Brindavan**  
*Nampally Station Road, Hyderabad*



“We never know the worth of water till the well is dry.”

- Thomas Fuller



**SUPERFLO**

*Quality that speaks for itself...* <sup>TM</sup>

[www.superflo.net](http://www.superflo.net)