

Nachiketanjali

...an offering



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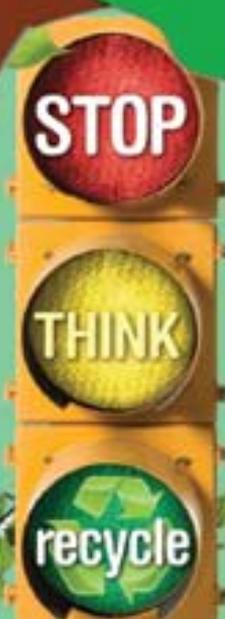
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Cover Story

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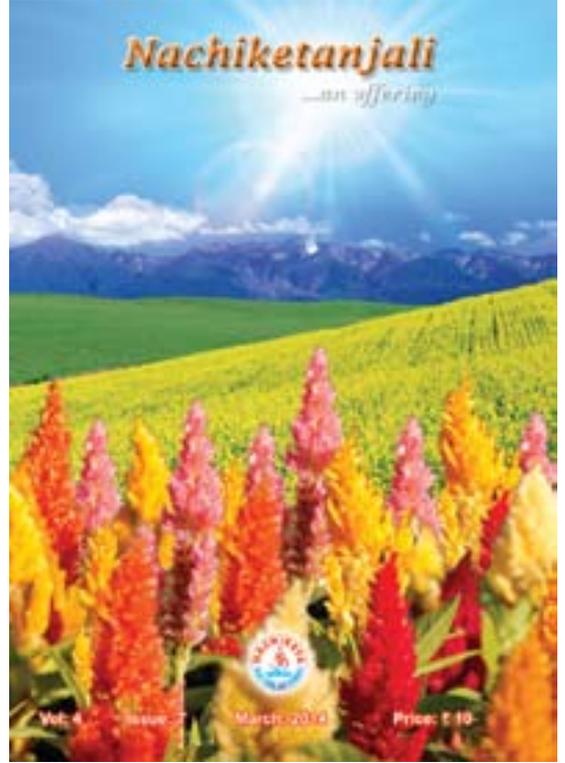
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The flower offered of itself

And eloquently spoke of Gods

In languages of rainbows

Perfumes

And secret silence...

- Phillip Pulfrey





Clear up the junk!

*L*ife's experiences are countless. While some give us immense pleasure, some are dreadful and create a great impact on our mind. Even when we recollect them later they create the same terror in us. To avoid this we need to clean up our mind and wipe out all the stored thoughts every now and then. The old ones should always be replaced with new ones. Almost all stores have clearance sales to get rid of old stocks. Similarly our mind should be cleared of all the stored thoughts in order to accommodate the new ones.

We would have observed trees shedding all their leaves and remain bare for a short while. But within no time the tree starts bearing new tender leaves which multiply in numbers making the tree look fresh and beautiful. When it is possible for the plant kingdom, it should be an easy task for us humans too. Initially it might appear like a gargantuan task like that of clearing the environment of plastic pollution. But no problem is without a solution. Sincere attempts are all that is needed.

A vacuum is created when all the stored up thoughts are flushed out. It is in this state that our true nature is revealed to us and we begin to understand ourselves. We have to make the best use of this void. It is from this emptiness that new thoughts sprout, which can make our lives more meaningful. Fresh thoughts have magnetic power and we should know how to handle them appropriately. When our thoughts are diverted towards meditation we gain mental stability which in turn gives us a strong intellect helping us acquire the supreme knowledge. If used in the right way there is every possibility of touching the SELF. This in fact is the final goal for spiritual seekers.

So let us clear up the junk and refresh our minds! But don't presume it is as easy as pressing the refresh button on your computer!

- Subhadra K.

Creative People Around

*D*ear Sadhakas!

It is important to introduce our few members who have been unseen pillars of Nachiketa Tapovan since long. Generally we rarely come across people who love to be hidden behind their work but here I do have mothers who always try to hide their identities. Truly speaking, they never try to build their image but they build the image of work and people around by hiding themselves like how God hides Himself. Strange, but it's a fact that they are truly an inspiration for the young and old. I have never seen them brooding over something that they never liked. Instead, they are always accommodating and involve themselves in more innovative, creative and healthy discussions. For me, they are like disciplined soldiers of our great nation.

Unless you are in the limelight, you will never get recognized. But frankly speaking, for many it is more important that their actions speak louder than words. And dear ones, I do have few people who are great *Sadhakas*; simple, humble, down to earth, pious, working selflessly for the welfare of the society, building image of people and working around them rather than for themselves. This small piece of thought is dedicated to people who have silently gotten dissolved into the society like sugar in water leaving only the sweetness of their presence in the society. It is important for me to bring to your notice so that this small piece of thought may charge at least one person who shall then go length and breadth of this world to propagate what is universal, applicable to all and above all spiritual.

We have arts and craft activity throughout the year and children of our Vidya Mandir are taught these life skills in such an amusing way that they never feel tired and understand the value of being a part of this life reforming activity. If I have to give credit to somebody for this activity then the list is endless but few have really worked upon and transformed it into a life giving and life transforming activity that not only teaches a good way to earn a living while shaping the society but also

takes care of shaping the future generation into enlightened ones. I would love to share few great stalwarts whose contribution is truly enormous.

It is highly difficult for me to think of arts and crafts activity without these creative hands and the first person who comes to my mind is Vandana Ma, who started her journey as a Rotarian and joined hands with Nachiketa Tapovan. She became a part of our most wonderful activity of imparting free education for underprivileged children and silently entered into Vidya Mandir's educational team. She prepared the curriculum and then became a part of arts and crafts team and is now one of the strongest pillars of the organization. As we all know, many contributors may seek recognition but how many are there in the society who forget their own identity and give their best? I could see this great quality in Vandana Ma. She knows what she can do, how much she can do and to what extent she can stretch herself. When such people start contributing then it is never a contribution but a consecration for me. Infusing life skills through arts and crafts in children and proving time and again of all possibilities has become her authentic signature and expression that has gone not only into the history of Nachiketa Tapovan but also into mankind.

Today, we are recognized by our arts and crafts activity. For this, along with Vandana Ma the credit goes to one more person who was not only involved in transforming our children into potential future citizens of our motherland but also in making our tiny world a beautiful place to live in. This lady is always bubbling with energy and once she commits to something then no matter the hour, day or night, she always lives up to it. She is more a mother than a volunteer for me. We fondly call her Navita Ma whose simple smile, sweet words and openness has brought tremendous change, a kind of revolution in Tapovan's history. She is not always seen in Tapovan but her presence is felt tremendously by everyone.

If Navita Ma is able to leave behind her signature then there is one more person who with her artistic way, started silently injecting life skills in children. Her involvement in every act is kind of infusing fresh energy in young budding children. Today our



Vandana Murarka



Craft Session



Madhavi Vir



Navita Bagaria



Mamta Agarwal

children have learnt a lot and it is all because of people like Mamta Ma. She not only renders her services to support the cause of Nachiketa Tapovan but also serves in various other places. She is a good *Sadhak* and spiritual person to the core. No matter what flag she carries, she always tries her level best to hold it high.

If Mamta Ma has done something to the society then one more person comes to mind who is a young lady and is always seen in Tapovan. She is none other than Madhavi. She talks to me for hours together on various spiritual dimensions of life. In fact, I was always engrossed in Karmayog and had hardly any time to contemplate, analyze or get into intellectual discussions but this tiny lady with high stature shook my whole existence sometime or other. Whether it is organizing a stall, or prizing creativity, her silent voice was always found and heard by everyone. 'Silent in her speech but most active in her act' is what I would label Madhavi.

Today, if we are able to achieve anything or get money or name and fame or leaving our creative signature behind, then it is all because of one of the best activities called 'Arts and Crafts'. I cannot dream our home schooling without it. Nothing can

beat this activity and the pious souls like Madhavi, Mamta Ma, Navita Ma and Vandana Ma. It is a great pleasure to see these mothers of Tapovan getting food or some snacks from their homes for the children regularly or cook something in Tapovan itself to take extreme care of their immediate needs. But what inspired me more is their Divine act to pay highest attention to the bond that they carry with Tapovan's children. They treat them like their own children. I bow down to Divine Mother for providing me such a beautiful bunch of mothers and salute many such seen and unseen hands for contributing towards the great cause. It is highly impossible for Tapovan to think of its own journey without such great souls.

I do not have words to express my gratitude towards their contribution but one thing I would like to ask Divine Mother, "place me wherever you want but at the same time give me this wonderful bunch of mothers so that in the journey called life I too shall gain some benefit."

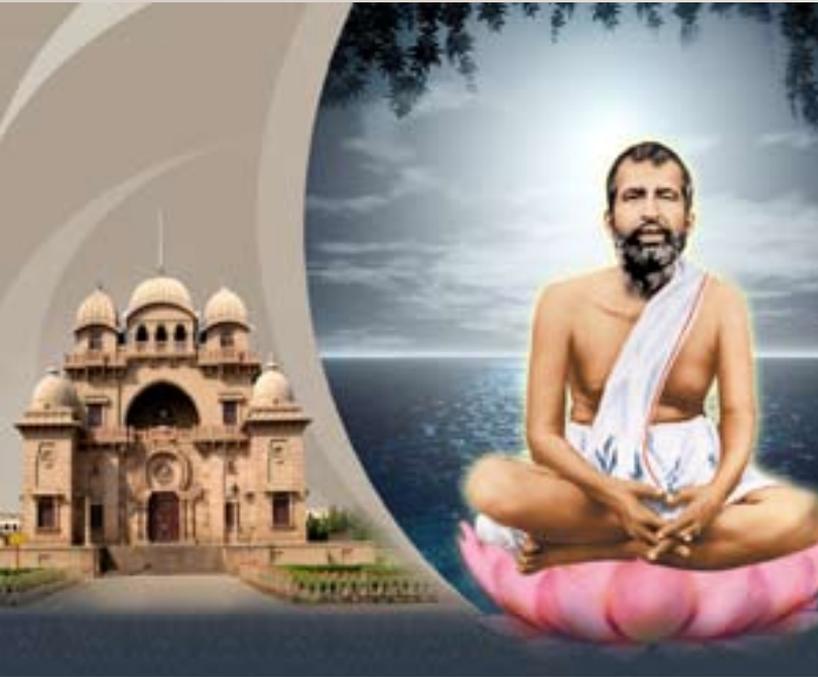


- Swami Nachiketananda Puri





Navagopal Ghosh & Nistarini Ghosh



tion of The Master, Navagopal sang Kirtans everyday with his family though he did not visit The Master again for three years. The Master sent word through Kishori to Navagopal asking him to visit. Navagopal was delighted that The Master remembered him after such a long-time. The Master advised Navagopal to visit him three more times, saying that would be enough for him to attain the higher realm of Bhakti. Once Navagopal arranged a small festival and invited Master to his home. The Master went into Samadhi listening to the Kirtans. Navagopal prostrated before the Master and asked to get him out of worldliness to which the latter replied "remember me once a day if you can do nothing else". Then he saw the luminous form of The Master. Nistarini had prepared dinner for The Master and expressed her desire to feed Him with her own hands. When she put a sweet in the mouth of The Master, she saw a mysterious being (*Kundalini* or the serpent power) gulping it down. The Master said that Nistarini is a great soul and is a partial incarnation of one of the ten forms of The Divine Mother.

"If you find a companion who is good, wise and loving, walk with him all the way and overcome all dangers", said Buddha in the Dhammapada. "And if you do not find a good companion then live alone and walk alone like an elephant in the forest". In the spiritual journey it is God's grace when a husband and wife have the same nature, same interest, and same goal. For the seekers of God it is a great boon to have harmony and peace in family life. Therefore a couple possessing mutual love, respect and trust progress faster spiritually. Navagopal Ghosh and his wife Nistarini were blessed with a harmonious marriage. They had several children. Navagopal was born in 1832 in the village of Begampur in Bengal and was a high official of the Henderson Company.

Once, a cat took refuge in Sri Ramakrishna's room at Dakshineswar with her little kittens. The Master asked Nistarini to take care of them at her home. After she took them home, The Master would enquire about them whenever He saw Nistarini. The Master once settled Navagopal's doubt with an analogy. There are two classes of devotees. One class has the nature of a kitten. The kitten depends completely on its mother. It accepts whatever its mother does for it. There is another class of devotees with the nature of a young monkey which clings to its mother with might and main. The devotees who behave like the young monkey have a slight idea of being the doer. The

They had the *darshan* of Sri Ramakrishna in 1882 with Kishori Mohan Roy. The Master asked their names and advised Navagopal to sing Kirtan every day. Following the instruc-

tion of The Master, Navagopal sang Kirtans everyday with his family though he did not visit The Master again for three years. The Master sent word through Kishori to Navagopal asking him to visit. Navagopal was delighted that The Master remembered him after such a long-time. The Master advised Navagopal to visit him three more times, saying that would be enough for him to attain the higher realm of Bhakti. Once Navagopal arranged a small festival and invited Master to his home. The Master went into Samadhi listening to the Kirtans. Navagopal prostrated before the Master and asked to get him out of worldliness to which the latter replied "remember me once a day if you can do nothing else". Then he saw the luminous form of The Master. Nistarini had prepared dinner for The Master and expressed her desire to feed Him with her own hands. When she put a sweet in the mouth of The Master, she saw a mysterious being (*Kundalini* or the serpent power) gulping it down. The Master said that Nistarini is a great soul and is a partial incarnation of one of the ten forms of The Divine Mother.

aspirants of both classes are devotees of God. He alone does everything. He alone is the Guru and He alone is the Ishta. During her pregnancy Nistarini decided that if a son was born to her she would dedicate him to the service of Sri Ramakrishna. Through the grace of The Lord, a son Nirode was born who later became Swami Ambikananda of the Ramakrishna order.

Towards the end of his life, Navagopal moved from Calcutta to Ramakrishnapur. He would bathe in the Ganga every day and on his way back home he would chant Jai Ramakrishna. His daily duty was to give medicines from the charitable dispensary. He performed Kirtan at his house every day and the neighbors would join in. Thus he spread the message of The Master. Before his death he blessed his wife and other members of his family and asked them not to grieve for him as the human body is subject to destruction, and asked them to chant the name of Sri Ramakrishna. Then while consciously chanting the name of The Master, Navagopal breathed his last.

Nistarini outlived her husband by many years. She was very close to Holy Mother and other direct disciples of The Master. When the monks became extremely sick at the monastery she would take them to her home and arrange proper diet and medicine for them. Because her son was a monk, the other monks felt very free with her and respected her. One day while repeating the *Mantra* she saw Lord Rama in front of her. As she was about to take the dust of His feet, she saw her beloved guru Sri Ramakrishna in place of Ramachandra. Then The Master said to her smiling, "Now you know who I am". When Nistarini became bedridden, she could not bear the touch of an impure person. Monks were then sent from Belur Math to serve her. On March 20, 1932 Nistarini hugged the picture of Sri Ramakrishna, repeated His name and passed away in deep meditation. When the news of her death reached Belur math, Swami Sivananda said, "They, Navagopal and Nistarini, were not just ordinary mortals; they are the companions of The Master. They come in every age with the Avatar to play their respective parts in His Divine drama".

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



*M*ere eyesight cannot be referred to as 'vision'.

We can only look at things on the surface; we cannot 'see' them for what they actually are. We don't see them for their true meaning or the real depth.

Every day I see this blindness in people and in myself too.

Blind we are to the truth, even if it is staring us in the face. We see only what we want to see.

The most profound truth may have been spoken, but it falls on deaf ears, because people only hear what they want to hear, what they have imagined in their twisted heads.

The most magical dance may be happening, but we miss it. We are blind to it ... since the perspective is missing.

Caught up in the swirls of our mind, the chaos of our emotions and our clouded vision, we can hear only criticism in the truth being spoken.

We complain about the others' lack of understanding. Our words are wrong, the tone inappropriate, the timing pathetic, our understanding shallow and yet, we can only blame the other.

Only when there is depth in our understanding... When our consciousness is elevated and enlightenment is the way of being, can we see things for what they really are, in the right perspective.

Now, when we see things through this elevated consciousness, through the depth of our being, through keen sensitive understanding, we can see life for what it really is.

- Gautam Vir

Log Into The INNERNET, Not The Internet

Asatoma Sadgamaya

Tamasoma Jyotirgamaya

Mrityorma Amritamgamaya

Om Shanthi ... Shanthi ... Shanthi!

A

sat means unreal and *Sat* means real. So we are asking God to lead us from unreal to the real, from darkness to light and from death to immortality. What is unreal? Is the world we live in real? It keeps changing and that which changes is not real. We ask God to take us from darkness to light ... What is darkness? Ignorance is darkness and knowledge is light ... from death to immortality... Is it possible to move from death to immortality?

Spirituality gives clarity of life. Are we all really happy? Is there any ultimate goal for happiness or will happiness last forever? ... Happiness is short-lived. It doesn't last forever. You might eat tasty food and be happy but it lasts only as long as the taste lingers in your mouth. After a few hours we feel hungry and the happiness is lost and not regained until you can eat more tasty food. You might long for a cycle and once you get it you'll long for a bike, later a car and so on. There is no end to these worldly desires as long as you are in the world. Then is there no way to get over this? I can authentically say that I have found out how to conquer our desires and realize that which is Real. I have been successful in realizing the Truth.

Aryabhata found out that Earth is spherical. In Rig Veda it is clearly stated that Earth is spherical. There are scientific evidences which prove that many Truths were already revealed by our ancient sages. Everything is existent inside us. Today we rely on Internet even for small information but our sages depended on their Innet or Inner world to search for Truth. All knowledge was derived by tapping their inner source. Eternal Truths were revealed to them.

The spirituality I am talking about or what our sages talk about is to get connected to the Inner world



and when you do so you will find true happiness as you are aware of the Truth. You will accept with joy the arrival of a new baby but the joy is lost when a person departs from your life. This is because of your fear about life and because of ignorance. You might feel you know everything but in reality you are totally ignorant of your true self. Once you get connected to the Inner world you will lose fear of death as Truth is realized. Until and unless you are connected to the Inner world, the purpose of human birth is not served. And please understand that it is very difficult to get a human birth.

A science student knows only about science. A doctor knows only about the human body and its functioning but he does not know anything that an engineer knows. His knowledge is limited. But in the spiritual world knowledge is unlimited. It is endless. Spirituality is a science. It is an *Adhyatmic* science which tells you about your own self.

When someone tells you, you are beautiful, you are happy but you feel sad when you get a negative comment. Happiness and sadness both exist within you. One who conquers this happiness and sadness knows his true form. You need to find out the source of happiness and sadness. Once you have realized the truth you need not become a sannyasi but you will become the best father, the best mother, the best child and so on. This is what Spirituality is. So, instead of logging into the internet, log into the Innet to find out your true self.

- *Paramahansa Swami Shivananda Puri*



Yoga - Kurmasana



Dear Sadhak!

Kurmasana means tortoise posture. Though it appears as a very simple posture, it is difficult to maintain since the pressure falls on the heels and side of the body in first posture whereas in second posture on the knee and thigh region. But unless the feet are not sufficiently supple it is very difficult to practice *Kurmasana*. Once the mastery is gained, this helps celibates and householders alike. *Sadhakas* can derive tremendous energy from this *Asana* since the heels press the anus close to the *Vajranadi* and prevent energy from escaping. Thus it channelizes the sexual energy to higher centers in the body. Important *Nadis* in the sides of the feet, which connect to the kidneys and other visceral organs, are pressed and thereby receive gentle stimulation.



Posture No. 1

1. Sit on the floor with legs straight out, place your hands sideways near the hips with palms down and fingers forward
2. Fold left leg and place left heel below the left buttock
3. Fold right leg and place right heel below the right buttock
4. Then place the feet in such a way that the heels press the anus and the toes point outwards with cross leg
5. Place your hands palms down on the same-side knee with arms relaxed and adopt hand mudra as per requirement
6. Straighten and extend your back and neck, bringing your head up nice and tall; look straight ahead



Posture No. 2

1. Sit on the floor with legs straight out, place your hands sideways near the hips with palms down and fingers forward
2. Fold left leg and place left heel below the left buttock
3. Fold right leg and place right heel below the right buttock
4. Then place the feet in such a way that the heels press the anus and the toes point outwards with cross leg
5. **Toes pointing outwards, heels further away from the buttocks**
6. Place your hands palms down on the same-side knee with arms relaxed and adopt hand mudra as per requirement
7. Straighten and extend your back and neck, bringing your head up nice and tall; look straight ahead

Benefits: *Kurmasana* improves the flexibility of your hips, knees, ankles, and strengthens the back. It straightens the curved spine as well. In this posture energy moves upward thus it is considered the perfect posture for celibates and householders alike. It regulates the sex glands, reproductive and excretory organs thus channelizing sexual energy to the higher centres in the body.

- Swami Nachiketananda Puri





“*A*re you unselfish?
That is the question.

If you are, you will be perfect
without reading a single
religious book,
without going into
a single church
or temple.”

- *Swami Vivekananda*





MAKE YOUR OWN PATH

Recently, while travelling in a train, I was standing at the door and noticed that near the track there was a lot of dry grass and waste. Here and there wherever people had travelled on foot or on bikes, I noticed that there was a distinct path, which was very clean and though very thin, could be seen clearly due to the difference between its colour and that of the surroundings. Just then I thought how many times people must have travelled on that path for it to have become so barren, yet clean. Then I thought as to what would have happened if that many people were to travel on the whole patch of grass so that the whole area could become clean.

Metaphorically too, I realised that this teaches us something. All of us want to do something that people will remember. Yet, we can't get ourselves to do something different. We all admire Swami Vivekananda because he dared to do something different. "Brothers and sisters of America", was how he addressed the gathering of religious leaders, and that is not something that we get to hear every day. It was his decision to take up his goal and work for it; and it was his determination toward this one-of-a-kind goal that made him the person that we know as - Swami Vivekananda.

From the example that I gave of a path, we see that many people who choose to follow another person's footsteps, slowly make an impression on the world. But one person who keeps going in a different path again and again, despite the hurdles he encounters, is the one who makes a huge impact on the earth. As it is said, there is a first time for everything; similarly, once someone takes up a path, others follow. So all we need are good leaders, right? No, this is basic human mentality. Why can't we understand that

leaders can't do everything. All of us jointly or individually need to take up an initiative and make others follow, to make that initiative work.



All children want to achieve something big. So let these shooting stars choose their own path.



Another example where we Indians are still hell-bent on sticking to one single path is, in choosing a career. From time immemorial, most parents thought that a good career is either becoming a doctor or an engineer. Why can't you let your child choose differently? Let them choose what they want to do. Let them decide their future. Medicine and engineering aren't the only career options out there. This mentality is the reason why India is still a developing country. Had the people promoted other careers earlier, people wouldn't have found the need to go to foreign countries looking for meaningful jobs. A child is like a piece of clay, whom the parents must mould into a star. All children want to achieve something big. So let these shooting stars choose their own path.

After all, it is they who will lead our country tomorrow.

Create a path! Make a difference!



N. Rohan C. Govind
Class 9,
GT Aloha Vidya Mandir,
Chennai

Save our sparrows

11

20th March

Celebration Par Excellence

The air was filled with tender voices saying 'Om Namah Shivaya, Amma/Akka'. Little children were clad in ethnic wear and were joyously running around. Little girls of fourth and fifth standards were comfortably walking even wearing *Sarees*! Some of the boys were wearing the traditional *Dhoti*. Everyone dressed up in their best, and the performers were gearing up to put their best foot forward. And rightly so! It was the 'Annual Day' of their beloved Nachiketa Tapovan Vidya Mandir, which was celebrated on January 12, 2014. It is difficult to capture the details of the happy day. Still, we make an attempt to share a few memories of the eventful day.

The programme began with a prayer, sung devotedly by the kids. They then welcomed the chief guest of the event, Ms. Kusum Gupta, the founder-director of Kalpa School, Hyderabad. Ms. Gupta has been associated with Nachiketa Tapovan for a long time and has been supportive of many of our efforts. She encouraged the children saying that they were fortunate to be taught by many talented people. The children were overjoyed when she said that the kids at Vidya Mandir are quick learners; she said children of her school would take a lot more time to learn things than the kids of Vidya Mandir would. She further encouraged them to study well and become good human beings. As their token of love, the children presented a bouquet of handmade paper flowers to Ms. Gupta.

The children then portrayed their talent – dance performances, singing, jokes, skits etc. were all to be immensely enjoyed. What made the teachers gleam was the confidence with which their pupils played their respective parts effectively and with little or no flaws at all. Be it the 'Maa Telugu Talliki Mallepoodanda' dance or the creative presentation of the establishment and development of Nachiketa Tapovan, the children performed it all very



Chief guest
Mrs. Kusum Gupta
lights the lamp



Krishna & Gopikas of Vidya Mandir



A skit on Swami Vivekananda



Mrs. Kusum Gupta awards certificates to the children



Children performing the welcome dance



Paramanandayya & his shishyas



ndir



We are all children of Mother India!



Dance performance

well and got widely admired and appreciated by the audience. The skit regarding the differences between pre- and post-independence India was moving. It touched upon significant ills plaguing our society and urged us to be conscientious citizens. The children devoutly remembered and prayed to Swami Vivekananda, whose birthday was being observed as Annual Day of the school. Everyone present absorbed the message that Swami Vivekananda gave to the world when the children presented the same in the form of a short play. That the hall was occupied to its full capacity is evidence to the fact that the performances were spell-binding.

The time then came for winners in competitions and few academically brilliant children to be rewarded. The academically meritorious from each class in each subject were rewarded with a cash prize of Rs. 500 each, to be deposited in their account with the school. The winners of a writing competition conducted for the students of Classes VII, VIII and IX were awarded Rs. 500 each, along with a book and an English dictionary. The chief guest, Ms.Gupta handed over the prizes to the winners.

The programme was followed by *Annadanam*. Everyone partook of the food which was affectionately prepared. While each one effectively played their roles, the work done by Sowja Ma, Subha Ma, Manisree Amma and Jyothi teacher has no parallel. They stood at the helm and led all the others with contagious enthusiasm.

Ultimately, the children, teachers and staff of Vidya Mandir are the winners! May they have a bright future and may they win many accolades individually and for their beloved institution! We leave you with a few pictures, providing glimpses of the celebration, which in every way was par excellence.

- Neetika



Renunciation



Long ago there lived a king named Sibhidhwaja. His beautiful wife Choodalaya was wise and virtuous. Both king and the queen were spiritually inclined and spent most of their time in reading scriptures and discussing spiritual matters. By virtue of purity of heart and clarity of thought, the queen was an evolved and enlightened soul. The king was not as evolved as the queen and often felt restless.

Understanding the scriptures merely by word but not in the spirit, Sibhidhwaja felt that detachment and renunciation would lead him to Self Realization. One night, without informing anybody, the king quietly walked out of his palace leaving behind his wife, wealth and kingdom. He went to a remote forest and started living there alone like a hermit.

The queen sent people in search of the king to every nook and corner of the kingdom but in vain. He was not to be found anywhere. Highly evolved soul that she was, Choodalaya, through her inner vision located Sibhidhwaja living in a forest in seclusion. But she decided to leave him alone for sometime without any disturbance. Meanwhile she took the responsibility of ruling the kingdom in his absence.

Few years passed by. The queen felt that it was about time to meet her husband and check his progress. Disguised as a Brahmin boy she went to meet him. Introducing herself as a poor Brahmin, she enquired about his particu-

lars and the reason for his living alone in a forest. Sibhidhwaja replied, "I was once a king but I renounced my family and my kingdom to attain enlightenment." The queen then asked, "Are you peaceful and blissful all the time?" "Alas! No. Even after years of solitude and penance, I have not achieved my goal," said the king sadly.

The queen smiled and said, "Raja! You have missed the point by failing to understand the essence of the scriptures. Renunciation does not mean running away from the external world. Renunciation is getting rid of the internal weaknesses by breaking away from the compulsions and tendencies acquired from past several births. True renunciation is freeing oneself from the limitations of the mind and body and gaining mastery over them. An unstable and restless mind cannot be peaceful even in Himalayas, whereas, a clear and stable minded person though living in the materialistic world can evolve to a state of equanimity and bliss."

After an eye opening talk, the queen revealed her true identity to her husband. The king now with a clear and peaceful mind went happily back to his kingdom.

'Just as the slush where the lotus grows is no hindrance to its bloom, so the world around is not a hurdle for one's spiritual growth and enlightenment.'

- A Seeker

A Song Forever

*H*ere is a tribe in Africa where the birth date of a child is counted not from when they were born, nor from when they are conceived but from the day that the child was a thought in its mother's mind. And when a woman decides that she will have a child, she goes off and sits under a tree, by herself, and she listens until she can hear the song of the child that wants to come. And after she's heard the song of this child, she comes back to the man who will be the child's father, and teaches it to him. And then, when they make love to physically conceive the child, some of that time they sing the song of the child, as a way to invite it.

And then, when the mother is pregnant, the mother teaches that child's song to the midwives and the old women of the village, so that when the child is born, the old women and the people around her sing the child's song to welcome it. And then, as the child grows up, the other villagers are taught the child's song. If the child falls, or hurts its knee, someone picks it up and sings its song to it. Or perhaps the child does something wonderful,

or goes through the rites of puberty, then as a way of honoring this person, the people of the village sing his or her song.

In the African tribe there is one other occasion upon which the villagers sing to the child. If at any time during his or her life, the person commits a crime or aberrant social act, the individual is called to the center of the village and the people in the community form a circle around them. Then they sing their song to them.

The tribe recognizes that the correction for antisocial behavior is not punishment; it is love and the remembrance of identity. When you recognize your own song, you have no desire or need to do anything that would hurt another.

And it goes this way through their life. In marriage, the songs are sung, together. And finally, when this child is lying in bed, ready to die, all the villagers know his or her song, and they sing- for the last time- the song to that person.

Source: The free thought project



Open up... and live a little

*I*n this storm of life

Naked abandoned all this while
Lonely and quiet inside
Lives a hope and faith
To change and rise above and beyond in this life.

Seeing the ruins of nature's rejection
abandoned and ignored
an appeal flows from my eyes
For us and generations to come
To open up... and see a little

We have always been protected and nurtured by nature
It's time we protect and nurture our existence
by nurturing the trees and plants
And to breathe, live,
bloom again in the basking of nature's love

A step forward will make a difference
Our protection and love for our existence
Open up... and give a little

The love we bestow on our loved ones
Let's bestow this love and care to our nature
Close your eyes and ask yourselves
do they deserve being neglected and depleted ?
Do they deserve this for giving us sustenance..??
Let's promise ourselves this moment
To give nature our unconditional love and care
For nature has given us life and sustenance

Mother Earth has blessed and loved us all this while
Let's each one of us plant and show
gratitude and reverence to our mother earth
Allow them to grow underneath the blue sky
in care, love and peace
Open up... and do a little
It's you who can change
and make this little difference

Listen ..sky ... trees and birds
let's play the music together
make them feel wonderful as it is
let them melt like snow within
and let them open up and live a little.

- *Suruchi Singh*





Baby Green Steps



*Little drops of water, little grains of sand,
Make the mighty ocean, and the pleasant land.
So the little moments, humble though they be,
Make the mighty ages of eternity.
Little deeds of kindness, little words of love,
Make our earth Happy, like the heaven above.*

- Julia A. F. Carney

The Go Green Club started by Nachiketa Tapovan in March 2011, takes this opportunity to thank the entire Tapovan community for the support and encouragement given, leading to the success of this humble initiative. As a token of utmost gratitude to the Mother Earth, Nachiketa Go Green Initiative undertakes the following gestures:

1. Spreading awareness about recycling waste materials through

- i) Presentations to communities about the imminence of recycling
- ii) Demos on dos and don'ts of recycling of waste and conservation of resources
- iii) Counsel regarding the 3Rs- Reduce Reuse Recycle, e-waste and kitchen gardens

Upon invitation, we hold interactive presentation sessions at communities, schools, at conventions and other gatherings. Many colonies and organizations have been availing our green awareness sessions and subsequently participating in our waste recycle initiative.

2. Undertaking collection of waste material from communities and directing it to recycling centres in turn generating funds which are directed towards supporting educational and awareness projects at Nachiketa Tapovan. Gated Housing developments like Mount Kailash, Jubilee Hills Club, Trimulgherry, Czech Colony, Aparna Sarovar, Fortune Towers, Hotels like Green Park, Marigold Hotel, Brindavan Hotel, Individual households and Volunteers of Vidya Mandir have contributed immensely to

the success of this endeavor. As a result, over the last 3 years, we have successfully diverted several thousands of kilos of waste material from hogging the perilously overloaded landfills onto recycling centres.

In the year 2013 we collected waste of 29,700Kgs generating funds amounting Rs. 2,38,534/-

- 3. Sale of array of goods made with recycled materials** like newspaper, wedding and greeting cards, rags and many more.
- 4. Plantation at Nachiketa Ashram and surrounding hamlets in Kodgal, Jadcherla.**
- 5. Advocating growing a kitchen garden-** putting to use water from washing vegetables, rice etc. one can easily nurture a patio garden of 10-12 pots growing good old marigolds, herbs, aloe etc.

*Baby green steps, little green steps-that
we dared to take*

Propelled by the synergy from the caring community

Grew gradually into strides, leaps and bounds!

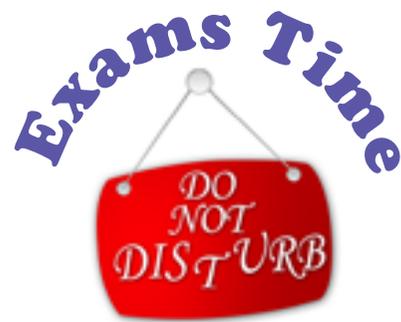
*Now we can proudly say, "We can lend a hand if you
want to take baby green steps,*

Little green steps towards a greener Earth."

- Annapurna R.

For queries, counsel and support contact : 9849168937

Have I prepared ENOUGH ???



... You can never be 100% SURE



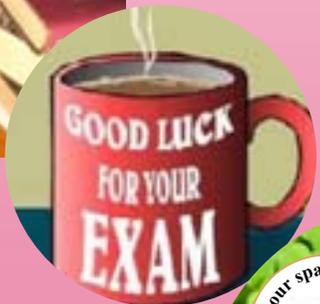
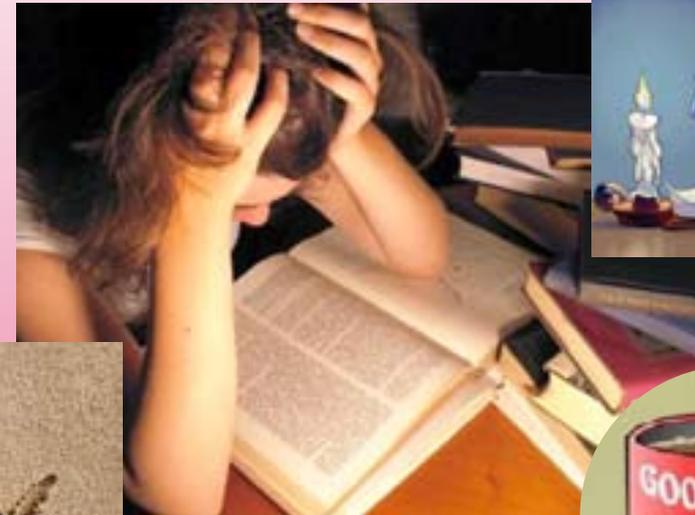
WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

- Be sure to take frequent breaks to help your brain subconsciously process information.
- Always re-write the important sections of your notes; it will help you memorize them.
- Eat right and have a good rest every night before an exam.
- Focus on what you are studying.



WHAT YOU SHOULD DO NOT

- Don't over-do it. There is a fine balance between work and time to relax with friends or pursue hobbies. Work hard, play hard.
- Don't do all your revision at once. You'll learn best if you read a little bit of your textbook each day.
- Don't stay up all night studying. Cramming late is not a good idea- get enough sleep before the day of the exam.
- Don't try to rush through the studying process; just spending time working through your notes will help you memorize them.





Sadguru Sri Nannagaru

*I*n the verandah of the house nestled among coconut palms, sits an elderly man surrounded by men and women gazing at him silently. His countenance is flooded with peace and love as if from a secret well of joy in his heart. He embraces each with loving glances, showering additional benevolence on men and children with soft caresses. Gracefully accepting offerings from the visitors with the eagerness and joy of a child, he returns a portion to them and distributes the remaining among others sitting around. This is the daily routine of Sadguru Sri Nannagaru.

Nannagaru (Nanna - father; garu - respectful title) as he is called endearingly, is the beloved Guru and father-figure for thousands of devotees who throng daily at his home seeking peace and guidance, both spiritual instruction and also advice for dealing with life's challenges. No one leaves dissatisfied, their doubts cleared and turbulence in their hearts quelled. A look is enough to lighten their hearts, and inspire courage and confidence to face the world and their inner struggles.

Born on 23 September 1934 in Jinnuru village, near Palakollu in West Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh, he had spiritual inclinations since childhood. In his early twenties, he saw an old man in a vivid dream whose overpowering presence remained with him even after waking. His quest to find this old man ended some months later when he saw a picture of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi. He immediately surrendered to Ramana and dedicated his life to him. Ramana took him into his fold though they never met in person. Since then his spiritual journey intensified and he remained firmly established in the Self and God Consciousness, while continuing his duties as a householder to perfection, keeping his personal needs simple and to the minimum.

Over time, his spiritual radiance attracted seekers, who experience deep peace and joy in his presence. As devotees grew in numbers, he started travelling across Andhra Pradesh and other States reaching out to devotees, while also respecting his family's privacy. Hundreds attend his discourses regularly in Jinnuru and other places drinking in his every word.

Nannagaru frequents the holy town of Tiruvannamalai, where Ramana Ashram is located. Over the years his devotees established two ashrams to provide for seekers visiting this holy town – Andhra Ashram and Sri Nannagaru Ashram.

A glimpse of his teachings and Grace

Nannagaru stresses on the purification of mind. Change should come from within to attain the higher states and real happiness. Your behaviour pattern in daily life is what really matters, he advises. Results are determined by the motive behind actions, and not the action itself.

Our fundamental aim should be to overcome likes and dislikes. These are the cause of fear; and fear results in pain and grief. True happiness comes when we overcome likes and dislikes and accept every incident in life with calmness, equanimity, and a positive outlook.

The course of life, including birth and death, are pre-determined but we have the freedom to choose how we handle each incident in life – with

a positive or negative attitude – and use these as opportunities for self-purification and spiritual upliftment; while also achieving worldly success in the bargain!

But then he says our destiny is made by us! Our fate is a consequence of past deeds. One should be alert and careful of every thought, word and action. You have to bear the consequences of not only what you say and do but of every thought that comes to you.

The world he says is neither good nor bad; it is the way you see it based on your attitude. It serves as a mirror to show your faults and shortcomings; you have to make the effort and overcome them. True revolution does not happen from upheavals in society; it happens when each person strives to overcome his shortcomings and becomes pure and simple. Only that person can truly serve society.

Good and bad deeds merely determine the course your life will take now and in future births. Good deeds however show you the right direction, while bad deeds distract you from the goal. To reach the final destination of Supreme Bliss and Awareness one has to rise above both good and bad.

He extols holy company as they aid your spiritual practice and under their influence your path is made smooth and easy. He cautions against friendships that can ruin you and divert you from the right path.

He gives equal importance to *Jnanamarga* (path of self enquiry) and *Bhaktimarga* (path of devotion). *Bhakti* is *Jnanamatha* (mother of *jnana*) he quotes. *Jnana* without *bhakti* (knowledge without devotion) is dry and tasteless. Only a true *bhakta* (devotee) can attain *jnana*. Courage is required to be a true devotee and constantly contemplate on God without a single thought about worldly matters. Like a leaf that trembles at the slightest breeze, if the mind is even slightly disturbed by one thought, true devotion is not possible. True *bhakti* ripens into Universal love. Only he with universal love blended with compassion, can truly serve God and humanity.

While he focuses on Ramana Maharshi's path of Self Enquiry and Bhagavat Gita, his spiritual instruction expands to include teachings of great Masters of all religions and faiths; including role models among social leaders and scientists. He gives us a deep insight into their greatness and contributions, inspiring us to reach the heights achieved by the great Masters and Leaders.

He speaks the language of common man; the most profound philosophy and intricate spiritual concepts are made easy and followed even by the simple uneducated housewives in villages. The clarity of his instruction shows the depth of his understanding and wisdom.

A true father to his devotees, he takes keen interest in their personal well-being and shares in their joys and sorrows. He guides them like any responsible head of a family - applauds their achievements, corrects their faults, and shows the right direction, expecting nothing in return.

Nannagaru's silence is however more eloquent than his words, and his eyes have the power to teach and reform. While his followers have an unquenched thirst for his talks, they hold his silence even more precious. Many have experienced the miracle of his silence when they found total peace in his presence, their sorrows dissolved and mind driven inwards, as exemplified by an incident witnessed by a western seeker.

An old lady came to Nannagaru sobbing pitifully; totally devastated having lost her son. Nannagaru sat quietly through her outpourings of grief with a compassionate look. Gradually she calmed down, as he spoke a few words softly. In less than 15 minutes, she was totally relaxed and left with a smile - a miraculous transformation coming to terms with the worst tragedy for any parent. The immediate burning pain was soothed in Nannagaru's presence, as naturally as a soft breeze blowing away a flame, giving strength and courage to overcome the deeper attachment and sorrow. He does not have to do anything, but just be there; and He has this effect on anyone who comes to him with a yearning – an automatic Divine action!

- Sreedevi P.

Thirteen and a Graduate Already!

*S*ushma Verma is a thirteen year old child in Uttar Pradesh with a less fortunate background. Her mother is illiterate and her father could study till only Class VIII. Her father works as a Class IV employee in an educational institution and they all live in a one-room tenement with bare minimum facilities. They do not have a television and her only pastime is to play with her kid sister. Yet, she did not become a victim of her circumstances.

At the age of seven, her name was recorded in the Limca Book of Records for she was the youngest matriculate to clear the Uttar Pradesh High School Examination. She beat her own brother (who is now pursuing MCA), who had cleared the exam at the age of nine. After her twelfth, she wanted to give the medical entrance exam in order to fulfil her dream of being a doctor, but the authorities did not permit her stating that she was underage in order to be admitted to the MBBS course.



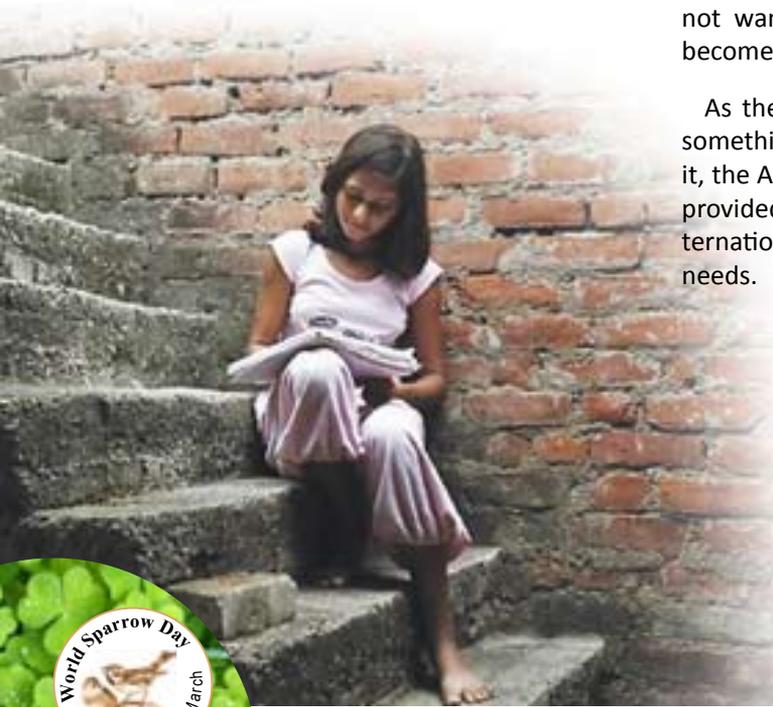
Undeterred, she took up microbiology and successfully completed the course. As she could not anyway sit for the medical entrance, she decided to enroll for master's degree in microbiology. She is now pursuing the same. In an interview to a national newspaper, she said she would finish her Ph.D. by the time she is 17 and would then give the medical entrance exam. A child prodigy indeed! While she admits that God has blessed her with a super-brain, she also underlines that each one of us has a special talent.

Her achievements at such a young age are inspiring and make us proud as a nation. What is even more inspiring is that she emerged successful in spite of her circumstances and financial constraints. For all of us in general and in particular, in societies where girl children and their education are looked down upon, she stands tall as an example of hard work coupled with zeal. It is heartening to note that she does not want to rest with a Ph.D., but wants to become a doctor.

As they say, when we sincerely desire to do something and are ready to sweat our brow for it, the Almighty ensures that we are adequately provided for. Deservingly, the NGO Sulabh International is taking care of all her educational needs.

We all have something or the other to learn from her. While children should be inspired by her enthusiasm and hard work, the elders should be invigorated by her spirit even in difficult situations. May God bless her and may she continue to inspire us all.

- Neetika Gogula





Our school is like VIDEOCON



Our school is like **VIDEOCON**
bada hai tho behtar hai

Our principal is **BPL**
believe in the best

Our teachers are like **NOKIA**
connecting the people

When exams approach
we are like **NIKE**
Just do it

After seeing our results
our teachers become **MIRINDA**
jor ka jatka laga

At last our teachers become
mentos
dimag ki batti jala de

When we are studying in this
school we buy **LG**
Life is good.



- V. Mahesh Raju
Class VIII

Nachiketa Tapovan Vidya Mandir



Take the lead others will follow

*N*eetika Akka showed us an interesting video the other day.

The incident which had an impact on me was about a young boy. He was on his way to school when he came across a road that was blocked by a felled tree, which led to a huge traffic jam. Though it was inconvenient to the commuters, nobody was willing to push it aside. Whereas this little boy walked up to it and tried to push it aside though it seemed a herculean task for him. Looking at the boy others too came and joined him and finally cleared the road.

From this video I learnt that if we take the initial step, others are likely to follow. In the same way, Swamiji and Vasundhara Amma started our school under a tree and later in a small hut. Now it is a Vidya Mandir. On seeing this, many kind people came forward to donate books, pencils, money etc. At present our Vidya Mandir is in a beautiful building and is running successfully with the support of many volunteers and sponsors.



Guru Brahmmya
Class VIII
Nachiketa Tapovan
Vidya Mandir



Greatness of SATSANG

The Lord laughed at this. He said, "Naradji, don't be upset. If you really want an answer to your question then go and ask that newly-born calf." Still sad with the death of the baby parrot, Naradji approached the newborn calf and softly asked in its ear, "What are the fruits of satsang?" Naradji stood still waiting for an answer. The calf looked at Naradji and toppled to the ground. It died. Naradji was now extremely depressed. He had now sinned by killing a cow. He quickly went to the Lord to speak his mind. He was going to tell him off! But the Lord calmed him down and said, "You will certainly get the answer to your question now. The king has a newborn boy. Go ask the baby prince your question."

Naradji once went to Shri Krishna. He asked, "What are the fruits of doing satsang?"

"Naradji," said the Lord pointing to a big worm, "This worm in hell will explain to you the benefits of doing satsang."

So Naradji went to the worm in hell and asked, "Worm, what are the fruits of doing satsang?" The worm looked at Naradji and then died! Naradji didn't get an answer. So he returned to the Lord and said, "I didn't get an answer to my question, and the worm died. Now you must give me an answer."

The Lord heard Naradji but said, "Look, see that nest, in it is a newly born parrot. Go and ask it. The baby parrot will explain to you the fruits of doing satsang."

With this command from God, Naradji approached the little baby parrot and asked, "What are the fruits of satsang?" The baby parrot opened its eyes and looked at Naradji. But then died! This frightened Naradji. He began to think, "The benefit of satsang is death! Whoever I ask this question to dies."

He made his way to the Lord. With great unhappiness he said, "If you want to tell me the truth then please tell me. Because whoever I ask dies.

Murder hangs on my head now. I don't think I can take your advice again."

Naradji said to the Lord, "Upto now I've asked a worm, a parrot, and a calf, and they've all died. I've been lucky that nobody has troubled me so far. But if the king's son dies then I'll be in deep trouble. So now I don't want to know the fruits of doing satsang!" The Lord assured Naradji that the prince would definitely explain to him the benefits of doing satsang and he would not die.

Naradji with a brave heart went to the palace and asked the prince, "Brother, what are the fruits of satsang?" Hearing this, the prince looked at Naradji, and laughed. He answered, "Naradji, haven't you understood the greatness of satsang yet? When you first asked me the question I was a worm. I then died and became a parrot. But with your darshan at my nest I died and was given the body of a calf. Then again with your darshan I was freed and given this highest of births, as a human being. And now with the grace of your darshan I have been fulfilled. If just by your darshan I have gained so much then think how much a person can gain by associating (satsang) with a great sadhu such as yourself!" Naradji now fully understood the greatness of satsang. He returned to the Lord and praised,

"Lord, your Divine ways will never be understood by anyone."

Tales Of Wisdom
-As told by Yogiji Maharaj

Perfect Guests

When I was a little girl, we used to get these little visitors- they would come to our house, unabashedly, making it their own home, sometimes alone, sometimes in couples or even as a band of relatives. These uninvited but cooperative guests would help themselves to grains and crumbs in the courtyards, wouldn't demand any special treatment, and were happy to sit on the clothesline chirping and entertaining the children and adults of the house. Before we knew we got so used to having these guests around that neither of us was conscious of the other's presence. In fact we grew upon each other and our housemates became symbols of: Joy, Inclusion, Creativity, Simplicity, Protection, Community, Productivity and Friendliness to me. In the absence of my parents and siblings they gave valuable company to me. During this harmonious coexistence I could spend hours, watching in awe- their perfectly ordered "meetings" on the electric cables (today's

 **Unleaded petrol and insecticides**, believed to be eco-friendly, has harmful byproducts that kills small insects which form the sole diet of young sparrows.

 **Mobile radiations**
 **Non availability of water**

 **Increase in pollution and pesticides.** The alarming decline in sparrow population indicates that air pollution levels in the metropolitan cities are rising dangerously. Since sparrows are mainly grain eaters, it could mean that the grains that the people are consuming contain higher amount of pesticides than before (Luis).

House Sparrows are known to be extremely adaptable. If we are losing such hardy species, we need to know that something is not right. House



political leaders would benefit a great deal by taking a class or two from them), the way they communicated with their kin and their utter rejoicement at rain! I greatly envied the fact that they didn't have to go to school. Yes you guessed it right! My reference is to House Sparrows.

However, I feel sad that I cannot pass on the gift of the valuable company of sparrows to my grandchildren because like perfect guests, sparrows are leaving our urban homes. There is a definite decline in their numbers over the last decade for several reasons:

 **The loss of nesting habits** like traditional ventilators and holes in walls and eaves of roofs which housed sparrows safely.

 **Non-availability of grain** due to extinction of household practices like sun-drying, winnowing of grains on roofs and courtyards, Shift of shopping paradigm from *kirana* shops where there is a bounty of loose grain spilling from gunny bags to spic and span, plastic bagged supermarkets.

Sparrows rarely occur very far from humans and our structures. A sparse House Sparrow population could indicate a threat to human existence too. Therefore, let us act:

- 
- Place food in bird feeders in your yards or balconies
 - Offer shelter in the form of boxes with different holes, shapes, and orientations
 - Offer fresh water in birdbaths or wide mouthed pots or bowls
 - Plant native shrubs, hedges and trees
 - Offer nesting material by hanging a mesh bag stuffed with string, cloth, straw, pet fur etc.

- Annapura R.

Origin of Shivalinga

In pre-historic period dating back to 2nd millennium BCE devotees asked Rishi Atharvana the co-author of Atharvaveda, where is God and how He looks? Rishi Atharvana described that God is like *Yupastambha* or *Lingam* and is like an endless pillar or ray of Light. In Sanskrit the word *Lingam* transliterated as *Linga*, has diverse meaning ranging from spiritual meaning such as mark, *Stambha*, sign or characteristic and in common language gender and sex.

As described by Rishi Atharvana, devotees in post Vedic period started constructing temples installing big *Stambhas* or *Lingam* and offered prayers. In those periods idol worship was unknown to people. People worshiped only *Stambhas* or *Lingam* as God. To prove that, in post Vedic period big *Shiva Lingams* were installed. A few examples are quoted below: Guddimallam temple known as Parasurameshwara temple located at Renigunta, Chittor District of Andhra Pradesh which was constructed in first century BC has *Shiva Linga* which is about 5 feet in height and one foot in thickness. The Juttika Shiva temple located at Bhimavaram in Andhra Pradesh belonging to Pre-Ramayana period has a tall *Shiva Linga*. The Drak-

sharamam Shiva Temple in East Godavari District of Andhra Pradesh which was constructed in mid 800 AD has *Shiva Linga* which is 2.6 metres or 7.8 feet in height. The Bhojpur temple located near Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh which was constructed in Eleventh Century has *Shiva Lingam* which is 18 feet in height and 7.5 feet in circumference.

From the above facts it is clear that in post-Vedic period *Shiva Lingams* were huge in size. Many devotees started performing puja by bathing the *Lingam* and offering *abhishekam*. By regular bathing, the surface of *Lingam* became smooth and 'U' shaped. These examples are given here to prove that even in post-Vedic period it was called Shiva Lingam. Later due to inconvenience in going to temples each day to perform *puja*, people started installing *Shiva Lingas* or *Stambhas* in their houses. As large *Lingam* or *Stambhas* cannot be erected in houses they started reducing the size of *Lingam* or *Stambhas*. The Indians even during post Vedic-period were genius and spiritually evolved. They felt size does not matter as God is God in any size. As *Shiva Lingam* or *Stambhas* is to be made from single stone the upper portion was carved as *Lingam* or *Stambhas* and the lower portion as the base which was wide in size so that the *Lingam* should not tilt or fall. Further the base was made circular with slight in-depth with an outlet so that *Abhishek* water should flow in one direction. As



long as the *Lingam* was tall in size no one inferred that as sexual organ. When people started installing small size *Shiva Lingas* certain sects of people, by looks, started assuming that *Shiva Linga* is a Phallus and the base as *Yoni* which is but only one of their representations. [1]It would be wrong to look at the *Linga* and the *Yoni* only in human sexual terms. The *Linga* with the *Yoni* below it, the standing stone and the ring base, show the union of male and female energies, not just in sexuality, but also as electromagnetic forces. Human sexuality is only one of the many manifestations of the cosmic forces of duality, of a greater Divine sexuality as it were, which transcends all creaturely existence. We must learn to see the cosmic energy behind human sexuality rather than try to reduce spiritual polarities to our own physical and emotional inclinations.

The *Shiva Purana* described *Lingam* as the beginningless and endless Pillar interpreted as a Cosmic Pillar symbolizing the infinite nature of Shiva. The *Linga Purana* stated that the nature itself is a *Linga* meaning the *Lingam* is devoid of colour, taste, hearing, touch etc and is spoken as '*Prakruti*' or nature. Another authentic reference comes from *Skanda Purana* where *Lingam* is clearly indicated as *Shiva Lingam* and is *Shiva* from where the whole universe is created and where it finally submerges... One of the first uses of the term 'Lingam in association with Shiva is found in the *Shvetasvatara Upanishad*. It says that Lord Shiva, the Supreme Being, has no *Linga* (sign or symbol). In simple terms it means it is impossible to define Brahman who is formless Shiva. Swami Vivekananda at the Paris Congress of History of Religions in 1900 has clearly stated that Shiva Linga has its origin in the idea of the *Yupa Stambha* the sacrificial post idealised in *Atharvaveda*. Greatest Indian Spiritual Masters including Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Ramana Maharishi also shared the same views.

Almighty Shiva is the creator of the cosmos, Universe and all the Gods. *Shiva Lingam* is the symbol of Almighty Supreme Shiva. God Shiva also known as *Shankar* or *Maheshwara* is the physical form of God Shiva.

- *Brij Bhushan Dubey*



[1] Excerpt from the article *The Shiva Linga and its meaning* by Pandit Vamdeva Shastry.

Don't Ask

Why do you ask me why I love Him?

Wasn't He the selector of the Divine womb where I was born?

Isn't He who has created this heavenly earth for us?

Isn't He who has planted the seed of love in my heart?

Isn't He the remover of sorrows?

Isn't He who spreads joy?

Isn't He the granter of love and devotion?

To love and adore Him

Who is the boatman who helps us cross the Bhavasagar?

Then why ask me why I love Him?

Don't ask. Don't ask. Don't ask.

- *Dharmendra Kalita*



*I*t was a happy trip to a friend's place. I was returning home in a bus. Like a child, I was cherishing the 'window seat' I got and was peeping out through the window. The sight was normal and boring – crowded roads, puffing vehicles and impatient drivers. I then decided to do something useful, that is, checking my hand bag and clearing it of all the unnecessary stuff. I opened it and was overjoyed to see that only a bit of paper had to be discarded from it, everything else was in order! This paper became my biggest problem, and at the same time gave me a chance to reflect.

As I was holding the paper and planning to throw it out of the window, I remembered the recent 'Atithi Devo Bhavah' advertisement where a passenger throws a banana peel from the window, and it embarrassingly lands on the camera of a foreign tourist! I smiled and restrained myself from making the clean road dirty. Then the bus stopped at a signal. Just adjacent to my window was the garbage dump. Garbage dump on a main road? That too a stinking garbage dump! I was aghast. A poor pedestrian was 'caught in the traffic jam', for while a part of the road was occupied by the dump, another was busied by the vehicles. There was no place to walk.

It struck my mind that I could throw the paper that was in my hand in that dump. I was about to do it when it set me thinking as to how that dump could have come up on a principal road. Was it because people like me threw rubbish on to the road that it got accumulated there? Or was it simply because of the lackadaisical attitude of the municipal authorities? Will my act of not discarding the paper in that heap matter at all? I finally decided not to throw it on the road and got down when the bus brought me to my destination. Then, came the second lesson.

E
V
E
R
Y



B
I
T

Crossing the busy roads in Hyderabad is definitely a difficult task, thankfully made easy many a time by the traffic police. Generally, the police stop vehicles for groups of pedestrians to cross the road. So, I was waiting in one such group being helped by a traffic policeman. He asked us all to stand behind a small divider-kind of a thing for three minutes after which he would stop the vehicles for us to go to the other side of the road. He was diligently doing his work, when I heard two girls saying, "Let us just go. He will make us wait for hours together." They moved ahead and made things difficult, much to the distress of the policeman! Had they waited for just a minute more, things would have been smooth.

C
O
U
N
T
S!

As they always say, an ocean is comprised of drops of water. Our surroundings depend to a great extent on our conduct. We want our roads to be clean, but we carelessly throw wastes on them. We want our system to be efficient, but we are impatient to cooperate with someone who is sincerely trying to do so. Why? All because of our selfishness and a kind of attitude which places our 'self' and our requirements above the common good. For a change, let us start holding ourselves responsible and let us be introspective, for it is we who collectively make a society. Let us try to make living easier for ourselves. Let each one of us say, "I am the change!"



Neetika Gogula

An advocate and has passion for writing on social issues.

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इवलइरगो ॥इइठन = ठरठु इइरठन

(Continued from last issue)

avyayAni

तथा

We use this to mean 'this way' or 'like this'. Please note that in many situations, there may not be much difference between 'this way' and 'that way'. However, तथा (and not एवम्) only goes with यथा, as we will see later. In the following examples, we can easily replace तथा with एवम् without any change in the meaning.

तथा न करणीयम् भवता
कृपया तथा मा वदतु भवान्!
सः तथा एव करोति।

इति

This is used to link sentences actually uttered with later part of the sentence as to who-said-to-whom. The use of apostrophe is optional as you see below.

भवान् युद्धं करोतु इति कृष्णः अर्जुनम् उक्तवान्।
'Fight!', Krishna told Arjuna.

भवान् तत्र गच्छतु इति पिता पुत्रं उक्तवान्।
'Go there', said the father to his son.

अहं श्वः आगमिष्यामि इति मम सखा उक्तवान्।
'I will come tomorrow', said my (male) friend.

For the last sentence, it would be incorrect to say the following:

सः श्वः आगमिष्यति इति मम सखा उक्तवान्।

This is because, in Sanskrit, all sentences should be said as they are uttered (namely, there is no indirect speech). The sentence per se is not wrong. It means that my friend communicated

to me that somebody (and not the friend himself) will come tomorrow.

यत्

This is quite like, but different from, इति above. The following sentences mean exactly the same as the previous 3 sentences we discussed. You might notice that यत् is like an opening-quote-mark.

कृष्णः अर्जुनम् उक्तवान् यत् भवान् युद्धं करोतु।
Krishna told Arjuna, 'Fight!'.

पिता पुत्रं उक्तवान् यत् भवान् तत्र गच्छतु इति।

मम सखा उक्तवान् यत् अहं श्वः आगमिष्यामि इति।

In the last 2 sentences, I used the closing-quote-mark (इति), which is optional in Sanskrit.

अतः

This is used when we say the reason first and its effect later. It is like 'therefore' or 'so'.

अद्य वर्षम् अस्ति। अतः अहं न आगच्छामि। -
There is rain today. Therefore I am not coming.

मम हृद्दोगः अस्ति। अतः अहं प्रतिदिनं गुलिकां खादामि। -
I have heart disease. So, I take tablet every day.

बालकः जनकस्य वाक्यं न शृणोति।

अतः तस्य पिता तं दण्डयति।

- The boy does not listen to his father's words.
Therefore, his father punishes him.

(To be continued in the next issue)



Vivekananda Jayanthi

Vivekananda Jayanthi was celebrated on 12th January 2014 at the Ashram by Vedavyasa Vidyalaya children. Swamiji enlightened the children on the values & ideals of Swami Vivekananda.

Republic day

Republic Day was celebrated on 26th January, 2014 at the Ashram with great patriotic fervor. The significance of the day was explained to the children by Swami Nachiketananda Puri.





Guests from UK

Mrs. Valerie Leivers & Mr. Terry Leivers from UK visited Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram. They represented Rotary Club of Sherwood Sunrises and their three day stay from 20th - 22nd January 2014 will be treasured by the ashramites. The children of Veda Vyasa Vidya Mandir welcomed them and participated in the learning session with great enthusiasm. The couple spent quality time with Swami Nachiketananda Puri who enlightened them on the various ongoing and forth coming Ashram projects.



We thank **Mrs. Valerie & Mr. Terry** for their donation of **Rs. 790220/-** towards one of the classrooms of Vedavyasa Vidyalaya. The donation was made on behalf of **Rotary Club of Sherwood Sunrises, UK**.

Work progress of Dining Hall



Thanks to Donors



We are extremely thankful to donors for their kind donations.

Sri Chunduri Rama Kanth, California

Sponsor-a-Child Corpus Fund - ₹ 1 lac

Sri Gaddam D. Reddy &

Smt. Jyotsna Reddy, New York

Sponsor-a-Child Corpus Fund - ₹ 1,23,324/-



Events & Celebrations

@ Nachiketa Tapovan, Hyderabad

Lumbini program

On the eve of Sankranti, 13th January 2014, students from Nachiketa Tapovan Vidya Mandir performed a classical dance in the club house at Lumbini, Kondapur.



Mataji

at HCL

From 20th-25th January 2014, Paramahansa Swami Shivananda Puri conducted Stress Management Program for employees of HCL, Hitech City.



Hillside Academy

On 24th January 2014, Hillside Academy Annual Day Celebrations were held at Ravindra Bharati. Paramahansa Swami Shivananda Puri was invited as a guest of honour. Nachiketa Tapovan Vidya Mandir students performed a classical dance.





Cultural program by Vidya Mandir students

Republic day

On 26th January 2014, Republic Day Celebrations were held at Nachiketa Tapovan Vidya Mandir. Dr. Ranga Rao who renders his services to Nachiketa Tapovan's free dispensary graced the occasion as chief guest.



Chief guest Dr. Ranga Rao



Vidya Mandir students salute the flag



Children pose with their new T-shirts

On 29th January 2014, Mrs. Valerie Leivers & Mr. Terry Leivers from Rotary Club of Sheerwood Sunshines, UK, visited Nachiketa Tapovan Vidya Mandir and presented T-shirts to our boys. Children from UKG & Grade 1 performed dances which were appreciated by our guests.

UK Guests visit Tapovan



Mrs. Valerie with Vidya Mandir students

Gandhiji Martyrdom day



Students and staff of the Vidya Mandir observed two minutes silence from 10:58 to 11:00 a.m. on 30th January on account of Mahatma Gandhiji Martyrdom day.

NACHIKETA'S GO GREEN CLUB...



We convey our thanks to all the participants of WOW initiative. You helped us earn **Rs. 16228/-** in the month of January and saved Mother Earth by recycling about **2028 kg** of plastic and paper waste material.

Salute to the Martyrs



Ah! Not for idle hatred, not
For honour, fame, nor self-applause,
But for the glory of the cause
You did what will not be forgot.

An excerpt from *Peschiera* by Arthur Hugh Clough

Martyrs Day observed on 23rd March

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Only Because of YOU...



Only because of kind-hearted well wishers like you, Vidya Mandir at Nachiketa Tapovan is able to provide free education, stationery and nourishing milk-n-meals to 240 children studying at Nachiketa Tapovan with the help of 12 paid teachers, 50 volunteers and community participation.

anna dAnam mahA dAnam; vidyA dAnam mahattaram

Celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, festivals and special occasions at Tapovan by sponsoring:

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 any Festival at Ma Yogashakti Peetham	₹ 20000

*Corpus Fund Options

Sponsor a child	₹ 1 Lakh
Anna Daanam (Mid-day Meals)	₹ 60,000/-
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")



"The gift of knowledge is a far higher gift than that of food and clothes; it is even higher than giving life to a man, because the real life of man consists of knowledge"

- Swami Vivekananda

Invitation

*We cordially invite you to
attend our celebrations*

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa's Birthday

3rd March 2014 (Tithi)

at Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram, Jadcherla.



HOLI

15th March 2014

at Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram,
Jadcherla.

&

at Nachiketa Tapovan Vidya Mandir,
Hyderabad.



Festivals & Events of March 2014

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Ugadi





*Words of appreciation from
Chief Guest Mrs. Kusum Gupta*

Vivekananda Jayanthi & Annual Day Celebrations

at Nachiketa Tapovan, 12th January 2014



Dance performance by Vidya Mandir students



We love Mother India!



Tapovan's Little Krishna

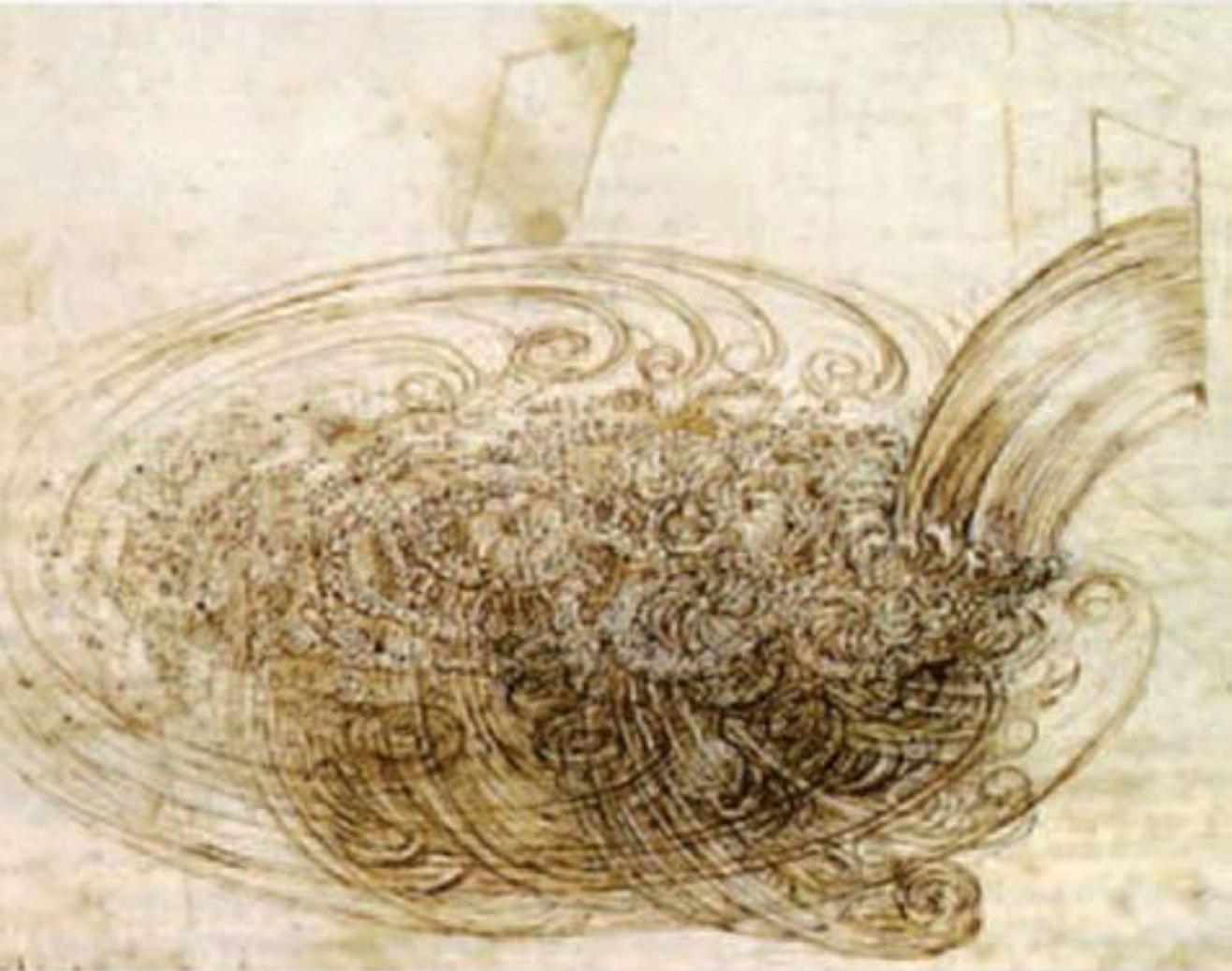
*I can become
Vivekananda too!*



Maa Telugu Talliki Mallepoodanda

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“Water is the driving force in nature.”

- Leonardo da Vinci



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