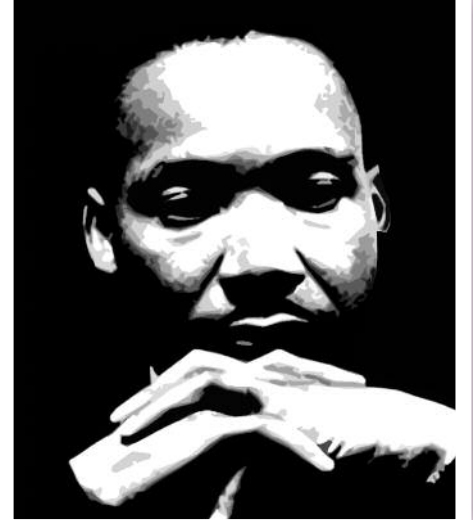


# Bhavan Australia

*Let noble thoughts come to us from every side - Rig Veda, 1-89-i*

[www.bhavanaustralia.org](http://www.bhavanaustralia.org)



*Nonviolence*

Life | Literature | Culture

# Words of Eternal Wisdom



*Non-violence is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind. It is mightier than the mightiest weapon of destruction devised by the ingenuity of man.*

**-Mahatma Gandhi**

*Non-violence leads to the highest ethics, which is the goal of all evolution. Until we stop harming all other living beings, we are still savages.*

**-Thomas A. Edison**

---

*At the center of non-violence stands the principle of love. ...The nonviolent approach does not immediately change the heart of the oppressor. It first does something to the hearts and souls of those committed to it. It gives them new self-respect; it calls up resources of strength and courage that they did not know they had. Finally it reaches the opponent and so stirs his conscience that reconciliation becomes a reality."*

**-Martin Luther King, Jr**

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*Violence sometimes may have cleared away obstructions quickly, but it never has proved itself creative.*

**-Albert Einstein**

---

*What is magnificent about humans is when they decide to turn and stand. If they respond with non-violence on principle and hold their ground, they are really magnificent.*

**-James Cromwell**

---

*Non-violence is not inaction. It is not discussion. It is not for the timid or weak ... Non-violence is hard work. It is the willingness to sacrifice. It is the patience to win. ... There is no such thing as defeat in nonviolence...The first principle of non-violent action is that of non-cooperation with everything humiliating. .*

**-Cesar Chavez**

---

*If the Gandhian moment is to be realized, then it must encompass both concerns with the violence of weapons and the violence of inequitable structures of domination and exploitation. Perhaps, unwittingly, the visibility of this violence due to the globalization of media coverage, especially TV, will hasten the process by which the peoples of the world sick from violence and the suffering entailed, will hasten the awakening of conscience and commitment needed to carry forward the struggle for a nonviolent world order. This is as much as we can hope for at present, but such a hope will certainly prove vain if we do not also act to the fullness of our individual and collective capacities to rid the world of war and violence..*

**-Richard Falk**

---

*One individual can begin a movement that turns the tide of history. Martin Luther King in the civil rights movement, Mohandas Gandhi in India, Nelson Mandela in South Africa are examples of people standing up with courage and non-violence to bring about needed changes.*

**-Jack Canfield**

# *Illumination Occurs Where There is Surrender*

There is a general tendency to look helplessly, if not with utter resignation, at the prevailing social malediction of rampant corruption, scam after scam, unabashed hunger for power, authority and an insatiable lust to amass wealth by any means with total disregard to the consequences.

People remain petrified and suppress their reactions because of fear of reprisals that are sure to be unleashed ruthlessly at the slightest hint of protest by such forces against which they have no defence. Their stoical reticence is understandable because there is a necessity to remain within the society which in turn entails compromise and the resultant sacrifice of cherished values.

Otherwise they will have to remain not only defenceless but also deprived. Right from the beginning of civilisation mankind had realised the value and need for civilised code of conduct and its social relevance. Down the millenniums right upto the present-day, however, there has been flow and ebb of enlightenment and adherence to values followed by suppression of those self-same values and ethics.

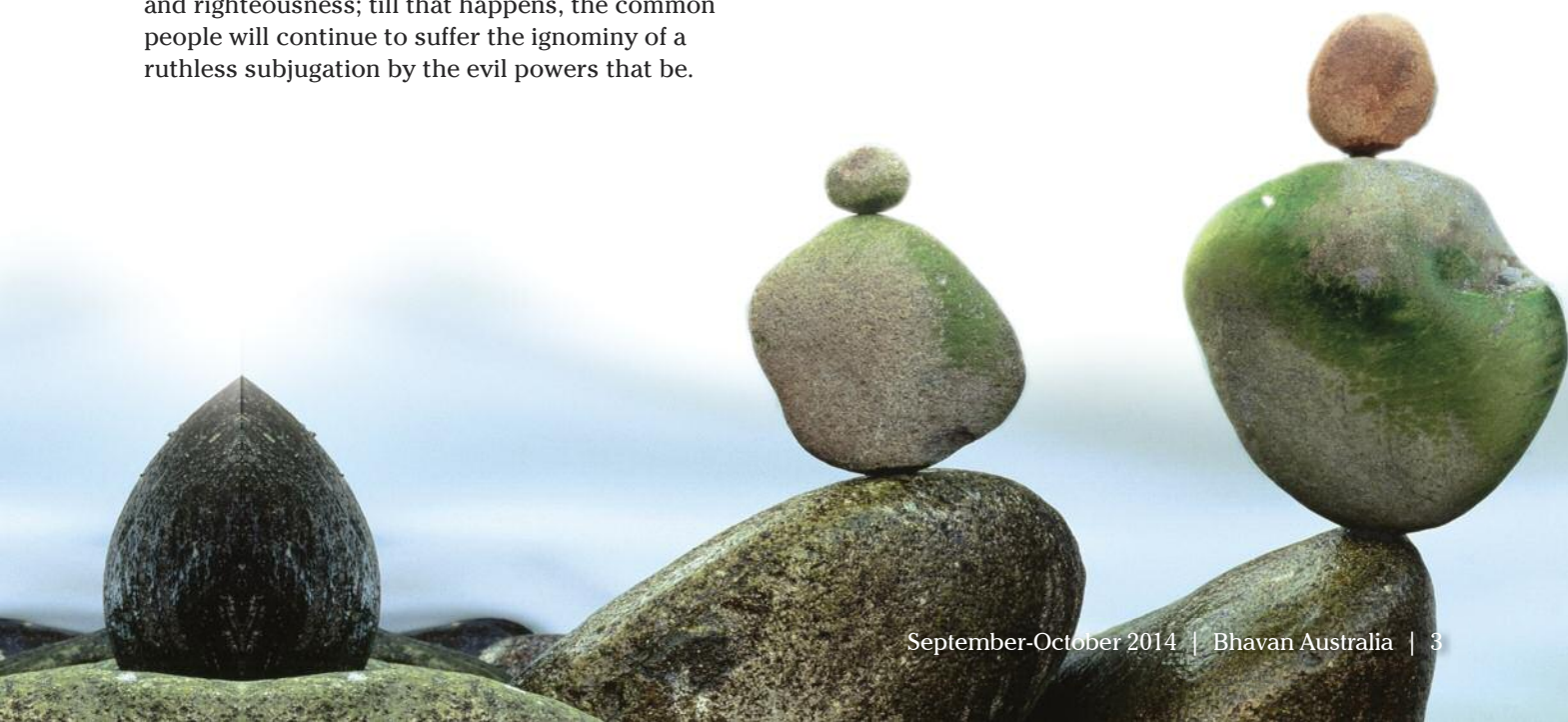
From time to time serenity, tranquillity and peace of societies have been rudely disturbed, shaken and mutilated by forces of the darkest kind who have imposed their will and their way of life on people by keeping them under subjugation through their brutal strength. Such forces have also been vanquished and their influence reversed in a cyclical order to make way for the return of the moral law and righteousness; till that happens, the common people will continue to suffer the ignominy of a ruthless subjugation by the evil powers that be.

Where there should be hope, there will only be anguish and a sense of helplessness.

There is, however, a small section of messianic people, who have faith in God and have faith in themselves. This combination fills their hearts with optimism and hope.

For them, no matter how dark it may be now at night, the illuminating rays of the sun are only a matter of hours away at dawn. Their numbers may be small but with missionary zeal they do their work of applying balm to the lacerated minds of the confused mass of people and do so quietly and unobtrusively. They are there amidst us all the time. When we look for them they are not easily found. However, when our defences are down, when we feel helpless, when we cry out in pain and pray, giving up our vanity and ego, these invisible angels are instantly at our side to pull us out of the depth created by our tormentors. Prayers are always answered, when they are made with absolute faith and the surrender is total. Let us pray then that these incarnates in flesh will someday lead us to a spiritual regeneration and righteousness—hope and salvation.

***Surendralal G Mehta***  
***President, Bharatiya***  
***Vidya Bhavan Worldwide***



# Contents



My Non-Violence .....	5	International Day of Peace .....	22
Launch of Nonviolence Month .....	8	Non-violent Strides towards Freedom .....	24
Ahimsa in Deed .....	10	Medellin: From Fear to Hope .....	26
International Day of Non-Violence .....	12	Learning the Power of Non-violence the Martin Luther King Way .....	28
Learning to resolve Conflicts through Nonviolent Means: A Dalai Lama Approach .....	14	Hindi Diwas (Day) .....	30
Developing a Culture of Nonviolence and Peace: Daisaku Ikeda Ways .....	15	Developing Our Personality .....	32
Nine Eleven and Mahatma Gandhi, Swami Vivekananda .....	16	Lal Bahadur Shastri .....	36
The Youth Promotion towards a Culture of Non-Violence and Peace .....	18	The Real Silent Killer—Your Own Mind .....	40
Educating for Non-Violence .....	19	Annie Besant .....	44
Mahatma Gandhi's List of Seven Deadly Sins .....	20	Indian Composite Culture - Religions .....	46
		Who is Responsible for the Decay of Varna Dharma .....	50

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# My Non-Violence



Mahatma Gandhi

## Truth and Non-Violence

Truth and non-violence are the twin pillars on which rested the entire framework of the magnificent edifice of Mahatma Gandhi's glorious life and work, which, according to the eminent scientist Einstein, was so spectacular that "generations to come, it may be, will scarce believe that such a one as this ever in flesh and blood walked upon this earth." To the Mahatma, of course, truth and non-violence were the two sides of the same coin. Hence one can understand the importance of non-violence in the working of Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of life.

Propagation of non-violence was no novel or unprecedented act of the Mahatma. As he himself has rightly said, "I have nothing new to teach the world. Truth and non-violence are as old as the hills. Mahatma Gandhi was pioneer in the field of applying the talisman of Ahimsa or non-violence, which until then was accepted by saints as a means to attain individual Moksha or salvation from this material world, for the solution of day-to-day problems of the common man.

To him life was an undivided whole and it could not be partitioned into water-tight compartments. Therefore, a true revolutionary as he was, he made it a mission of his life to see that the age-old dictum of non-violence gets its rightful place in the community of the future and all the relations and activities of the society are carried on the basis of this universal doctrine.

To tell the truth, non-violence today has become a more pressing cry of the entire humanity than in any particular phase of the human history. The tremendous advent in the sphere of physical science has created such lethal weapons, before which the extinction of the human civilization, nay, even the species itself is a matter of a few seconds. In the ancient times when science and technology were in their infant stage, men could afford to be violent.

But in the mid-twentieth century, when the world has been divided into two warring camps, armed to teeth with the latest models of armaments of total annihilation, the very urge of self-preservation has made it imperative on our part to embrace non-violence. Acharya Vinoba Bhave, the well-reputed protagonist of non-violence in modern India, has rightly remarked that this is an age when we must have to make proper synthesis of Vijnana and Atmajnana, i.e. science and self-knowledge.

Not only Gandhians like Vinoba but so many others from all over the world have echoed the same voice and have said that without the guidance of the Spirit the present civilization is like a ship without a rudder. And what is the guidance of Spirit if it is not non-violence, i.e. pure love? In trying to understand Mahatma Gandhi and his non-violence we should not overlook one important aspect of the truth. Mahatma Gandhi was no philosopher in the dogmatic sense of the term. He did not cut himself adrift from the daily problems and struggles of the mankind and take refuge in a solitary physical and mental corner to formulate his philosophy of non-violence.

His was the unique technique of taking active role in the process of the solution of the everyday problems of the downtrodden and in this process he evolved, like a lotus that blooms petal after petal, his non-violence. Hence in the restricted sense of the term, his was a realistic philosophy and that is why he was not tired of calling himself a practical idealist.

Whatever he has uttered in this respect war first experimentally proved by him and therefore it is a negation of truth if one says that the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi are meant for the Mahatmas alone and not for the man on the street. To such critics the entire life and work of Mahatma Gandhi are glaring testimonies. It is but natural that such an important subject should be a matter of deep interest for all, who are concerned with the wellbeing of the mankind.



Source: [www.mkgandhi.org](http://www.mkgandhi.org)

## *A Season for Nonviolence*

Of course there can and should always be a season for nonviolence. But at times it becomes necessary to remind ourselves the significance of certain deliberate initiatives in our daily life. Practice of nonviolence is one such, perhaps the most, significant trait of human behaviour.

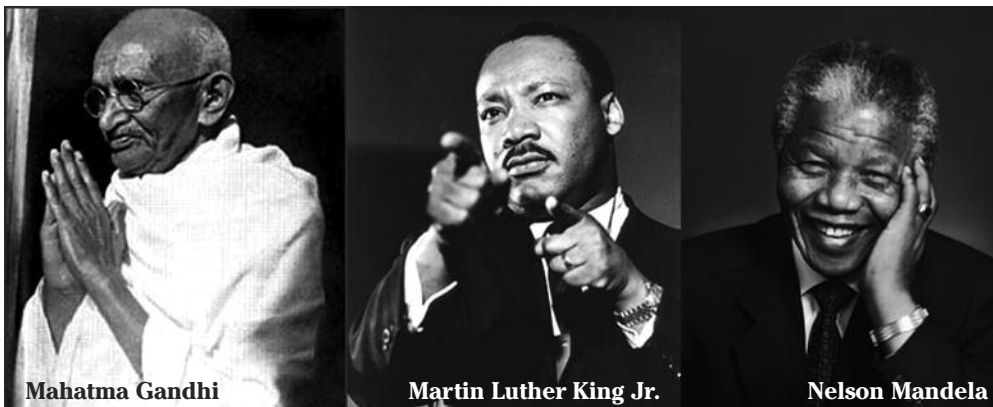
Nonviolent action is a means of social struggle which has begun to be developed in a conscious way only in the last several decades. It does not rely on the good will of the opponent but instead is designed to work in the face of determined opposition or violent repression. It is not limited to any race, nationality, social class, or gender and has been used successfully in widely varying political circumstances.

Nonviolent action is not simply any method of action which is not violent. Broadly speaking, it means taking action that goes beyond normal institutionalized political methods (voting, lobbying, letter writing, verbal expression) without injuring opponents. Nonviolent action, like war, is a means of waging conflict. It requires a willingness to take risks and bear suffering without retaliation. On the most fundamental level, it is a means by which people discover their social power.

Ever increasing number of prison inmates is going to solve the chronic epidemic of crimes involving violence on fellow human beings. Hearing of incidents of violence everyday everywhere makes us think more seriously of the alternative approach to conflict resolutions. Violence cannot be mitigated by violence. As Mahatma Gandhi would say tit for tat or eye for eye approach will make everyone blind.

It is true that no one person or institution can make any significant difference, but cumulative effect of drops form an ocean! Besides, every beginning has been made by taking one step first. I know it sounds so childish and obvious, but sometimes we have to get back our pure, innocent and naïve childhood thoughts to broaden our thinking and actions.

Inspired by Dr Ela Gandhi, whom I met for the first time about 3 years back in Durban at the international conference on nonviolence organised by Gandhi Development Trust and International Centre of Nonviolence (ICON) South Africa, I set up the International Centre of Nonviolence Australia with her blessings. I was



**Mahatma Gandhi**

**Martin Luther King Jr.**

**Nelson Mandela**



borne after Mahatma Gandhi had left this mortal world and therefore could never had chance to meet this greatest noble soul in person. But meeting with Dr Ela Gandhi made me feel as if I was talking to Mahatma Gandhi.

Since the launch of ICON Australia I have always been thinking of continue my work towards spreading the message of nonviolence in action everywhere. We launched our quarterly magazine Nonviolence News late last year and then the Mahatma Gandhi International Prize for Social Responsibility earlier this year.

I know I have yet to conquer my violent behaviour and thoughts, but that shouldn't stop me in my mission of nonviolence. After all I am nowhere even being close to a spark of Mahatma Gandhi.

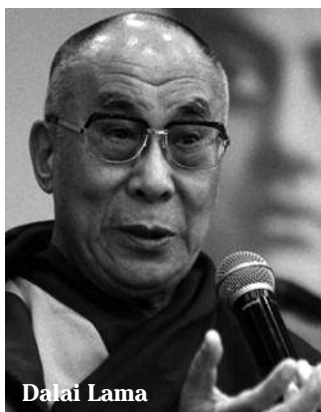
In my spare time I try to read about nonviolence movements and projects around the world. Earlier this I learned about the Nonviolence Season in the USA which starts on 30 January (being Mahatma Gandhi's martyrdom anniversary) and finishes on 4 April (being Dr Martin Luther King Junior's martyrdom anniversary).

This inspired me to start the Nonviolence Month starting 2 October (being the UN International Day of Nonviolence commemorating Mahatma Gandhi's birth anniversary). May be next year we commence the Nonviolence Month on 21 September (being the International Peace Day) and finish on the third Sunday of October.

I plead with everyone to join us in our efforts of spreading the message of nonviolence in every aspect of our day to day life be it art, science, philosophy or simply daily living routine.



**Gambhir Watts OAM**  
President, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Australia



**Dalai Lama**



**Aung San Suu Kyi**



**Daisaku Ikeda**

# Launch of Nonviolence Month

On the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti (Birth Anniversary) and International Day of Nonviolence on 2 October 2014, International Centre of Nonviolence (ICON) Australia launched its new initiative, *Nonviolence Month*. The Nonviolence month was inaugurated at University of New South Wales (UNSW) on the Library Lawn in front of the Mahatma Gandhi bust.

Mahatma Gandhi is revered by peoples across India as Babu 'The Father of the Nation' and the world over as the 'Great Soul'. He is remembered as much for his work towards Indian Independence as for his commitment to non-violence and his belief in simple living and high thinking. Born on 2 October 1869 in Porbandar, India, Mahatma Gandhi opposed discriminatory policies against peoples till his last breath.

The event started with the inaugural speech by Gambhir Watts OAM, Founder and President ICON Australia. While launching the Nonviolence Month, he emphasised the role and importance of Gandhian values in combating the internal and societal violence. He stressed upon the need of nonviolence and cited his visionary aim to continuously work towards spreading the message of nonviolence in action everywhere. He read out the messages by ICON Patrons to the audience. The messages from the ICON Patrons included: Lord Mayor of Sydney Hon. Clover Moore; Senator the Hon Lisa Singh, Labor Senator for Tasmania, Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Water; Nick Kaldas, APM Deputy Commissioner (Field Operations), NSW Police Force.

Dr Neville Roach AO, Patron of the UNSW Node of the Australia India Institute in his speech spoke about the nonviolence and the Gandhian values. He invited people to be a part of Nonviolence Month celebrations and activities. He emphasized the launch of Nonviolence month as the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi and an opportunity to reflect on his life, his values and their meaning to people all today.

Greg Johns, Vice General Director, Soka Gakkai International (SGI) Australia spoke about the violence spread across the peoples, nations and emphasises the need of the Nonviolence practices to be adopted in today's society. He spoke as how SGI is working towards spreading the message of nonviolence among people. While seeing the







Nonviolence Month as a major opportunity to spread the message of nonviolence among masses at grassroots levels, he congratulated and extended his full support for ICON Australia in its Nonviolence initiatives and wished a great success.

Educational material 'My Non-Violence', with teachings of Mahatma Gandhi regarding how he showed to the world that Truth and Non-Violence are the twin pillars on which rested his life, were distributed to the audience.

Various ministries, government departments, non-government organisations, universities, schools have extended their support and cooperation in spreading the message of nonviolence through their participations in various activities and keep the nonviolence message louder to the people and communities. These include: New South Wales Parliament House; City of Sydney; Tasmanian Government; Penrith City Council; Soka Gakkai International Australia; Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment; Griffith University, Centre for Interfaith & Cultural Dialogue; James Cook University; Monash University; Institute for Economics and Peace; Women's Council for Domestic and Family Violence Services (WA);

Noosa Library; University of Sydney; Department of Education and Early Childhood Development; Blacktown City Council; Corrective Services NSW (CSNSW), Department of Justice Corrections Victoria; University of New South Wales; Department of Justice and Attorney General Queensland Corrective Services etc.

ICON Australia aims to have the Nonviolence Month, an Australia-wide event in collaboration with the major universities in every major city (Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Brisbane, Perth, Hobart, Darwin). This includes planned activities; concerts, musicals (peace through music), sports, lectures, workshops, visit to prison inmates and under privileged communities in the various regions of Australia.

ICON Australia will be closing The Nonviolence month with organising Nonviolence Month Concert in partnership with Soka Gakkai International Australia on 1 November 2014 at SGI Auditorium, Olympic Park, Sydney. The concert will be including various performances: Indian Classical Music, Scottish Highland Dance, Russian Opera Singer, SGI World Choir Music, Bohemia combining Egyptian tabla with clarinet and Middle Eastern Dance fusion and Latin Dance from Colombia, Cuba, Puerto Rico and Argentina.

## *Ahimsa in Deed*

Limitless are the bounties, beauty and wonders of nature. She has blessed mankind in abundance; but with certain inherent control mechanisms. She has her own rules and regulations, which man needs to follow for his own well-being and spiritual growth. She has been kind enough to give intelligence and discretionary powers to man. But man, in his greed, many a time does not understand nature's checks and balances. Nature then is forced to checkmate him, for his own good.

Many of us are vegetarians. We eat plant-based food. We believe in 'Ahimsa' which is non-violence or having reverence for all forms of life. We not only believe in 'Ahimsa', but are practitioners of 'Ahimsa'. We have minimised our needs by becoming or remaining vegetarians. Though being vegetarian is excellent for man's physical as well as spiritual health, it is not enough. We have realised, over the years, that being 'vegan' is a complete practice of 'Ahimsa'. Veganism does not allow milk or dairy products for human consumption or use.

Vegetarians generally think that milk is part of vegetarian diet; this is not so. Vegetarian food necessarily means something grown on a plant / tree. Vegetarian food is entirely plant-based. As well-known, milk does not grow on any tree / plant and therefore not a vegetable. One may say MILK stands for mother's infinite love and kindness. It is produced by a human or animal mother. When a female, whether human or animal, becomes pregnant to give life and birth to another being, she produces milk.

This is simply because she takes upon herself the work of the Creator, nurturing, protecting, taking care and loving the new born as her own self, forgetting discomfort and pain. She is the one who gives shape to and creates and gives life to the new creation. Her love, compassion and kindness flow into the new creation and that naturally transforms into white milk when her creation comes into the world. Milk hence is only for the new born of the mother and that too for a limited period of time, for the nourishment and early growth of the infant.

Milk is a gift of nature for the helpless baby. The red blood turning into white milk for the baby is a miracle of nature. As long as the child does not cut teeth, the mother gets milk, and the child grows in strength by consuming mother's milk. Law of



nature is thus clear that milk belongs exclusively to the baby. No species, other than human beings, consumes milk when it grows beyond a stage, only when it is too young.

Human beings, unfortunately start having milk of other species once they grow beyond this stage; little realising that it is a calf or an off-spring of some other species that is deprived of its dues. It is, in fact, inhuman and against the tenets of non-violence and non-stealing when humans have milk of cows or other species, belonging to their offspring. Where can the helpless calf go for its nourishment? The animal baby starves and remains under-nourished.

As though this sin is not enough, a bigger crime follows. If the offspring is a male, it is sent away to the veal industry in Western countries and to the slaughter house (surreptitiously in the early hours of the day) in India. Now-a-days, everywhere, since the bull is not required by humans, either for farming or carting, they indulge in these inhuman activities to suit their selfish ends. Thousands of bulls go to butchers for slaughter.

In addition to these atrocities, as the babies are weaned away from their mothers, the mother has to undergo the pain of separation which she suffers in silence, without any revolt, as she practices non-violence. The cow cries silently, as the new-born is taken away. The silent agony of the cow creates certain vibrations.

These selfish acts perpetrated by human beings, due to their greed, result in the following three consequences:

*Vegetarians generally think that milk is part of vegetarian diet; this is not so. Vegetarian food necessarily means something grown on a plant / tree. Vegetarian food is entirely plant-based. As well-known, milk does not grow on any tree / plant and therefore not a vegetable*

1. When we take the milk which belongs to the off-spring of the cow, the suffering vibrations of the cow and the calf would boomerang on us and might create some separation in our lives. As we plant the pain in others, the vibrations received would result, as a 'karmic' consequence, into separation from our dear ones.
2. The cow's normal life span is twenty-five years. Humans reduce this longevity by slaughter or use in veal industry. The 'karma' of taking away the longevity of a living being influences our life span and may result in reduction of our own life span or of our dear ones.
3. We snatch away or steal the off-spring from the cow, as well as its milk for the calf. The milk and the child are taken away ruthlessly without the permission of the cow.

This is 'adatta dan', a charity not done by the donor. It is acquisition of someone's belongings without consent. The cow has milk, but it does not give it. It stops eating, being separated from her offspring. Machines are used to milk and for artificial insemination. A lot of suffering is inflicted on these peace-loving creatures by humans for their greed. In about seven years, due to their exploitation, the cows become useless for humans and are sent for slaughter.

Our glass of milk results in the cow being eventually slaughtered. The cow undergoes

physical torture and an agonising feeling of separation, for human well-being. It would be clear to any intelligent, caring and compassionate person that it is not logically, medically, morally and spiritually right to drink milk of other species, once the natural period of having mother's milk is over. To satisfy ourselves and for our nourishment and well-being, we may have milk from several alternative sources like plants or nuts such as soya, rice, almond, coconut etc.

As Bhagwan Mahavira had said, "Non-violence and kindness to living beings is kindness to oneself. For thereby one's own self is saved from many kinds of sins and the resultant sufferings and is able to secure his own welfare."

**Chitrabhanu Maharaj, a renowned Jain Spiritual Leader was born on 26 July 1922 in Rajasthan, India, During his twenty-eight years of monkhood, he spent the first five years in silence and meditation. With this experience, he emerged in the world with inner gaiety and enlightened spirit. With his wisdom, lucid language and eloquent speech, he won the hearts of millions in India and became one of the spiritual leaders of twenty million Jains. Chitrabhanu Maharaj is the founder and spiritual adviser to the Jain Meditation International Center in New York City as well as to other meditation centers in America, United Kingdom, Africa, Canada and India.**



**Source: Bhavan's Journal, 31 March 2014, Pictures: [www.forum.ge](http://www.forum.ge), [www.flickr.com](http://www.flickr.com)**





## *International Day of Non-Violence*

*“Non-violence is not a garment to be put on and off at will. Its seat is in the heart, and it must be an inseparable part of our being.”*

**-Mahatma Gandhi**

### **The Day of Non-Violence**

The United Nations' (UN) International Day of Non-Violence is a global observance that promotes non-violence through education and public awareness. It is annually held on October 2 to coincide with Mahatma Gandhi's birthday, the leader of the Indian independence movement and pioneer of the philosophy and strategy of non-violence.

*“At the center of non-violence stands the principle of love.”*

**-Martin Luther King, Jr.**

According to General Assembly resolution the International Day of Non-Violence is an occasion to “disseminate the message of non-violence, including through education and public awareness”. The resolution reaffirms “the universal relevance of the principle of non-violence” and the desire “to secure a culture of peace, tolerance, understanding and non-violence”.

The UN General Assembly came up with a resolution in 2007 to establish the International Day of Non-Violence. The Day aimed to spread the message of non-violence, including through education and public awareness, around the world. The resolution reflected universal respect for Gandhi and his philosophy. October 2, which is Gandhi's birthday, was allocated as the day's date. The first International Day of Non-Violence was on October 2, 2007.

*The principle of non-violence, also known as non-violent resistance, rejects the use of physical violence to achieve social or political change*

### **Mahatma Gandhi**

*“There are many causes that I am prepared to die for but no causes that I am prepared to kill for.”-*

*Mahatma Gandhi, The Story of My Experiments with Truth, 1927*

Mahatma Gandhi's “novel mode of mass mobilization and non-violent action” brought down colonialism, strengthened the roots of popular sovereignty, of civil, political and economic rights, and greatly influenced many a freedom struggle and inspired leaders like Nelson Mandela and Martin Luther King Jr. Desiring to secure a culture of peace, tolerance, understanding and non-violence, The International Day of Non-Violence should be celebrated by all through education and public awareness. The Day helps promote and strengthen cultural understanding among the people of the world.



*“Non-violence is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind. It is mightier than the mightiest weapon of destruction devised by the ingenuity of man.”*

### Principle of Non-Violence

The principle of non-violence, also known as non-violent resistance, rejects the use of physical violence to achieve social or political change. Many groups throughout the world use this method in social justice campaigns. The non-violence action includes: protest and persuasion, including marches and vigils, non-cooperation and non-violent intervention, such as blockades and occupations.

*“There are many people who feel that it is useless and futile to continue talking about peace and non-violence against a government whose only reply is savage attacks on an unarmed and defenceless people.”*

**-Nelson Mandela**

The UN recognizes a philosophical connection between the human rights principles in its universal declaration and those that Mahatma Gandhi used. Gandhi is remembered today for his contributions towards India’s freedom and for sharing with the world a doctrine for dealing with injustice and disharmony. He taught people the philosophy of Ahimsa, which encourages the use of non-violence as a tool for the peaceful resolution of differences. India gained its freedom on August 15, 1947, through Gandhi’s efforts.

*“I do not hold to non-violence for moral reasons, but for political and practical reasons.”*

**-Aung San Suu Kyi**

### Celebrations

Many people, governments, and non-government organizations around the world observe the

On the occasion **International Centre of Nonviolence (ICON)** Australia commemorates the **NONVIOLENCE MONTH** starting on 2 October, and finishing on 1 November 2014. During the month a series of activities are planned nationwide with participation from various Universities and Government and Non-Government Organisations

International Day of Non-Violence through various events and activities such as:

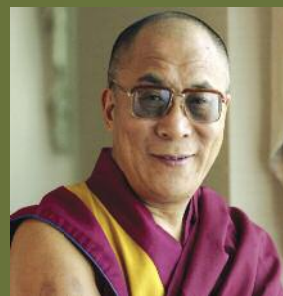
- News articles and broadcast announcements promoting the day.
- Public lectures, seminars, discussions, and press conferences about non-violence.
- Photo exhibitions highlighting issues, such as the dangers of the illicit trade of small arms.
- Street awareness campaigns.
- Light ceremonies promoting non-violence and peace.
- Multi-faith prayer meetings.

The International Day of Non-Violence has strong connections with the works, beliefs, and methods of peace leader Mahatma Gandhi, India’s “Father of the Nation”.

**Source: [www.un.org](http://www.un.org),  
[www.gandhitopia.org](http://www.gandhitopia.org),  
[www.timeanddate.com](http://www.timeanddate.com)**



# Learning to resolve Conflicts through Nonviolent Means: A Dalai Lama Approach



People search through and want answer to as whether nonviolent action can be effective as a means to bring about change; and how such action can be made more effective. In particular, it seeks to identify those factors, both internal and external to a nonviolent movement, which are favorable for that movement's success, and to define nonviolent strategies which can be used by non-state groups. There is a pressing need: as the incidence of conflicts waged within state borders increases, nonviolence as a viable alternative to armed struggle is progressively under pressure.

In an interlinked world, how to promote nonviolence in these disputes is a question which concerns the entire international community. We should directly involve the leaders of peoples and nations responsible for making decisions of whether to use armed force or nonviolence in pursuit of their goals; and for deciding how to respond to violence inflicted upon them by states.

We should explore the relationships between nonviolence, violence, terrorism, conflict and limitations experienced by peoples as they attempt to exercise their right to self-determination. Self-determination was understood as the process by which a people or nation obtains any goal in a broad spectrum of possible objectives, from human, linguistic or cultural rights, to democracy, protection of the environment, autonomy, or, in some cases, independence.

The limiting of the exercise of that right was identified, in many cases, as the cause of conflict. We must fundamentally reaffirm the use of nonviolence as an active means of promoting and achieving goals, while rejecting violence as an instrument for resolving political, social and economic problems. It condemns both unprovoked violence against nations, peoples and minorities and all forms of terrorism, regardless of the perpetrators.

In relation to the use of self-defense, we must recognise that in some cases nations and peoples feel compelled to use armed force to defend themselves against armed aggression, genocide and other prolonged or massive forms of violence against them;



yet they remained aware that once begun, violence breeds violence and is difficult to control and contain. We must recommend several actions which could be undertaken by peoples and minorities as well as by certain sectors of the international community, including state governments and international organizations, to support and foster nonviolence, particularly in conflicts of an intra-state nature.

Effectiveness of nonviolent action—even in the face of a violent oppressor—is dependent in large part on the internal conditions of each specific movement as well as on the attitude and actions of actors outside the movements. Good internal organization, coherent strategies, and the skilful use of existing tools are essential for nonviolent movements to be effective. Responsible leadership can be an important factor in this regard.

We must urge leaders of peoples and minorities to develop effective strategies for peaceful change appropriate to their specific situations and to open themselves up for dialogue at all levels with the parties with whom they are in conflict.

These must include:

- recognition of and respect for the equal rights of all peoples and those of minorities, regardless of their size, their culture or religion;
- taking the needs and views of unrepresented peoples and minorities seriously; speaking out and condemning all unprovoked acts of violence and gross violations of Human rights against unrepresented peoples and minorities;
- recognition of the legitimacy of movements or governments which use peaceful and democratic means to achieve their objectives;
- engagement in open and sincere dialogue with all such movements and governments and rewarding their adherence to non-violence;

We must call on corporations and financial institutions to end the violent exploitation of resources which sustain peoples, and to end the promotion of violence through irresponsible arms trade and the commercialisation of violence in the media and in their products.

**Source:** [www.unpo.org](http://www.unpo.org),  
**pictures:** [www.thechocolatebuddha.org](http://www.thechocolatebuddha.org)

# *Developing a Culture of Nonviolence and Peace: Daisaku Ikeda Ways*

*“The real struggle of the twenty-first century will not be between civilizations, nor between religions.*

*It will be between violence and nonviolence.*

*It will be between barbarity and civilization in the truest sense of the word.”*

**-Daisaku Ikeda**

Nonviolence and Peace, Ikeda emphasizes, is not just the absence of war. He defines a truly peaceful society as one in which everyone can maximize their potential to lead fulfilling lives free from threats to their dignity. Genuine peace can only be established on the basis of respect for the dignity of human life, on a recognition of our shared humanity.

Ikeda firmly rejects the idea that the different cultural and religious traditions that underlie the great civilizations of our planet are in intrinsic conflict. He writes, “Since 9/11, much has been made of the role religious belief plays as a factor in terrorism. But the real issue is that of exclusionary ideology and fanatic actions cloaking themselves in the language and symbols of religion. If we fail to appreciate this, and start looking askance at the practitioners of a particular faith, we will only deepen mistrust and aggravate tensions.”

In Ikeda’s view, all cultural and spiritual traditions are expressions of human creativity responding to the challenges of life. He has described culture as growing from people in different historical and geographic circumstances attuning their ears and hearts to the wisdom and compassion inherent in the cosmos itself. Strengthening the bonds of connection and mutual respect among different peoples is the first essential step to building a robust and inclusive culture of peace on a global scale. Ultimately, such a culture of peace represents the only fundamental solution to the challenges of war and terror.

## **A Clash of Civilizations?**

The September 11, 2001, terror attacks on the USA and the subsequent launching of the “war on terror” made the issue of terrorism an overwhelming focus of concern around the world. Many of Ikeda’s peace proposals and other writings have examined this issue, questioning the appropriate response and looking at related issues around the questionable idea of a “clash of civilizations.”

About terrorism itself, Ikeda is unequivocal:

“Terrorism, which so cruelly robs people of life, can never be excused or justified by any reason or cause. It is an absolute evil. And when such acts are committed in the name of religion, it demonstrates the utter spiritual bankruptcy of the perpetrators.”

The question of how to prevent and eliminate terrorism is, however, more complex. At the core of Ikeda’s thinking has been a challenge to the concept that the problems of violence can be solved by violence. What are the long-term effects of a response predicated on the use of force? Even if force can appear to produce short-term results, does it not end up deepening and perpetuating the cycles of hatred and violence? And if violence ultimately does not offer a viable solution, what should form the basis of realistic response to organized terror?

Ikeda stresses that any approach that will constitute a “fundamental cure”—rather than simply a symptomatic treatment—needs to be based on the exercise of “soft power” embodied in values and culture. Such an approach takes as its point of departure, in his words, “an acute awareness of the humanity of others.” This awareness is, he says, “the very essence of civilization.” A response in these terms might focus on tackling the underlying conditions of poverty and injustice that are enabling factors in terrorism, and would thus express “genuine proof of civilization.”

Ikeda gives lengthy consideration to political and institutional responses to terrorism, advocating, for example, the important role of the International Criminal Court to strengthen respect for the rule of law. He sees, however, a deeper issue in need of address.

Thus, “In a world trapped in cycles of terrorism and military reprisal, I feel it is vital to put the scalpel to the corrupt roots from which the spiritual malaise of our era stems. Only by mustering the courage to do this will we be able to breathe again the liberating winds of hope.”

**-Daisaku Ikeda, President  
Soka Gakkai**

**International (SGI)**

**Source:**

**[www.daisakuikeda.org](http://www.daisakuikeda.org)**



# *Nine Eleven and Mahatma Gandhi, Swami Vivekananda*

We pray Mahatma Gandhi and Swami Vivekananda on this day of September 11.

## **Mahatma Gandhi's Satyagraha**

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi first articulated the concept of 'Satyagraha', non-violent resistance, at a public meeting in South Africa on September 11, 1906. His rigorous application of this philosophy over the next 40 years earned Gandhi the title of Mahatma—great soul. It also gave the modern world a powerful new political tool for dealing with conflict and hurt.

On 9/11, 1906 Gandhi found himself in a leadership role at a gathering of Indians of all faiths, castes and professions at the Imperial Theatre in Johannesburg. In an atmosphere charged with anger and the determination to fight racism, Gandhi dropped an idea that acted like a depth charge. Let us fight discriminatory laws by refusing to comply—by offering unflinching non-violent resistance.

His logic was impeccable. Truth is God and God is love. It follows that a struggle for justice cannot involve hurting one's opponent. Instead, the 'other' in a conflict must be weaned from error by patience and sympathy. In turn, this means cultivating the willingness to examine 'truth' in all its many dimensions. This can only be done by being strong—not physical strength but the strength of truth-force or love-force.

## **Satyagraha: Its Theory and Practice**

Carried out to its utmost limit, this force is independent of pecuniary or other material assistance: certainly, even in its elementary form, of physical force or violence. Indeed, violence is the negation of this great spiritual force which can only be cultivated or wielded by those who will entirely eschew violence. It is a force that may be used by individuals as well as by communities. It may be used as well in political as in domestic affairs. Its universal applicability is a demonstration of its permanence and invincibility. It can be used alike by men, women and children. It is totally untrue to say that it is a force to be used only by the weak so long as they are not capable of meeting violence by violence.

It is impossible for those who consider themselves to be weak to apply this force. Only those who

realize that is something in man which is superior to the brute nature in him, and that the latter always yields to it, can effectively be passive. This force is to violence and, therefore, to all tyranny, all injustice, what light is to darkness.

We have taken long to achieve what we set about striving for. That was because our passive resistance was not of the most complete type. All passive resisters do not understand the full value of the force, nor have we men who always from conviction refrain from violence. The use of this force requires the adoption of poverty, in the sense that we must be indifferent whether we have the wherewithal to feed or clothe ourselves. During the past struggle, all passive resisters, if any at all, were not prepared to go that length. Some again were only passive resisters so-called. They came without any conviction, often with mixed motives, less often with impure motives.

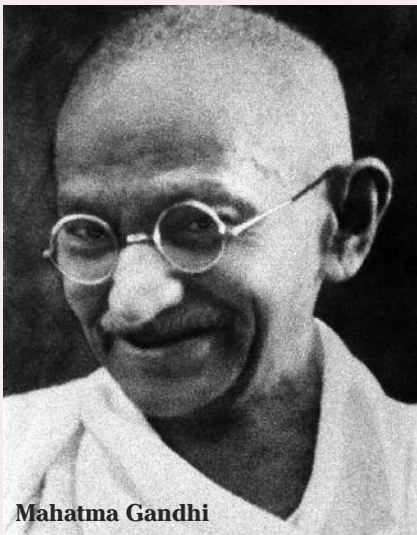
Some even, whilst engaged in the struggle, would gladly have resorted to violence but for most vigilant supervision. Thus it was that the struggle became prolonged; for the exercise of the purest soul-force, in its perfect form, brings about instantaneous relief. For this exercise, prolonged training of the individual soul is an absolute necessity so that a perfect passive resister has to be almost if not entirely, a perfect man. We cannot all suddenly become such men, but if my proposition is correct—as I know it to be correct—the greater the spirit of passive resistance in us, the better men we will become. Its use is indisputable, and it is a force which, if it became universal, would revolutionize social ideals and do away with despotism's and the ever-growing militarism.

Let no one understand that a non-violent army is open only to those who strictly enforce in their lives all the implications of nonviolence. It is open to all those who accept the implications and make an ever-increasing endeavor to observe them. There never will be an army of perfectly nonviolent people. It will be formed of those who will honestly endeavor to observe nonviolence.

## **Swami Vivekananda's God Realisation Lecture**

It was on September 11, 1893 that an Indian monk, Swami Vivekananda, was overwhelmed by a three minute standing ovation at the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago. He travelled to the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago, at the age of 30,





**Mahatma Gandhi**



**Swami Vivekananda**

not so much as a Hindu missionary, but the bearer of what he experienced as a universal non-sectarian truth. Vivekananda realized that all spiritual striving is beyond reason, but reason is the only way to get there. For reason is the greatest gift of human existence.

Even institutionalized religions, Vivekananda told the Parliament at Chicago, are nothing but “different paths which men take through different tendencies, various though they appear, crooked or straight” to the same goal. That goal is God-realization or self-realization – the two being one and the same thing.

Over the next decade, till he died at the age of 39, Vivekananda travelled across the USA and western Europe engaged in dialogue about racial and religious conflict. He left behind a body of work that attempts to recalibrate the dynamic between conquest, reparation and reconciliation. Reverberations of his appeal for universal brotherhood persist today beside the buzz of protest and counter-protest.

Swami Vivekananda’s speech on that day began with the simple words “Sisters and Brothers of America” and proceeded to declare that sectarianism, bigotry and fanaticism are outdated phenomena. This is why he tends to be somewhat simplistically deployed as a poster-boy of multi-cultural camaraderie.

In this famous speech, Swami Vivekananda spoke of his vision for an end to violence and fanaticism. His message of the 1800’s is as timely and fitting now, in the 2000’s, as it was then, over 100 years ago.

### **World Parliament of Religions**

In recent history there have been great strides in bridging the spirituality of East and West. Notable among these was the message given by Swami Vivekananda at the World Parliament of Religions

in 1893. The World Parliament of Religions was sponsored by the Unitarians and Universalists of the Free Religious Association, and was a part of the greater Columbian Exposition held for several months in 1893, in Chicago, which was attended by over 27 million people.

### **Swami Vivekananda’s Standing Ovation**

Swami Vivekananda’s opening talk is a benchmark, in that he was one of the earlier teachers to come to America from the East, and the first swami to visit America. Most notably, this was his first talk in America. The 7,000 people in the audience, immediately feeling the depth of his sincerity, rose to their feet and according to reports, “went into inexplicable rapture with standing ovation and clapping that lasted for more than three minutes.” He went on, “It fills my heart with joy unspeakable to rise in response to the warm and cordial welcome which you have given us...”

### **Call for the end to Fanaticism**

Swami Vivekananda closed by speaking of humanity’s history of violence and his hopes for it’s end, “Sectarianism, bigotry, and its horrible descendant, fanaticism, have long possessed this beautiful earth. They have filled the earth with violence, drenched it often and often with human blood, destroyed civilization and sent whole nations to despair. Had it not been for these horrible demons, human society would be far more advanced than it is now. But their time is come; and I fervently hope that the bell that tolled this morning in honor of this convention may be the death-knell of all fanaticism, of all persecutions with the sword or with the pen, and of all uncharitable feelings between persons wending their way to the same goal.”

**Source: [www.opendemocracy.net](http://www.opendemocracy.net), [www.mkgandhi.org](http://www.mkgandhi.org), pictures: [www.swamij.com](http://www.swamij.com)**

# *The Youth Promotion towards a Culture of Non-Violence and Peace*

## **Youth as Agents of Behavioural Change (YABC) initiative**

YABC is the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent's (IFRC) flagship initiative on the promotion of a culture of non-violence and peace, created in 2008 for youth and with youth from Red Cross Red Crescent worldwide. IFRC views youth as a powerful source of change, whose energy and skills need to be harnessed to foster a culture of non-violence and peace built on non-discrimination and respect for diversity, gender equality, prevention of violence by addressing its underlying root causes, inter-cultural dialogue and social inclusion. YABC empowers youth to take up an ethical leadership role in inspiring a transformation of mindsets, attitudes and behaviours within themselves and their community.

This is done through:

1. the development of behavioural or interpersonal skills: active listening, empathy, critical thinking, dropping bias and non-judgement, non-violent communication, mediation and peaceful resolution of tensions;
2. a non-cognitive or 'from the heart to the mind' methodology using games, role-plays, visualizations and storytelling;
3. peer education. Youth are more receptive to learn from other youth instead of being 'taught down to' by adults. Actually, YABC learning comes from within and from exchange with peers. Understanding is fostered by referring to one's own experience and sharing with peers. Peer education, therefore, favours exchange at a level of equality, trust and thought-provoking learning where solutions are explored and found together;
4. creative artistic platforms to reach out to the local community: art, dance, theatre, music, digital stories, video and sports;
5. inner change, i.e. the commitment and action to start with oneself, to "be the change we want to see in the world" (Mahatma Gandhi). This means embarking on a lifelong learning process to 'walk our talk', which instils a sense of humility and of taking up responsibility;
6. the development of a capacity to operate from inner peace. Pursuing peace and harmony within ourselves is essential to be able to inspire change outside. To this purpose, YABC has put together 'inner arts', like Qi Gong,

breathing and relaxation techniques.

## **Volunteering, An Essential Tool**

Volunteering is at the heart of community building. Perhaps one of the most powerful ways to create or enhance a sense of community belonging is to participate in activities which strengthen the community. Volunteering is an excellent way for an individual to become involved in the life of the community. It brings together people from different backgrounds, cultures and religions and helps to develop compassion and friendship, thereby fostering respect for diversity.

Active participation in community life highlights that the elderly are a resource to be respected and valued by the community as a whole. For children and youth, volunteering can help to develop values and skills.

Youth feel a sense of pride and usefulness, as they are able to actively contribute to their community. Volunteering strengthens community support systems, which increase resiliency and reduce vulnerability to participating in violent activities.

So, organized community service, when prescribed by the court, can be an effective tool and an opportunity to promote more positive social values and develop skills and resiliency to avoid future violence. Participation in successful service projects in their own communities can help youth to regain their self-esteem and a sense of belonging and personal investment in their community. This can also facilitate the youth's reintegration, as other community members will see this positive effort to assist and improve the community, helping to rebuild trust.

## **A Call to Action**

- Promote the engagement, especially of youth, in voluntary service or community programmes to nurture humanitarian values and increase community cohesion.
- Institutionalize voluntary service at the national level, through introducing the Movement's Fundamental Principles and avenues for voluntary service as part of the formal school curriculum, in particular at the primary and secondary level.

**Source:** [www.ifrc.org](http://www.ifrc.org)

# Educating for Non-Violence



What it is and How to cope with it:

There is a global increase of domestic insecurity, crime and violence, and crimes committed against minority groups. Consequently, a culture of violence has sprung up against children, women, and the elderly, and is threatening humanity as a whole. We are faced with the challenge to change this trend of increasing violence and make people realize that through violence we cannot reach our goals. We have to start a transformation process, a change towards a culture of peace, i.e. a set of values, attitudes and behavior that reflect and inspire social interaction and sharing, based on the principles of freedom, justice and democracy, tolerance and solidarity that reject violence and endeavors to prevent conflicts.

How to change the culture of violence at the national level:

1. The National level
  - Omit the use of violent language in the media
  - Involve the youth in the formulation of a vision of a peaceful society
2. The Community level
  - Fostering cooperation and participation, tolerance and understanding
3. Families
  - Monitor consumption of violence
  - Listen to children
  - Criticize children less
  - Eliminate the identification of masculinity with violence
  - Foster co-responsibility of men and women in rearing children
4. The School level
  - School environment should foster peace
  - Cooperation operation
  - Good communication
  - Positive learning environment
  - Empathy tolerance and compassion

Violence is a learned behavior which can be unlearned by and mediation conflict resolution. The objective to reach a culture of peace is to realize on a global scale the following skills:

- Dialogue
- Respect for human right
- Mediation
- Cooperation

Prior to reaching the globalization, these skills should be implemented on a local basis and

eventually be passed on to other fellow countries. In this process, one's own life, the family life, schools, and the communities are the initiating factors in solving the problem of violence. The philosophy for being a good educator is to listen to the values, beliefs and aspirations of the children, thus showing one's respect for them.

To find solutions to the problem of education for non-violence due attention must be paid to the following insights that relate to basic causes of youth violence:

1. Two distinct aspects to reverse the current trends away from youth violence:
  - Socializing youth towards self-love and self-worth, including respect for their communities
  - Rehabilitate young people who are prone to violent behavior.

The incidence of corporal punishment, which induces fear into young people, diminishes their self-confidence, and lowers their self-esteem. Corporal punishment seriously damages young students as the classroom environment becomes dominated by fear.

2. Sound discipline for the building of sound character. It is important to set behavioral boundaries and appropriate sanctions, while duly observing that arbitrary use of power tends to become socially detrimental.
3. With regard to the gender dimension in societies, young males are discouraged from showing emotional grief when they feel the need to do so.
4. Value education should be introduced into the teaching of traditional subjects. This will entail the training of teachers, to model the values they are attempting to transmit.
5. Reorientation of the concept of non-violence in education i.e. a non-violent school should not merely imply a school in which there are no overt acts of physical injury.

The solutions to the problems resulting from violence are:

- Involvement of all parts of government
- Mobilization of support structures, e.g. schools, family, community (early intervention)

**Source: [www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org), Pictures: [www.veganismisnonviolence.com](http://www.veganismisnonviolence.com)**

# Mahatma

## Gandhi's List of Seven Deadly Sins

Mahatma Gandhi said that seven things will destroy us. Notice that all of them have to do with social and political conditions. Note also that the antidote of each of these “deadly sins” is an explicit external standard or something that is based on natural principles and laws, not on social values.

1. Wealth Without Work
2. Pleasure Without Conscience
3. Knowledge Without Character
4. Commerce (Business) Without Morality (Ethics)
5. Science Without Humanity
6. Religion Without Sacrifice
7. Politics Without Principle

### Wealth Without Work

This refers to the practice of getting something for nothing - manipulating markets and assets so you don't have to work or produce added value, just manipulate people and things. Today there are professions built around making wealth without working, making much money without paying taxes, benefiting from free government programs without carrying a fair share of the financial burdens, and enjoying all the perks of citizenship of country and membership of corporation without assuming any of the risk or responsibility.

How many of the fraudulent schemes that went on in the 1980s, often called the decade of greed, were basically get-rich-quick schemes or speculations promising practitioners, “You don't even have to work for it”? That is why I would be very concerned if one of my children went into speculative enterprises or if they learned how to make a lot of

money fast without having to pay the price by adding value on a day-to-day basis.

Some network marketing and pyramidal organizations worry me because many people get rich quick by building a structure under them that feeds them without work. They are rationalized to the hilt; nevertheless the overwhelming emotional motive is often greed: “You can get rich without much work. You may have to work initially, but soon you can have wealth without work.” New social mores and norms are cultivated that cause distortions in their judgement.

### Pleasure Without Conscience

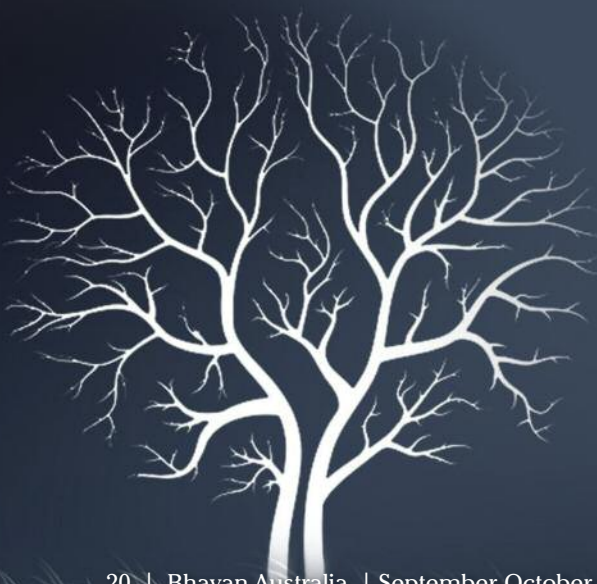
The chief query of the immature, greedy, selfish, and sensuous has always been, “What's in it for me? Will this please me? Will it ease me?” Lately many people seem to want these pleasures without conscience or sense of responsibility, even abandoning or utterly neglecting spouses and children in the name of doing their thing. But independence is not the most mature state of being - it's only a middle position on the way to interdependence, the most advanced and mature state. To learn to give and take, to live selflessly, to be sensitive, to be considerate, is our challenge. Otherwise there is no sense of social responsibility or accountability in our pleasurable activities.

The ultimate costs of pleasures without conscience are high as measured in terms of time and money, in terms of reputation and in terms of wounding the hearts and minds of other people who are adversely affected by those who just want to indulge and gratify themselves in the short term. It's dangerous to be pulled or lulled away from natural law without conscience. Conscience is essentially the repository of timeless truths and principles - the internal monitor of natural law.

A prominent, widely published psychologist worked to align people with their moral conscience in what was called “integrity therapy.” He once told me that he was a manic-depressive. “I knew I was getting suicidal,” he said. “Therefore, I committed myself to a mental institution. I tried to work out of it, neutralize it, until I reached the point where I could leave the hospital. I don't do clinical work now because it is too stressful. I mostly do research. And through my own struggle, I discovered that integrity therapy was the only way to go. I gave up my mistress, confessed to my wife, and had peace for the first time in my life.

### Knowledge without Character

As dangerous as a little knowledge is, even more dangerous is much knowledge without a strong, principled character. Purely intellectual development without commensurate internal character development makes as much sense as putting a high-



powered sports car in the hands of a teenager who is high on drugs. Yet all too often in the academic world, that's exactly what we do by not focusing on the character development of young people. One of the reasons I'm excited about taking the Seven Habits into the schools is that it is character education.

Some people don't like character education because, they say, "that's your value system." But you can get a common set of values that everyone agrees on. It is not that difficult to decide, for example, that kindness, fairness, dignity, contribution, and integrity are worth keeping. No one will fight you on those. So let's start with values that are unarguable and infuse them in our education system and in our corporate training and development programs. Let's achieve a better balance between the development of character and intellect. The people who are transforming education today are doing it by building consensus around a common set of principles, values, and priorities and debunking the high degree of specialization, departmentalization, and partisan politics.

#### **Commerce (Business) Without Morality (Ethics)**

In his book *Moral Sentiment*, which preceded *Wealth of Nations*, Adam Smith explained how foundational to the success of our systems is the moral foundation: how we treat each other, the spirit of benevolence, of service, of contribution. If we ignore the moral foundation and allow economic systems to operate without moral foundation and without continued education, we will soon create an amoral, if not immoral, society and business. Economic and political systems are ultimately based on a moral foundation. To Adam Smith, every business transaction is a moral challenge to see that both parties come out fairly. Fairness and benevolence in business are the underpinnings of the free enterprise system called capitalism. Our economic system comes out of a constitutional democracy where minority rights are to be attended to as well. The spirit of the Golden Rule or of win-win is a spirit of morality, of mutual benefit, of fairness for all concerned. Paraphrasing one of the mottos of the Rotary Club, "Is it fair and does it serve the interests of all the stakeholders?"

That's just a moral sense of stewardship toward all of the stakeholders. I like that Smith says every economic transaction. People get in trouble when they say that most of their economic transactions are moral. That means there is something going on that is covert, hidden, secret. People keep a hidden agenda, a secret life, and they justify and rationalize their activities. They tell themselves rational lies so they don't have to adhere to natural laws. If you can get enough rationalization in a society, you can have social mores or political wills that are totally divorced from natural laws and principles.

I once met a man who for five years served as the

"ethics director" for a major aerospace company. He finally resigned the post in protest and considered leaving the company, even though he would lose a big salary and benefit package. He said that the executive team had their own separate set of business ethics and that they were deep into rationalization and justification. Wealth and power were big on their agendas, and they made no excuse for it anymore. They were divorced from reality even inside their own organization. They talked about serving the customer while absolutely mugging their own employees.

#### **Science Without Humanity**

If science becomes all technique and technology, it quickly degenerates into man against humanity. Technologies come from the paradigms of science. And if there's very little understanding of the higher human purposes that the technology is striving to serve, we become victims of our own technocracy. We see otherwise highly educated people climbing the scientific ladder of success, even though it's often missing the rung called humanity and leaning against the wrong wall.

The majority of the scientists who ever lived or living today, and they have brought about a scientific and technological explosion in the world. But if all they do is superimpose technology on the same old problems, nothing basic changes. We may see an evolution, an occasional "revolution" in science, but without humanity we see precious little real human advancement. All the old inequities and injustices are still with us.

About the only thing that hasn't evolved are these natural laws and principles - the true north on the compass. Science and technology have changed the face of most everything else. But the fundamental things still apply, as time goes by.

#### **Religion Without Sacrifice**

Without sacrifice we may become active in a church but remain inactive in its gospel. In other words, we go for the social facade of religion and the piety of religious practices. There is no real walking with people or going the second mile or trying to deal with our social problems that may eventually undo our economic system. It takes sacrifice to serve the needs of other people - the sacrifice of our own pride and prejudice, among other things.

If a church or religion is seen as just another hierarchical system, its members won't have a sense of service or inner worship. Instead they will be into outward observances and all the visible accoutrements of religion. But they are neither God-centered nor principle-centered.

*Source: [www.mkgandhi.org](http://www.mkgandhi.org)*

# International Day of Peace

*“It is not enough to teach children how to read, write and count. Education has to cultivate mutual respect for others and the world in which we live, and help people forge more just, inclusive and peaceful societies.”*

**-UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon on his message for ‘Education for Peace’**

Each year the International Day of Peace is observed around the world on 21 September. The General Assembly has declared this as a day devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace, both within and among all nations and peoples.

The International Day of Peace, Peace Day, provides an opportunity for individuals, organizations and nations to create practical acts of peace on a shared date. It was established by a United Nations resolution in 1981 to coincide with the opening of the General Assembly. The first Peace Day was celebrated in September 1982. In 2002 the General Assembly officially declared September 21 as the permanent date for the International Day of Peace.

By creating the International Day of Peace, the UN devoted itself to worldwide peace and encouraged all of mankind to work in cooperation for this goal. During the discussion of the UN Resolution that established the International Day of Peace, it was suggested that:

“Peace Day should be devoted to commemorating and strengthening the ideals of peace both within and among all nations and peoples...This day will serve as a reminder to all peoples that our

organization, with all its limitations, is a living instrument in the service of peace and should serve all of us here within the organization as a constantly pealing bell reminding us that our permanent commitment, above all interests or differences of any kind, is to peace.”

## History

In 1981, United Nations General Assembly affirmed, in a declaration subsidized by Costa Rica, the third Tuesday of September as an International Peace Day devoted to observing and spiraling the ethics of peace. In 2001, a new declaration was passed through the General Assembly, supported through the United Kingdom and Costa Rica to provide the day of calm a rigid date and proclaim it as the world ceasefire day. In the year of 2005, United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan termed for the international ceremony of 24-hours cease-fire and the day of non-violence to smear the Day.

In the year of 2006, during his period in office, Secretary-General Kofi Annan rang Peace Bell for the most recent time. That year UN declared the “many ways it works for peace and to encourage individuals, groups and communities around the world to contemplate and communicate thoughts and activities on how to achieve peace. United Kingdom held the primary community and official observation of the United Nations International Peace Day and Non-Violence in Rochdale, Greater Manchester.”

In the year of 2007, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon rang Peace Bell at United Nations



Headquarters in New York terming for the 24-hours termination of oppositions on 21 September, and also for one minute to make quiet to be watched around the humanity.

### **The Day of Ceasefire**

“There is never a good war or a bad peace.”  
-*Benjamin Franklin*

In 2001, the General Assembly established 21 September as an annual day of non-violence and cease-fire. The UN invited all nations and people to honour a cessation of hostilities during the Day, and to otherwise commemorate the Day through education and public awareness on issues related to peace. The Day is a global call for ceasefire and non-violence. International Day of Peace is also a Day of Ceasefire—personal or political. We should take this opportunity to make peace in our own relationships as well as impact the larger conflicts of our time. Imagine what a whole Day of Ceasefire would mean to humankind.

### **Youth for Peace and Development**

Young people around the world must take a stand for peace. Youth, peace and development are closely interlinked: Peace enables development, which is critical in providing opportunities for young people, particularly those in countries emerging from conflict. Healthy, educated youth are in turn crucial to sustainable development and peace. Peace, stability and security are essential to achieving the Millennium Development Goals, aimed at slashing poverty, hunger, disease, and

maternal and child death by 2015.

### **Make Your Voice Heard**

The World Peace Society gives confidence contribution by all organizations, schools and individuals. Each year; all parts of the people in the globe celebrate this International Peace Day on 21st September. Peace Bell is directed from the coins contributed by kids on all the continents, and also considered a sign of world unity. It was specified as an endowment by Japan. It is submitted to as a “reminder of the human cost of war.” The dedication on its elevation reads: “Long live absolute world peace.”

### **Celebrations**

Anyone, anywhere can celebrate Peace Day. It can be as simple as lighting a candle at noon, or just sitting in silent meditation. Or it can involve getting our co-workers, organization, community or government engaged in a large event. The impact if millions of people in all parts of the world, come together for one day of peace is immense.

The United Nations invites all nations and people to honour a cessation of hostilities during the Day, and to otherwise commemorate the Day through education and public awareness on issues related to peace.

**Source:** [www.un.org](http://www.un.org),  
[www.internationaldayofpeace.org](http://www.internationaldayofpeace.org),  
[www.altiusdirectory.com](http://www.altiusdirectory.com), **pictures:**  
[www.peacesymbol.org](http://www.peacesymbol.org)



# Non-violent Strides towards Freedom

*As the nation celebrates Mahatma Gandhi's 145th birth anniversary on October 2, we trace his illustrious life and achievements*



**October 2, 1869:** Diwan of the princely state of Porbandar, Karamchand Gandhi and his fourth wife, Putli Bai, are blessed with a baby boy who is named Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi.

- **June, 1891:** Mohandas clears the Bar examination and becomes a lawyer after attending Inner Temple Law School in the United Kingdom. He represents Indian Muslim traders in South Africa.
- **1893:** He is thrown off a train at Pietermaritzburg in South Africa after he refuses to give up his first class reservation and move to third class. He protests and gets a first class seat the next day but is beaten up by the driver as he refuses to make room for a European traveller. Gandhi decides to oppose this by bringing together people from other countries living in South Africa.
- **1894:** To oppose a Bill denying Indians the right to vote in South Africa, he forms Natal Indian

Congress. Though NIC is unable to stop the Bill, Gandhi starts a crusade against injustice.

- **1897:** When he lands at Durban Harbour, South Africa in January, a group of White settlers beat him up. The wife of the Durban Police Chief tries to save him. The event gets huge media coverage and the colonial government is forced to arrest the Whites. Gandhi refuses to press charges and leverages public admiration. The attackers offer a public apology.
- **1906:** The Asian Population Registration Act is enacted. It requires all Asian residents to register their personal information and carry a card with their fingerprints. Gandhi asks people to not register and suffer punishment. Thus, Satyagraha (non-violent movement started by Gandhi to help India attain independence) gains prominence. Over seven years, several protesters are jailed or shot.
- **1908:** In August, Gandhi and around 2,000 Indians burn their registration cards. Gandhi and other leaders are arrested and the country witnesses many protests.
- **1919:** The British Government enforces the Rowlatt Act that allows it to arrest suspected “terrorists” and keep them in prison without trial. The Indian National Congress starts the Hartal Movement—thousands of Indians stop working, stop selling and buying British goods. Riots occur. Nearly 400 Indians are killed and a thousand are injured in Amritsar.
- **1920:** Gandhi encourages Indians to boycott British products, asks them to produce their own clothes.
- **1930:** Brits pass the Salt Act that makes it illegal for Indians to make salt. On March 12, 61-year-old Gandhi travels 320 km on foot for 24 days to Dandi to make salt. Millions of Indians



join him. Gandhi is arrested.

- **1942:** He launches the Quit India campaign to declare India's Independence. Agitated rulers imprison Gandhi.
- **1943:** The 73 year-old starts a hunger strike that lasts 21 days to protest against India's Partition.
- **1944:** Fearing that he would die in prison due to deteriorating health, Gandhi and fellow leaders are released.
- **August 14-15, 1947:** The Indian Independence Act is enacted and India becomes an independent state
- **January 30, 1948:** Nathuram Godse fires three bullets at the Mahatma from point blank range at 5.17 pm at Birla House in Near Delhi.

**Source: India Perspectives, September-October 2014**



## *Launching of National AYUSH Mission*

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, today gave its approval for launching of the National AYUSH Mission (NAM) with its core and flexible components.

The proposed Mission will address the gaps in health services through supporting the efforts of State/UT Governments for providing AYUSH health services/education in the country, particularly in vulnerable and far-flung areas. Under NAM special focus will be given for specific needs of such areas and for allocation of higher resources in their Annual Plans. The Mission will help in:

- i. the improvement of AYUSH education through enhancement in the number of upgraded educational institutions;
- ii. better access to AYUSH services through increase in number of AYUSH hospitals and dispensaries, availability of drugs and manpower;
- iii. providing sustained availability of quality raw material for AYUSH systems of medicine; and
- iv. improving availability of quality Ayurvedic, Siddha, Unani and Homeopathy (ASU&H) drugs through increase in number of pharmacies, drug laboratories and improved enforcement mechanism of ASU&H drugs.

### **Background**

India possess an unmatched heritage represented by its ancient systems of medicine like ASU&H which are a treasure house of knowledge for preventive and promotive healthcare. The positive features of the Indian systems of medicine namely their diversity and flexibility; accessibility; affordability, a broad acceptance by a large section of the general public; comparatively lesser cost and growing economic value, have great potential to make them providers of healthcare that the large sections of our people need.

# Medellin: From Fear to Hope

Every time I have been in the middle of a conversation with a group of Australians and they have asked me where I am from, a fearful expression appears on their faces when they hear my answer: Medellin, Colombia. Even though they try in different ways to hide it, I would always notice their faces change immediately. Then they would try to change the topic to avoid the uncomfortable silence or try to make a positive comment about the coffee or the flowers that they remembered from an old documentary they had seen years ago.

Unfortunately, that is the reputation we got as a city after many years of violence, drugs and countless social problems; a reputation that has taken many years to remove from people's minds. Now that I have come back to Medellin after living several years abroad, I have come to recognize that Medellin is experiencing a speedy transformation that has changed its reputation from a violent, bloody, and unsafe place to a haven of innovation and urban development that is recognized worldwide.

## From Fear to Hope

But this has not been an easy process. From 2003 – 2007 Medellin has experienced a profound transformation that has taken them from fear to hope. From fear of death, violence, kidnapping to the hope that brings education and new opportunities. One of the main problems to solve was the inequality and violence rooted in the depths of society that was based on the drug trade. This factor brought not only murders, but also the destabilization of society.

That was the moment when government implemented a double dynamic: decreasing violence through political transformation and increasing opportunities through education and culture.

These complementary actions gave great results and even though we have a long way to go, we have improved increasingly as a society. In 1991, we were the most violent city in the world, but we went from 381 homicides in 1991 to 26 homicides in



2007. This number has been reducing year after year and one of the main reasons for this deep change came from cultural incentives and opportunities.

In December 2012, Medellín was recognized as the most innovative city in the world, resulting from a competition staged and conducted by The Wall Street Journal. This was sponsored by Citigroup and through the support of the Urban Land Institute (ULI). So how is it possible to explain this change in a city that had previously been so violent? Before answering this question, it is vital to gain some context of the structure and demographic of Colombia.

Located in the north-western corner of South America, the Republic of Colombia is the only country in South America with coasts on the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. With a land area of almost 1,200,000 km<sup>2</sup>, Colombia is the fourth largest country in South America, and with a population of around 47 million, that makes it the third largest in Latin America. Colombia is the third largest country when it comes to the number of Spanish speakers, possessing a multicultural population, regions and races. This comes from the blending of ethnicities between Europeans, Indians and Africans, with minorities of indigenous and Afro-descendent.

Medellin is the capital of the department of Antioquia, in Colombia's Andean region. Although there is still much to do, this city has shown the world a new face, because of its resilience and its ability to reverse this tough international image. Part of this is due to heavy investment in the Municipal Administration projects for the development of its people. One of the key areas: culture.



## Poetry festival Medellin From Fear to hope



The Aburrá Valley, where Medellin is located, has been strongly flourishing through its people in projects of cultural and artistic expression. For example, they have exchanged guns for violins, all through strongly support government projects such as PPL and PP. In 2007 the Mayor of Medellin institutionalized Local Program Planning and Participatory Budgeting (PPL and PP) which emerged as an idea that citizens themselves decide on a percentage of public resources (5% of the annual budget of hedge funds) as a way to overcome some of the problems that each area of the city has. One of the most critical areas for citizens: culture as an effective medium for social transformation.

Between 2005 and 2015, the government has allocated around 1,300 billion pesos in Local Program Planning and Participatory Budget. In the periods from 2013, 2014 and 2015 the amount is estimated to reach 453,000 million pesos (\$ 225,935,162 in American Dollars approx.).

*“The child hugging an instrument, never will wield a weapon”*

Thousands of young people and city dwellers have benefited from these programs. One of them is Diego Alexander Zapata and his group “Empire Group”, who for the second year have won first place in Comunal dances in the city, and through the Calls for Stimulus PP and PPL are publicizing their talent with urban and modern rhythms. A lot of children that used to be exposed to daily violence and had the guns as the only instrument to survive and defend themselves, are discovering culture as an opportunity to expand their horizons and see beyond their reality, and that it is possible to have another future. While there is still a lot to do and we are far from achieving complete peace and harmony, I can see how new generations are

breathing the fresh air that opportunity and collaboration can bring.

### Local Program Planning Participatory Budget

In the cultural sphere, specifically the Ministry of Citizenship Culture for 2014 is running Local Program Planning and Participatory Budgeting with a wide range of courses and cultural events that will be available to the public. The beneficiaries will be over 55,000 citizens from Medellin.

The program for 2014 will invest more than 11 billion pesos in different municipalities, with four components to develop.

1. **Cultural Agenda:** includes all events and cultural coexistence, as encounters with citizens to mobilize around community activities and artistic expressions in a limited space and time. It brings together ideas, dreams and proposals, mediated by the manifestations of talent and creativity.
2. **Artistic Training:** includes teaching - learning in different areas and expressive modalities related to music, dance, performing arts, visual arts, graphic and communication arts, applied arts, crafts, design, literature, or other specific artistic appreciation, as required by communities. There are also workshops for all ages.
3. **Memory and Heritage:** It focuses on recovering, rescuing, evaluating, disseminating, publicizing and promoting oral, historical, and cultural memory, as well as the tangible and intangible heritage in the towns and districts of the city. It responds to the need of strengthening the collective identity of citizens in their territory through collaborative processes.
4. **Cultural Strengthening:** includes strengthening and shaping processes of cultural networks through training and support in the development of work plans and management of cultural and artistic networks.

*-Ana María Palacio Lopera is a Colombian journalist working at the Agency of Urban Development in Medellín. She has been involved in cultural associations and social development projects while living in Peru and Australia.*



# Learning the Power of Non-violence the Martin Luther King Way

## Not to Humiliate but to Win Over

The nonviolent resister does not seek to humiliate or defeat the opponent but to win his friendship and understanding. Our aim is not to defeat, not to humiliate any community but to win the friendship of all of the persons who had perpetrated this system in the past. The end of violence or the aftermath of violence is bitterness. The aftermath of nonviolence is reconciliation and the creation of a beloved community. A boycott is never an end within itself. It is merely a means to awaken a sense of shame within the oppressor but the end is reconciliation, the end is redemption. We have to make it clear also that the nonviolent resister seeks to attack the evil system rather than individuals who happen to be caught up in the system. The struggle is rather between justice and injustice, between the forces of light and the forces of darkness. And if there is a victory it will not be a victory in real sense. But it will be a victory for justice, a victory for good will, a victory for democracy.

Another basic thing we have to get over is that nonviolent resistance is also an internal matter. It not only avoids external violence or external physical violence but also internal violence of spirit. And so at the center of our movement should stand the philosophy of love. The attitude that the only way to ultimately change humanity and make for the society that we all long for is to keep love at the center of our lives.

## Agape Love

The Greek language uses three words for love. It talks about eros. Eros is a sort of aesthetic love. It has come to us to be a sort of romantic love and it stands with all of its beauty. But when we speak of loving those who oppose us we're not talking about eros. The Greek language talks about philia and this is a sort of reciprocal love between personal friends. This is a vital, valuable love. But when we talk of loving those who oppose you and those who seek to defeat you we are not talking about eros or philia. The Greek language comes out with another word and it is agape. Agape is understanding, creative, redemptive good will for all men. Biblical theologians would say it is the love of God working in the minds of men. It is an overflowing love which seeks nothing in return. And when you come to love on this level you begin to love men not because they are likeable, not because they do things that attract us, but because God loves them and here we love the person who does the evil deed while hating the deed that the person does. It is the type of love that stands at the center of the movement that we are trying to carry on in the Southland—agape.

## Some Power in the Universe That Works for Justice

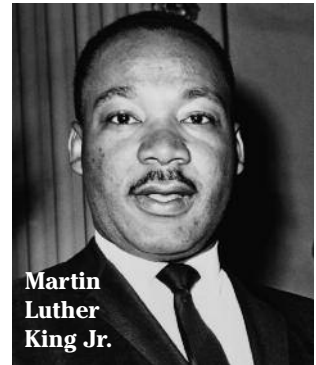
There are persons who believe firmly in nonviolence who do not believe in a personal God, every person who believes in nonviolent resistance believes somehow that the universe in some form is on the side of justice. That there is something unfolding in the universe whether one speaks of it as an unconscious process, or whether one speaks of it as some unmoved mover, or whether someone speaks of it as a personal God. There is something in the universe that unfolds for justice. And this is one of the things that kept the people together, the belief that the universe is on the side of justice.

Agape says you must go on with wise restraint and calm reasonableness but you must keep moving. We have a great opportunity to build here a great world, a world where all men live together as brothers and respect the dignity and worth of all human personality. We must keep moving toward that goal. We must continue to move on. Our self-respect is at stake; the prestige of our world is at stake. Civil rights is an eternal moral issue which may well determine the destiny of our civilization in the ideological struggle with communism. We must keep moving with wise restraint and love and with proper discipline and dignity.

## The Need to be “Maladjusted”

Modern psychology has a word that is probably used more than any other word. It is the word “maladjusted.” We all should seek to live a well-adjusted life in order to avoid neurotic and schizophrenic personalities. But there are some things within our social order to which you are proud to be maladjusted and to which call upon you to be maladjusted. Never intend to adjust yourself to segregation and discrimination. Never intend to adjust yourself to mob rule. All men are created equal and are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights and that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.” God grant that we will be so maladjusted that we will be able to go out and change our world and our civilization. And then we will be able to move from the bleak and desolate midnight of man’s inhumanity to man to the bright and glittering daybreak of freedom and justice.

**Source:** [www.teachingamericanhistory.org](http://www.teachingamericanhistory.org),  
**pictures:** [www.loveangeles.com](http://www.loveangeles.com)



**Martin  
Luther  
King Jr.**

# Learning and Promoting the Legacy of Nelson Mandela: Non-Violence and Forgiveness as a Means of Change

There are probably only a distinct minority of persons on this globe who have not heard of Nelson Mandela, a man imprisoned for 27 years on Robbens Island for protesting the evils of apartheid. Millions have even seen the movie *Invictus* or read his biography about the long road to freedom. It was a long road for Mandela himself, and one that led eventually to his being the President of South Africa and a Nobel Peace prize winner. Nelson Mandela has been an inspirational figure for millions, and having spent time on various occasions in South Africa, you can understand why. At the bottom of this post I will share with you some of his inspirational sayings.

Mandela, above all else was a politician, and proud of it, working to rid a country of its official racist policies, something which he certainly largely succeeded in doing. It is of course one thing to change a nation's laws, another to change its heart. Mandela's commitment to non-violence, as he once explained was a matter of political tactics, more than a matter of principle as it was for Mahatma Gandhi or Martin Luther King. Violence is never a long term solution to any endemic human problem, and the worst part about it is when you use violence vs. one's enemies, you become what you despise, a perpetrator of evil in the form of murder, whether sanctioned and legal or otherwise.

There were many stories of courage and facing down the racism with non-violent resistance, and even love of enemies. It is a story we should learn more about in a world still plagued by racisms of various sorts. Think with some of Madeba's wisdom, his aphorism..... see what you think... What you will think is, that the Prince of Peace would be pleased with Mandela's major accomplishments.

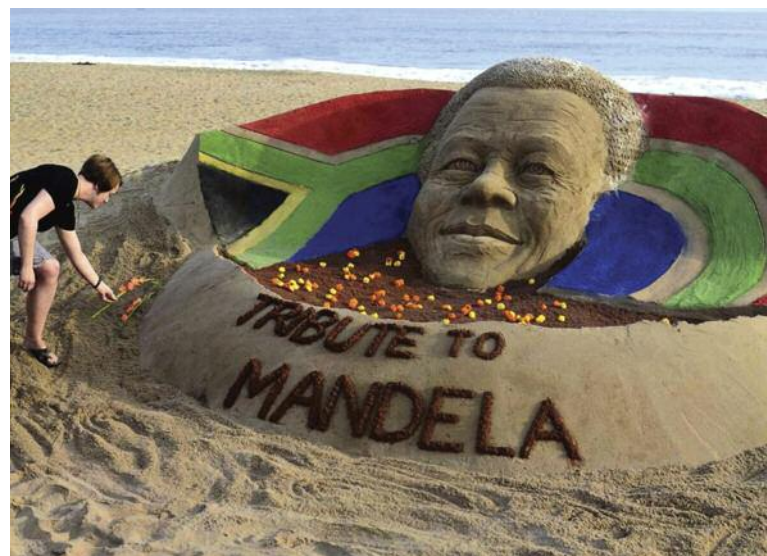
## Learning and Promoting the Nelson Mandela Philosophy

- Courage is not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear.
- Difficulties break some men but make others. No axe is sharp enough to cut the soul of a sinner who keeps on trying, one armed with the hope that he will rise even in the end.
- It always seems impossible until it's done.
- When a man has done what he considers to be his duty to his people and his country, he can

rest in peace.

- Real leaders must be ready to sacrifice all for the freedom of their people.
- A fundamental concern for others in our individual and community lives would go a long way in making the world the better place we so passionately dreamt of.
- Everyone can rise above their circumstances and achieve success if they are dedicated to and passionate about what they do.
- Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.
- For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others.
- Do not judge me by my successes, judge me by how many times I fell down and got back up again.
- There is no passion to be found playing small – in settling for a life that is less than the one you are capable of living.
- We must use time wisely and forever realize that the time is always ripe to do right.
- Man's goodness is a flame that can be hidden but never extinguished
- Resentment is like drinking poison and then hoping it will kill your enemies.
- A good head and a good heart are always a formidable combination.
- When people are determined they can overcome anything.

Source: [www.patheos.com](http://www.patheos.com),  
pictures: [www.leadsa.co.za](http://www.leadsa.co.za)



# Hindi Diwas (Day)

14 September is celebrated as Hindi Day or Hindi Diwas. Hindi was adopted as the official language of Constituent assembly in 1949 on this day. The Day marks Hindi as our Raj Bhasha (National Language). The Constitution of India adopted Hindi in Devanagri Script as the official language of the union in 1950. Hindi is a standardised and Sanskritised register of the Hindustani language derived from the Khariboli dialect. Hindi, the primary official language of the Republic of India, is one of the 22 official languages of India.

## History

Hindi has a history behind; it belongs to Indo-Aryan branch of Indo-European language family. The word 'Hindi' itself is a gift of Persian, Mughals added to its flavour, Amir Khusro was first to write Hindi Poem. Though it evolved from Sanskrit but many of its words originated from Arabic or Persian language.

## The Link Language

Hindi is also called as a 'link language', as it has united the vast Indian Diaspora and also minimized the gap between South and North India. Hindi language has travelled a long distance to make its presence felt in the World. It is spoken in many parts of the world and is one of the main languages in Mauritius, Surinam, Trinidad and many others including US, South Africa, New Zealand etc. If it is mother tongue of 180 million people then it is also the second language of 300 million people. Mahatma Gandhi used this language to unite the whole India and used this language as 'language of unity'. The word Swadeshi revolutionised the freedom struggle, and its entry into the Oxford dictionary marks its importance in world history. Hindi being a live language is gaining popularity and on the way to become a global language.

## The Official Language

At the state level, Hindi is the official language of the many states in India: Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Delhi and Himachal Pradesh. Each of these states may also designate a "co-official language"; in Uttar Pradesh for instance, depending on the political formation in power, sometimes this language is Urdu. Similarly, Hindi is accorded the status of co-official language in several states.



The celebration of our Independence Day in the month of August leaves us with more reason to enjoy the spirit of patriotism by celebrating the Hindi day in September. Our national language has a special significance in touching our lives each day. Renowned poets and lyricists have conveyed via many songs the spirit of freedom felt by Indians and also extolled the beauty of poetry through Hindi.

The essence of Hindi is felt in mythological characters, school syllabus and our daily exchange as a means of communication. The visit to theatres is characterized by respecting our National Anthem in Hindi which expresses wonderful emotions felt by all Hindustanis.

## Celebrations

Hindi Diwas is celebrated in many schools and colleges. It is fun to enjoy poems and exchanges in dramatic sequences highlighting the multifarious activities that can be conducted through Hindi. Students recite poems and read papers to show the importance of Hindi. Various religious and cultural programs are held in the schools. The students recite Dohas of Kabir, Ravidas, Rahim. The students and teachers use Hindi language in their conversation throughout the day. On the Day Hindi Diwas awards and Raj Bhasha Awards distribution functions are organized.

## Hindi Diwas Celebrations in Australia

IABBV Hindi School celebrated Hindi Diwas 2014 and Indian Literary and Art Society of Australia (ILASA) organised its fourth annual Hindi Kavi Sammelan (poets' conference) to celebrate Hindi Day. Hindi Samaj of Western Australia will be organising an event 'Phulwari'.

**Source:** [www.goodparenting.co.in](http://www.goodparenting.co.in),  
[www.indiascanner.com](http://www.indiascanner.com), [www.mapsofindia.com](http://www.mapsofindia.com),  
**pictures:** [www.searchpp.com](http://www.searchpp.com),  
[www.exoticindiaart.com](http://www.exoticindiaart.com)

# Transforming towards a Culture of Non-Violence and Peace

## Common Roots, Common Solutions

Changing a culture of violence into a culture of peace requires a transformation of problems to creative and constructive solutions that answer the needs of those involved. When we think about violence, discrimination and exclusion, the challenges may seem insurmountable. However, these challenges are fundamentally connected. Ignorance and misunderstandings, assumptions based on a lack of communication and mistrust, feed discrimination and violence. These all influence and reinforce one another.

Vulnerability to violence, discrimination and exclusion can also be linked to a number of common social determinants, such as alcohol and drug misuse or abuse, poverty, inequalities of income, gender or power and misuse of power. Seeing these connections, it becomes clear that it is essential to systematically address common root causes. Just as there can be common roots of violence, discrimination and exclusion, there can be common solutions. Successfully addressing these three humanitarian challenges requires a change of mindsets, attitudes and behaviours.

We need to start with ourselves. We all carry bias and prejudice. Awareness, questioning and critical self-reflection can help break conditioning or correct bias learned through schooling, media and upbringing. Equipping parents, teachers, communities, organizations and each and every individual with skills to interact constructively and live harmoniously together, such as empathy, active listening and non-violent communication, will support and help sustain this values-based mind shift. Values and skills-based education is a concrete action contributing to this required change of mindsets, attitudes and behaviours.

Through values and skills-based education—whether in school, family or community life—children, for example, will learn how to act with non-judgement or listen actively and therefore gain a respect for diversity. Having respect for diversity will lessen their chance of participating in discriminatory behaviour and, later on, in adolescence or adulthood, to resort to violence when confronted with tensions or problems.

## Values and Skills-Based Education

Values and skills-based education is an essential tool for transforming towards a culture of non-violence

and peace. Values and skills-based education instils humanitarian values, like respect for diversity, compassion, care and friendship, mutual understanding, cooperation, equality and peace.

As with culture of non-violence and peace, the process of values and skills-based education is crucial. This type of education is participatory and stimulates critical thinking and independence.

Values are generally more associated with feelings than with intellect or rational analysis. Values connect to our right brain. So, arts, music, sports are ideal vehicles to instil, develop and nurture values and interpersonal social skills, where feelings, experience, vibrations or body rather than intellectual analysis are entry points for learning. A strong link has been shown between early childhood experiences and later adult attitudes and behaviours. Therefore, starting values and skills-based education as early as possible is essential. This can be done in a variety of settings such as family, preschool and school, sport clubs and social activities.

## A Call to Action

- For formal education, institutionalize values and skills-based education and cultural awareness programmes at the national level: incorporation as an integral part of the formal school curriculum, at the earliest stage, including primary and preschool level.
- For non-formal education, public and private schools to engage in partnerships with external actors who can transmit values and skills-based education through school or after-school interventions.
- In the community:
  - i) provide and encourage access for all to community-based activities such as sports, arts, music and theatre which favour the development of a sense of fair play, teamwork and creativity. Sports, for example, have also been successfully utilized to foster dialogue, respect and understanding to reduce violence;
  - ii) reach out to vulnerable youth through non-cognitive empowerment programmes, which have proven to be more successful and cost effective than many traditional programmes for at-risk communities.

Source: [www.ifrc.org](http://www.ifrc.org)





## *Developing Our Personality*

People's personalities are truly diverse. In the multitude of people's personalities, we see the Buddhist principle of cherry, plum, peach and apricot blossom at work. Just as each blossom is beautiful in its own way, each person is also endowed with their own special qualities. Being introverted doesn't make someone incapable, just as being quick-tempered doesn't make a person useless. We should live in a way that is true to ourselves.

Our personality doesn't determine our happiness or unhappiness, rather it is the substance of how we've lived our lives that decides. The purpose of Buddhism and education as well as of all our efforts toward self-improvement and growth is to enhance that substance.

For example, a person's shyness may be transformed into valuable qualities such as prudence and discretion, while someone's impatience might be transformed into a knack for getting things done quickly and efficiently. It's inevitable that there will be aspects of your personality that you don't like. But it is foolish to become obsessed by such things and succumb to feelings of self-hatred and unworthiness and consequently hinder your own growth. Outstanding individuals didn't become great overnight. They disciplined themselves to overcome their weaknesses, conquering apathy and inertia to become true victors in life.

Life is a struggle with ourselves; it is a tug-of-war between moving forward and regressing, between happiness and unhappiness. Those short on willpower or self-motivation should pray with conviction to become a person of strong will, a person who can tackle any problem with real seriousness and determination. Perhaps they could try challenging themselves to some task at hand—it can be anything—and keep at it until they can say that they're absolutely satisfied they've done their best.

Anyone who has ever made a resolution discovers that the strength of their determination fades with time. The moment you feel that happening is when you should make a fresh determination. That is the time to say to yourself, "Okay! I will start again from now!" If you fall down seven times, get up eight. In other words, don't give up when you feel discouraged, just pick yourself up and renew your determination each time. The important thing is not that your resolve never waver, but that you don't get down on yourself when it does and throw in the towel.

No one has only faults or only merits. We all have a mixture of both. Therefore, you should strive to develop and polish your positive attributes. As you do so, your shortcomings will fade until they are no longer apparent. The important thing is to take that first step. If you bravely overcome one small fear, it will give you the courage to take on the next one.

Make goals, whether big or small, and work toward realizing them. At the same time, you must be serious and dedicated to your goals. An earnest, dedicated spirit shines like a diamond and it moves people's hearts. If we are sincere, people will understand



Daisaku Ikeda







our intentions, and our positive qualities will radiate. It is pointless to be caught up in outward appearances. The German poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832) wrote: “How may one get to know oneself? Never by contemplation, only, indeed, by action. Seek to do your duty, and you will know at once how it is with you.”

It’s all about taking action, taking that first step. If your aim is to swim across a vast ocean, it would do you no good to get cold feet standing on the shore before you even take the plunge; you’ve got to make a move, keeping your sights set on your goal in the distance.

You have to be true to yourself; you have to follow your own path. Anyone can lead good, fulfilling lives, if they aim and work toward a great goal or purpose. Indian political and spiritual leader Mahatma Gandhi (1869–1948) is an excellent example. As a boy, Gandhi was excruciatingly shy. He was unable to sleep without a light on, haunted by the fear of imaginary thieves, ghosts and serpents. He was introverted and always worried that people would make fun of him. Gandhi struggled with this problem for many years.

Even after passing the bar exam and qualifying as a barrister, he was still quite timid. When he finally had to present his first case in court and the time came to cross-examine the witness, he became nervous and confused, and the room started spinning. He completely forgot what he was going to say and had to leave the courtroom. A major turning point occurred when Gandhi was in South Africa. The Indian residents there faced severe discrimination. On one occasion, he was riding in a first-class car on a train when a white person brought over the train conductor, who ordered him to move to the freight car. Gandhi wouldn’t budge, so the conductor called a police officer who forcibly pushed him off the train.

In the waiting area at the train station, Gandhi sat shivering in the cold and dark. He stayed awake all night lost in thought, pondering whether he should return to India or endure the hardship of taking a stand and fighting for human rights. He finally came to the conclusion that it would be nothing but cowardice to run from his fears and disregard those who were being discriminated against the way he had been. From that moment, with the determination to save people from injustice, Gandhi faced and challenged his timid nature.

After a twenty-year struggle, the Indian people in South Africa gained concessions toward freedom. And, as is well known, Gandhi then made his final return to India where, through his movement of nonviolent civil disobedience, he achieved the independence of his home country. Gandhi held the conviction that we can become anything we want to be. It all depends upon the strength of our determination.

***Daisaku Ikeda, a Buddhist philosopher, peacebuilder, educator, author and poet is the third president of the Soka Gakkai lay Buddhist organization and the founding president of the Soka Gakkai International (SGI), a Buddhist organization promoting a philosophy of character development and social engagement for peace.***

***-This article has been provided by Greg Johns, Vice General Director, Soka Gakkai International Australia***



# Shaheed Bhagat Singh

“The aim of life is no more to control mind, but to develop it harmoniously, not to achieve salvation here after, but to make the best use of it here below, and not to realise truth, beauty and good only in contemplation, but also in-the actual experience of daily life; social progress depends not upon the ennoblement of the few but on the enrichment democracy or universal brotherhood can be achieved only when there is an equality of opportunity of opportunity in the social, political and individual life.” -Bhagat Singh (Page 124 of Jail notebook)

Shaheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh, a revolutionary and martyr gave a new direction to revolutionary movement in India. He formed ‘Naujawan Bharat Sabha’ to spread the message of revolution in Punjab, formed ‘Hindustan Samajvadi Prajatantra Sangha’ along with Chandrasekhar Azad to establish a republic in India, assassinated police official Saunders to avenge the death of Lala Lajpat Rai, dropped bomb in Central Legislative Assembly along with Batukeshwar Dutt. He took Lala Lajpat Rai’s death revenge by killing Scott. He was a true martyr of Indian freedom struggle.

## Early Life

Bhagat Singh was born on 27 September 1907 at Banga in Lyallpur district (now Pakistan) to Kishan Singh and Vidya Vati. From his early childhood, Bhagat Singh was imbued with the family’s spirit of patriotism. At the time of his birth, his father Kishan Singh was in jail. His uncle, Sardar Ajit Singh, was a great freedom fighter and established the Indian Patriots’ Association. He was well-supported by his friend Syed Haidar Raza, in organizing the peasants against the Chenab Canal Colony Bill. Ajit Singh had 22 cases against him and was forced to flee to Iran.

## Jalianwala Bagh

Kishan Singh enrolled Bhagat Singh Dayanand Anglo Vedic High School run by Arya Samaj. While studying at D.A.V. School in Lahore, in 1916, young Bhagat Singh came into contact with some well-known political leaders like Lala Lajpat Rai and Ras Bihari Bose. Punjab was politically very charged in those days. In 1919, when Jalianwala Bagh



**Bhagat Singh**

massacre took place, Bhagat Singh was only 12 years old. The massacre deeply disturbed him. On the next day of massacre Bhagat Singh went to Jalianwala Bagh and collected soil from the spot and kept it as a memento for the rest of his life. The massacre strengthened his resolve to drive British out from India.

## Mahatma Gandhi

In response to Mahatma Gandhi’s call for non-cooperation against British rule in 1921, Bhagat Singh left his school and actively participated in the movement. In 1922, when Mahatma Gandhi suspended Non-Cooperation Movement against violence at Chauri-Chaura in Gorakhpur, Bhagat was greatly disappointed. His faith in non-violence weakened and he came to the conclusion that armed revolution was the only practical way of winning freedom. To continue his studies, Bhagat Singh joined the National College in Lahore, founded by Lala Lajpat Rai. At this college, which was a centre of revolutionary activities, he came into contact with revolutionaries such as Bhagwati Charan, Sukhdev and others.

## A Born Revolutionary

To avoid early marriage, Bhagat Singh ran away from home and went to Kanpur. Here, he came into contact with a revolutionary named Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, and learnt his first lessons as revolutionary. On hearing that his grandmother was ill, Bhagat Singh returned home. He continued his revolutionary activities from his village. He went to

Lahore and formed a union of revolutionaries by name 'Naujawan Bharat Sabha'. He started spreading the message of revolution in Punjab. In 1928 he attended a meeting of revolutionaries in Delhi and came into contact with Chandrasekhar Azad. The two formed 'Hindustan Samajvadi Prajatantra Sangha'. Its aim was to establish a republic in India by means of an armed revolution.

### **Simon Commission**

In February 1928, a committee from England, called Simon Commission visited India. The purpose of its visit was to decide how much freedom and responsibility could be given to the people of India. But there was no Indian on the committee. This angered Indians and they decided to boycott Simon Commission. While protesting against Simon Commission in Lahore, Lala Lajpat Rai was brutally Lathicharged and later on succumbed to injuries. Bhagat Singh was determined to avenge Lajpat Rai's death by shooting the British official responsible for the killing, Deputy Inspector General Scott. He shot down Assistant Superintendent Saunders instead, mistaking him for Scott. Bhagat Singh had to flee from Lahore to escape death punishment.

### **Central Legislative Assembly Bombing**

*"I am such a Lunatic that I am free even in Jail."*

Instead of finding the root cause of discontent of Indians, the British government took to more repressive measures. Under the Defense of India Act, it gave more power to the police to arrest persons to stop processions with suspicious movements and actions. The Act brought in the Central Legislative Assembly was defeated by one vote. Even then it was to be passed in the form of an ordinance in the "interest of the public." Bhagat Singh who was in hiding all this while, volunteered to throw a bomb in the Central Legislative Assembly where the meeting to pass the ordinance was being held.

It was a carefully laid out plot, not to cause death or injury but to draw the attention of the government, that the modes of its suppression could no more be tolerated. It was decided that Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutt would court arrest after throwing the bomb. On April 8, 1929 Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutt threw bombs in the Central Assembly Hall while the Assembly was in session. The bombs did not hurt anyone.

After throwing the bombs, Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutt, deliberately courted arrest by refusing to run away from the scene.



They wanted them to teach a lesson. Both of them got arrested and during their trial in jail, Bhagat Singh went on a hunger strike in order to protest against the inhuman treatment given to Indian prisoners. In the court he decided to use the court as a tool to showcase his protest for Indian independence. Moreover, the cause of the hunger strike was to get newspapers for political prisoners, good quality of food, better clothing and supply of necessary toiletries. He and other members of his party were there on a 63 day hunger strike. After this long strike, the British officials had to agree on their terms and they provided all the necessary things, which he demanded.

### **The Execution**

They deliberately wanted to die and when the court gave the sentence, they were very happy. They wanted to die because they wanted that their death would inspire the youth of our country and they will get united to fight against the British Empire.

On October 7, 1930 Bhagat Singh, Sukh Dev and Raj Guru were awarded death sentences. While Bhagat Singh was in prison along with his other three friends, he wrote a letter to the Viceroy. He wanted that he should treat him as the prisoners of war thus; they should not be hanged but, should execute them by firing squad. Bhagat Singh was a true soldier who fought for his country and got hanged when he was just 23 years of age. On March 20, one of Bhagat Singh's friends visited him in jail as he wanted him to sign on a letter for mercy, but this great man refused to sign that letter. Despite great popular pressure and numerous appeals by political leaders of India, Bhagat Singh and his associates were hanged in the early hours of March 23, 1931.

**Source:** [www.shahidbhagatsingh.org](http://www.shahidbhagatsingh.org), [www.sikh-history.com](http://www.sikh-history.com), [www.iloveindia.com](http://www.iloveindia.com), [www.peopleforever.org](http://www.peopleforever.org), [www.culturalindia.net](http://www.culturalindia.net)

# Lal Bahadur Shastri

*“The world as a whole is full of problems and difficulties and it is most important that every country which loves its Freedom and wants to maintain its Independence and sovereignty should work for peace and try to see that there is disarmament in the world which alone will lead to real peace”.*

**-Lal Bahadur Shastri**

Small of stature, simple and soft-spoken, Lal Bahadur proved to be one of the heroes of the history of India. A great General in Mahatma Gandhi's army of peaceful soldiers of freedom, Lal Bahadur became the symbol of India's valour and self-respect.

*“I am just an ordinary man and not a very bright man.”*

But there was always a smile, which overarched his words. There was not the slightest sign of pride or authority in his bearing.

*A short man, A lean body,  
Eyes wide as the wheels of a cart.  
His clothes simple, his voice  
soft and almost inaudible.*

Lal Bahadur never praised himself. He never aspired for power. He never worked for it. And yet power and authority came in search of him. Fame set a crown on his head. The short man grew into a colossus. He showed by his work that, though he was tender like a flower, he could be hard as diamond, too. He filled the Four Corners of the world with the fame of India.

## Childhood and Early Life

Lal Bahadur Shastri was born on October 2, 1904 at Mughalsarai, Uttar Pradesh to Sharada Prasad and Ramdulari Devi. His father Sharada Prasad was a school teacher and later on he became a clerk in the Revenue Office in Allahabad. He got a meagre salary of fifty rupees a month. Even with this little money he could meet his both ends properly. Though he had limited means, he never accepted bribes and lived a life of honesty and integrity. Lal Bahadur, who was beau ideal of simplicity and honesty, got these habits from his father.

His mother, Ram Dulari was also a very great soul. Because of her strong will, high character and spirit of dutifulness, she became an ideal mother. In 1906, when Lal Bahadur was just eighteen months old, his father suddenly died of the plague. The breadwinner of the family was gone leaving a

young pregnant widow, Ramdulari Devi with two small children. Lal Bahadur's younger sister was born after three months of his father's death. With three small children, Ramdulari Devi faced her misfortunes with great courage.

As a boy, Lal Bahadur loved reading books and was fond of Guru Nanak's verses. He revered Bal Gangadhar Tilak, the Indian nationalist, social reformer and freedom fighter. Lal Bahadur listened to the speech of Tilak when he visited Varanasi, which left strong impressions in the mind of Lal Bahadur and guided him all through his life. Lal Bahadur was greatly inspired when he heard a speech of Gandhi in Varanasi in 1915. Then and there he dedicated his life to the service of the country.

## Youth and the Independence Struggle

Since his childhood, Lal Bahadur was a responsible, disciplined and a simple person. During his young age, he was excited to hear about the great martyrs and their sacrifices for the nation and was greatly influenced by the life and thoughts Guru Nanak, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai and Mahatma Gandhi. As a committed young man Lal Bahadur himself was ready to sacrifice his life for the freedom struggle and for the independence of the nation. He participated in the various movements launched by Mahatma Gandhi for the political independence of the nation and imprisoned seven times during the period of 1921 to 1945.

## Mahatma Gandhi

Lal Bahadur took a keen interest in Mahatma Gandhi's non-cooperation movement and when the time came to boycott the schools, he did so by not appearing for his examinations. With just one year left for his graduation, the news was not taken well at home. None supported Lal Bahadur's action, but his mother who had complete faith in him, supported his decision as long as he promised not to renege from the task later. With his mother's blessings, he became fully involved in the non-cooperation movement. He was arrested for taking part in banned processions but released since it was his first offence. This was to be the first of many arrests for Lal Bahadur. He worked during the evenings in a Khadi shop and studied while studying for the Degree of Shastri (Bachelor) in Philosophy. Lal Bahadur graduated at the head of his class.

He then went on to do social work among the

Harijans, working to make their lives better. Two years later he married Lalita Devi. Lal Bahadur and Lalita moved to Allahabad where Lal Bahadur served as secretary of the District Congress Committee. He attended the 1929 Lahore session of the Congress, and upon his return to Allahabad actively spoke out against the British Raj and for "Purna Swaraj". As protests continued more and more people were arrested for participating in the struggle. When Lalita Devi mentioned to Lal Bahadur that the jails were full, he replied in his characteristic fashion, "Yes, but there is still room for me." He was arrested a few days later. During his stay in jail his wife gave birth to their first child Kusum. He had two other children, Hari and Suman.



Lal Bahadur Shastri

### Freedom Struggle

His total commitment to Mahatma Gandhi and the non-cooperation movement resulted in many jail terms. Since the Congress party was banned by the British Government, Lal Bahadur and his associates spent their time travelling around India spreading Mahatma Gandhi's message. He was soon arrested for these activities, and jailed for seven months at an unknown location. Eighteen months later Lalita Devi was granted permission to meet her husband.

### Prime Minister of India

*"We believe in peace and peaceful development, not only for ourselves but for people all over the world. Our main preoccupation is with economic and social development at home and peace and friendship abroad"*

Lal Bahadur was finally released from prison in 1946. On August 15, 1947 India gained independence. Lal Bahadur was appointed Minister of Police in Nehru's cabinet. In 1951 Jawaharlal Nehru was re-elected Prime Minister for a second term, and Lal Bahadur was appointed General Secretary of the Lok Sabha. While in Nehru's cabinet, Lal Bahadur was entrusted with portfolios for Minister of Railways, Minister of Communications and later Home Minister. He served as Nehru's right hand. On May 27, 1964 Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru died. May of that year Lal Bahadur Shastri became India's second Prime Minister. His term is best known for introducing measures to make India self-sufficient in food production.

### Pakistan War and Tashkent

In 1965 Pakistan attacked India on the Kashmiri front and Lal Bahadur Shastri responded in kind by

punching toward Lahore.

If Pakistan has any ideas of annexing any part of our territories by force, she should think afresh. I want to state categorically that force will be met with force and aggression against us will never be allowed to succeed. -Lal Bahadur

In 1966 a cease-fire was issued as a result of international pressure. Lal Bahadur Shastri went to Tashkent to hold talks with Ayub Khan and an agreement was soon signed. Shastri had suffered heart attacks twice before. And during the period of the Pakistan war and the following days, his body, already battered, had to bear a very heavy strain. At a time when the world sang his praises as a hero, an incomparable patriot-hero and as the architect of peace, and just as he touched the peak of his life, Lal Bahadur passed away all too suddenly. He came to power unexpectedly, and he left the world equally suddenly. He signed the joint Declaration on 10 January 1966. He died the same night.

The news of Lal Bahadur Shastri's death struck India like a bolt from the blue. The entire nation was plunged in grief. Some people suspected foul play also. Gone was the war hero and the messenger of peace, gone was the great statesman who restored to India her honour and self-respect in the assembly of nations. A tiny, tidy figure. A soul that had lived in perfect purity of thought, word and deed. The very embodiment of selflessness, detachment and simplicity. Such was this man who had lived in our midst. He belongs to the race of the heroes of India.

### Bharat Ratna

Lal Bahadur was a star of great brightness in the history of India. After his death the President of India conferred on him, on behalf of the nation, the award of 'Bharat Ratna'; it was a most fitting. A small body but mighty man—so runs a Kannada proverb. It applies to several great men. Shivaji was not tall. But like a magnet he attracted people and organized and built a great empire. Napoleon was short. But he shook the whole world. Lal Bahadur Shastri was not taller than those two; but he was not second to them in greatness. Firmness, love of adventure, patience and skill in administration were the hallmark of Lal Bahadur Shastri.

**Source: [www.liveindia.com](http://www.liveindia.com),  
[www.freeindia.org](http://www.freeindia.org),  
[www.lalbahadurshastri.ind.in](http://www.lalbahadurshastri.ind.in),  
pictures: [www.iloveindia.com](http://www.iloveindia.com)**

# *A Tribute to a Great Teacher*

## *Dr S. Radhakrishnan*

**-Vice President of India (1952–1962), President of India (1962–1967)**



*“The best teacher is the one who suggests rather than dogmatizes, and inspires his listener with the wish to teach himself.”*

**-Edward Bulwer-Lytton**

Teachers or Gurus mold the lives that they influence because the lessons learned from teachers remain with their students throughout life. Teachers have an influencing role in the life of every student. They are like beacons of light, guiding us in the formative years of our life. Teachers mould us and in the process shape our future. What we learn from our teachers remains with us throughout our life. However we fail to show our appreciation and gratitude for their altruistic devotion. Teachers do need encouragement and support from the community to feel that their efforts are being recognized. To serve the purpose, Teacher’s Day is celebrated throughout the world, year by year. By celebrating National Teacher’s Day, we thank our teachers for providing us their invaluable guidance. Teacher’s Day is a tribute to the hard work and devotion of the teachers all year long, to educate us.

In India, Teacher’s Day (also called Teachers’ Appreciation Day or National Teacher’s Day) is celebrated on 5th of September, every year. The date was selected, because it is the birthday of a timeless teacher and the former President of India—Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan. When some of his students and friends approached him and requested him to allow them to celebrate his

birthday, he said, “instead of celebrating my birthday separately, it would be my proud privilege, if September 5th is observed as Teacher’s day”. From then onwards, the 5th of September has been observed as Teachers Day, in India.

Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man how to fish and you feed him for a lifetime. That’s exactly what a teacher has done for us and we celebrate this joyous occasion in remembrance of the greatest teachers of India on his birthday.—  
Dr S. Radhakrishnan.

Teachers have an influencing role in the life of every student. They are like beacons of light, guiding us in the formative years of our life. Teachers mould us and in the process and shape our future. What we learn from our teachers remains with us, throughout our life. However, very often, we fail to show our appreciation and gratitude for their altruistic devotion. Teachers do need encouragement and support from the community to feel that their efforts are being recognized. To serve the purpose, Teacher’s Day is celebrated throughout the world, year by year. By celebrating National Teacher’s Day, we thank our teachers for providing us their invaluable guidance.

According to Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, Former President of India,

*‘Teachers Should Be Role Models’. ‘A student spends 25,000 hours in the campus. The school must have the best of teachers who have the ability to teach, love teaching and build moral qualities.’*

To celebrate Teacher’s day cultural programs are held, which include singing competitions, dance and play performances. The students offer flowers, greeting cards and gifts as the token of affection, to the teachers. The latest trend is to organize Teacher’s Day party. Students are keen about throwing a lavish party for their teachers, to show how much they care and respect them.

### **Dr Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan**

Dr Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan was born on 5 September, 1888 in Tirutani, a well-known religious centre in the Madras State. He was the second son of Veera Samayya, a tehsildar in a Zamindari



hailing from a middle-class, respectable Hindu Brahmin family.

Radhakrishnan was married in 1906, at the tender age of 18 and while still a student, to Sivakamma, and spent a happy married life with her for fifty years before she died in 1956. Bright and precocious, with a scholarly disposition and a serene demeanour, from the very beginning, Radhakrishnan spent the first eight years of his life happily and fruitfully in his home town with his parents. The tranquil and challenging atmosphere of that famous and well-loved place, as well as the benign influence of his parents who, as was common in the South, were intensely religious in the traditional sense, went far in moulding his character and sowing a lively seed of religiousness in him.

The far-sightedness and broad-mindedness of his revered parents to send their son to well-disciplined Christian educational institutions—held him in good stead throughout, making it possible for him to acquire specially Occidental vices like a sense of duty, punctuality, discipline and the like, together with specially Oriental qualities of religiosity, calmness, patience, faith in God and men.

He studied Sanskrit and Hindi also and garnered a good deal of interest in the traditional languages of India. He also read the Vedas and the Upanishads with great care and reverence.

In fact, Radhakrishnan was, and is, still today, a reader in the true sense of the word. For, what he read—and he read widely and lovingly all kinds of good books—did not remain an external acquisition, an ornamental decoration, with him; but blossomed forth in him in fullest glory and grandeur.

For, all throughout his brilliant career, honour after honour was showered on him.

Radhakrishnan was, and still is, one of the most celebrated writers of the present generation. His works are many and varied on philosophical, theological, ethical, educational, social and cultural subjects. He contributed also numerous articles to different well-known journals, which too, will prove to be of immense value to generations to come.

His articles are not merely outer expressions of his inner thoughts, but, what is more, infinitely more, emblems and embodiments of his very life—life that merrily dances forth in the fortuitous, zig-zag way of the world, removing all its obstacles in its own inner irresistible urge and boundless boldness. Hence, it is that his works, written in an incredibly simple, sublime, soft and serene way,

are so very enchanting, enlivening, exhilarating to all. As a matter of fact, as is well known, it is very difficult to express very abstract and abstruse philosophical thoughts in easily intelligible and enchantingly sweet language. But Dr Radhakrishnan, like the great and revered Rabindranath, is one of the few who could accomplish this apparently impossible feat. That is why his philosophical writings are not ordinary scholarly dissertations, but also melodious poetical perfections of great and permanent value.



Dynamic in personality, quiet in demeanour, austere in habits, unostentatious in behaviour, just in decision, prompt in action, simple in his dress, sympathetic in his dealings—such is our revered Dr Radhakrishnan. He is a living, loving symbol and lovely emblem of our age-old Indian culture and civilization. Nothing much need be said here regarding his ideas and attitude towards different issues. For, the central refrain of his Life's Music reverberates through every walk of his blessed life. That is why he is a Monist in Philosophy, believing in one Reality, viz., Spirit; a Monotheist in Religion, believing in one God; an Eudemonist or Perfectionist in Ethics, believing in inner perfection as the summum bonum or the highest end of life; a Socialist in Politics, believing in mass or universal uplift.

Radhakrishnan is considered as the greatest living philosopher of India, and one of the greatest living philosophers of the world. This proves beyond doubt that he is universally considered to be one amongst the most notable of modern philosophical luminaries.

According to our Indian view, the highest aim of human life is to be, step by step, a 'Brahmachari' (or one who lives and moves about and believes in Brahman), a 'Brahmajnani' (or one who knows Brahman or the Absolute) and finally, a 'Brahmavadin' (or one who speaks or writes about Brahman or the Absolute). Dr Radhakrishnan—himself a real 'Brahmachari', a real 'Brahmajnani'—subscribed to this theory all along his life. Dr Radhakrishnan is, indeed, a versatile genius—a great scholar, philosopher, seer, writer, orator, statesman, administrator and above all, a great man.

**Source: [www.living.oneindia.in](http://www.living.oneindia.in),  
[www.iloveindia.com](http://www.iloveindia.com), pictures:  
[vicepresidentofindia.nic.in](http://vicepresidentofindia.nic.in)**

# *The Real Silent Killer—Your Own Mind*

*“Honesty and frankness make you vulnerable.  
Be honest and frank anyway.”*

**-Kent M. Keith**

Our medical scare system tries to rope you into their basket by frightening you with words like silent killer high blood pressure, silent killer diabetes, etc. almost daily. The truth is otherwise. The silent killer is your own mind.

Where is the mind? All over you, indeed! Mind is your own consciousness.

Consciousness is fundamental and all else is derived from that, is the opinion of one of the great brains in physics, Max Planck.

Human body, is therefore, the extension of or the other name for the human mind. “Cogito ergo sum”—“I think, therefore, I am” was the right proclamation of Rene Descartes back in the eighteenth century, although he meant it for the opposite reasons to divide the human body into two parts—the thinking part (res Cogitans) and the other part (res Extensa).

That is where our curse began of reductionism—science started looking at bits and pieces to understand the whole. With all the wonderful advances in modern day physics of (w) holism, medical science still looks at bits and pieces, becoming a bane to society.

Charles Sherrington, a Nobel winning physiologist, became the professor of physiology in 1899 when he admitted that “positive sciences do not and cannot answer the question “why”.

That was precisely how silent killer hypertension etc. originated. Today with the understanding of (w) holism we are able to ask the pertinent question as to ‘why does the blood pressure goes up in the first place’? Here I am not referring to the disease secondary hypertension where we know the cause for elevated BP. I am talking of what modern medicine calls primary or essential hypertension.

Similarly we now know why the sugar or cholesterol goes up, again excluding primary type I diabetes. Now the reader will have to understand elementary human physiology. We have a healer inside us which is the most powerful healer and the best doctor in the world called the immune system. This has to be kept in its best mode all the time.

While we were hunger gatherers in the forest our only cause of premature death was predation. Nature then endowed us with a very intelligent extra system called the autonomic nervous system which would keep us going when we are seriously injured as we did not have the intensive care units then. What the intensive care unit does was being done by the autonomic nervous system in a better way. It could close up cut vessels, make the blood clot there, get our blood pressure up when it goes down and see that the vital organs get enough blood by redistributing blood more efficiently.

In case we see a tiger the same system would make us capable of running away from danger by elevating our blood pressure, sugar, cholesterol and other sterols as life saving measure.

Now that we are in a (un) civilised world with our rat race to make money and get positions, we have to deal with human tigers every day.

Many a time these tigers live with us as our near and dear ones. We are yet to evolve to get rid of the autonomic nervous system and that might take millions of years of evolution.

As of now we get the flight-fight-fright reaction of the forest tiger sighting with the same biochemical reactions and consequent altered blood parameters and BP rise.

While in the forest the elevated levels used to be burnt up to give us energy to run.

Today we cannot run away from the human tigers. On a chronic basis we accumulate these elevated blood parameters and become hypertensive, diabetic, and what have you. So it is not the elevated blood pressure, which wags its tail silent killer. It is the abnormal consciousness of fear, fight reaction of human mind that does the trick.

Unfortunately in reductionist medicine we do not look at the whole and try to deal with the end result, maybe BP going up or cholesterol. Cancer is another killer. Cancer cells are normal body cells that fail to die on their appointed time by apoptosis



(normal programmed cell death) and mutate to become rogue cells. They are a bunch of jobless, aimless, wandering cells that might eventually become clinical cancers weeks, months or even years after they get formed in the first place.

So if we can screen for rogue cells all of us will have many potential cancers inside us every day. Why do these cells grow to be cancers in some but die away in the majority? Here again the culprit is our mind. Negative thoughts like hatred, jealousy, and anger and pride help the cells to grow to be cancers while love, camaraderie, sharing and caring (otherwise called spirituality) would try and destroy those rogue cells. Abnormal over eating is another trigger for cancer cells to grow. Frugal diet might not encourage them.

Modern medicine is now recognising hostility as the main culprit in heart attacks and anger in haemorrhagic strokes. Depression with frustration does bring on cancer and all other killer diseases in their wake. We all know how to keep our body clean but many of us do not know how to keep our minds clean and devoid of all the negative dangerous thoughts. Every thought gets translated into a powerful chemical in the body to do all the damage or good depending on the thought being either negative or positive. How then do we do control our thoughts?

That is the job of the true educational system which, unfortunately we had completely destroyed in India, thanks to our colonial masters who wanted to keep us under their thumb.

Every new born child is a genius and a Godly person only to be converted into an idiot and a devil in the present schooling system where negative thoughts and competition are taught.

From day one in school these innocent compassionate children are graded with ranks and marks and are made to be aware of their individuality. The altruistic “we” concept gets transformed into the dangerous egoistic “I” concept. That leads to illness in later life while WE would have encouraged wellness.

Education must make healthy minds and not just wealthy careers. Healthy mind is defined as that which has “enthusiasm to work and enthusiasm to be compassionate”.

Indian Sanathana dharma, which goes back to times out of mind, has had all those beautiful ideas but was all but removed from the educational arena. We still follow the British model in our schools and



colleges while Britain is slowly taking ideas from our ancient system. Schools in London are trying to teach Sanskrit, a fully developed ancient language of India.

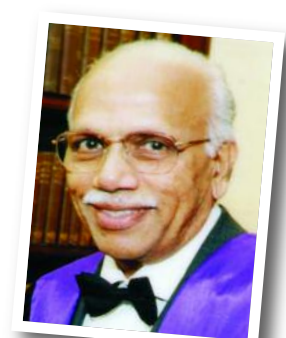
Let us be human and humane in our social intercourse for us to develop a healthy mind which is the best vaccination for all killer diseases and the mercury containing chemical vaccines that we load our children with. Another one of those reductionist ideas.

Even Adam Smith had defined education as that rocks which trains a man to act “justly, skilfully and magnanimously under all circumstances of war and peace”. This world runs through your consciousness. Matter comes into existence when observed by you. This new concept is called bio centrism, a brain child of that great thinker physician Robert Lanza.

*“The truth can only offend those who live a lie!”*

**-Anon**

***-B.M. Hegde, MD, FRCP, FRCPE, FRCPG, FACC, FAMS. Padma Bhushan awardee 2010. Editor-in-chief, The Journal of the Science of Healing Outcomes; Chairman, State Health Society's Expert Committee, Govt. of Bihar, Patna. Former Prof. Cardiology, The Middlesex Hospital Medical School, University of London; Affiliate Prof. of Human Health, Northern Colorado University; Retd. Vice Chancellor, Manipal University, Chairman, Bhavan's Mangalore Kendra.***



**Source: Bhavan's Journal, August 31, 2014**

# Festivals of the Month-Australia

Cairns Festival



Alice Desert Festival



Eden Whale Festival



Melbourne Festival



## Cairns Festival, North Queensland— 30Aug-7 Sept 2014

Cairns Festival is one of Australia's leading diverse cultural festivals and is a showcase for the region both nationally and internationally, featuring a program of creative, cultural and sporting events across a three-week period.

## Alice Desert Festival, Northern Territories— 10-14 Sept 2014

The Alice Desert Festival is Central Australia's arts and cultural festival, celebrating the desert and the diversity of people that live here. The festival shares the stories, songs and the unique lifestyle of Central Australia's arid region.

## Eden Whale Festival, NSW—22 Sep-23 Oct 2014

The Eden Whale Festival is an annual event, highlighting the southern migration of the humpback and other whales. The whales can be seen in large numbers in the Twofold Bay for one to get up close and personal with these magnificent animals.

## Melbourne Festival, VIC—10-26 October 2014

Melbourne International Arts Festival now commonly known as Melbourne Festival is one of Australia's leading international arts festivals presenting unique international and Australian events in the fields of dance, theatre, music, visual arts, multimedia and other outdoor events.

Source: [www.festivalaustralia.com.au](http://www.festivalaustralia.com.au),  
pictures: [www.cairnsblog.net](http://www.cairnsblog.net),  
[www.alicedesertfestival.com.au](http://www.alicedesertfestival.com.au),  
[www.edenwhalefestival.com.au](http://www.edenwhalefestival.com.au),  
[www.melbournefestival.com.au](http://www.melbournefestival.com.au)



Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam

"The Whole world is but one family"

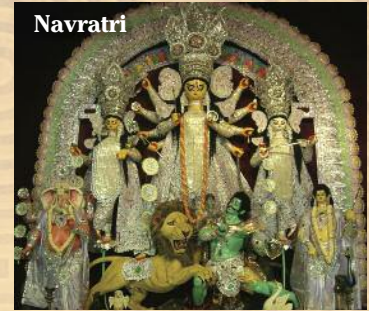
# Festivals of the Month-India



Teacher's Day



Onam



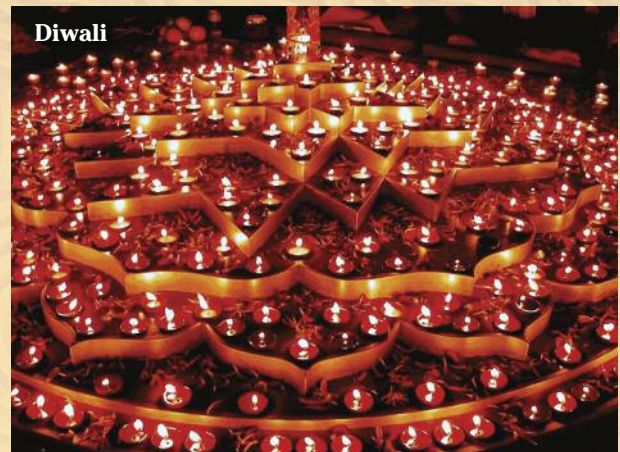
Navratri



Dussehra



Id-ul-Zuha



Diwali

## Teacher's Day—5 Sept 2014

*A good teacher is like a candle—it consumes itself to light the way for others.*

5 September is celebrated as Teacher's Day as a mark of tribute to the contribution made by teachers to the society. 5th September is the birthday of a great teacher Dr. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan, who was a staunch believer of education, and was the well-known diplomat, scholar, President of India and above all a Teacher.

## Onam—7 Sept 2014

Onam Festival, a festival of Kerala marks the commemoration of Vamana Avatara of Vishnu and the subsequent homecoming of mythical King Mahabali.

## Navratri—25 Sept - 3 Oct 2014

Navratri, the festival of nine nights is dedicated to Goddess Durga and her nine forms.

## Dussehra—3 Oct 2014

Dussehra also called Vijaya Dashami is a celebration of victory of good over evil. The celebrations starting from Navratri ends with the tenth day festival of Dussehra celebrating the triumph of Lord Rama over Demon Ravana and of Goddess Durga over the buffalo demon, Mahishasura.

## Id-ul-Zuha (Bakr-Id)—6 Oct 2014

Eid-ul-Zuha, also known as Eid-ul-Adha, Bakra-Id is celebrated to commemorate the sacrifice of Prophet Ibrahim, who willingly agreed to kill his son at the behest of God. This festival coincides with the Haj pilgrimage in Mecca. Prayers are offered in the mosques and the sacrificial meat is then distributed after the Id prayers.

## Diwali/Deepavali—23 Oct 2014

Diwali also known as the "festival of lights", is an ancient Hindu festival spiritually signifying the victory of light over darkness, knowledge over ignorance, good over evil, and hope over despair.

**Source:** [www.festivalsofindia.in](http://www.festivalsofindia.in),  
[www.panchangam.org](http://www.panchangam.org),  
[www.hindudevotionalblog.com](http://www.hindudevotionalblog.com),  
[www.drikpanchang.com](http://www.drikpanchang.com), **pictures:**  
[www.happydiwalifestival.in](http://www.happydiwalifestival.in),  
[www.onamfestival.org](http://www.onamfestival.org), [www.navratri.org](http://www.navratri.org),  
[www.sacredsites.com](http://www.sacredsites.com)

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# Annie Besant

*My own life in India, since I came to it in 1893 to make it my home, has been devoted to one purpose, to give back to India her ancient freedom.*

**-Annie Besant**

Dr Annie Besant is one of those foreigners who inspired the love of the country among Indians. She declared in 1918 in her paper "New India": "I love the Indian people as I love none other, and... my heart and my mind... have long been laid on the altar of the Motherland." Annie Besant, born of Irish parents in London on October 1, 1847, made India her home from November, 1893. Dr Besant, said Mahatma Gandhi, awakened India from her deep slumber. Before she came to India, Dr Besant passed through several phases of life—housewife, propagator of atheism, trade unionist, feminist leader and Fabian Socialist. By 1889, "there was scarcely any modern reform (in England) for which she had not worked, written spoken and suffered." Dr Besant started the Home Rule League in India for obtaining the freedom of the country and reviving the country's glorious cultural heritage. She started a paper called "New India." She attended the 1914 session of the Indian National Congress and presided over it in 1917.

No philosophy, no religion, has ever brought so glad a message to the world as this good news of Atheism.

## A Born Orator

Liberty is a great celestial Goddess, strong, beneficent, and austere, and she can never descend upon a Nation by the shouting of crowds, nor by the arguments of unbridled passion, nor by the hatred of class against class.

An orator and writer with poetic temperament, Dr Besant was a veritable tornado of power and passion. By her eloquence, firmness of convictions and utter sincerity she attracted some of the best minds of the country for the national cause. She was largely responsible for the upbringing of the world renowned philosopher K. Krishnamurti.

## Early Life

Annie Wood was born in 1847 in London into a middle-class family of Irish origin. Annie was always proud of being Irish and supported the cause of Irish self-rule throughout her adult life. Her father died when she was young and



**Annie Besant**

left the family almost penniless. Annie's mother was forced to support the family by running a boarding house for boys at Harrow. She raised the money for a private tutor for Annie in this way. Annie was educated privately by a female tutor as an Evangelical Christian. She was given a strong sense of duty to society and an equally strong sense of what independent women could achieve.

## Married Life

Annie was married in 1867 in Hastings, Sussex, to 26-year-old clergyman Frank Besant, younger brother of Walter Besant. The marriage was, however, a disaster. The first conflict came over money and Annie's independence. Annie wrote short stories, books for children and articles. Frank took all the money she made: married women did not have the right to own property. Politics further divided the couple. Annie began to support farm workers who were fighting to unionise and to win better conditions. Frank was a Tory and sided with the landlords and farmers. The tension came to a head when Frank struck Annie. She left him and returned to London. Annie was to remain Mrs Besant for the rest of her life.

## The Social Activist

Every person, every race, every nation, has its own particular keynote which it brings to the general chord of life and of humanity.

Annie fought for the causes she thought were right, starting with freedom of thought, women's rights, secularism, birth control, Fabian socialism and workers' rights. Once free of Frank Besant and exposed to new

currents of thought, Annie began to question not only her long-held religious beliefs but also the whole of conventional thinking. She began to write attacks on the Churches and the way they controlled people's lives. In particular she attacked the status of the Church of England as a state-sponsored faith.

### Fabian Society and Socialist

That is the true definition of sin; when knowing right you do the lower, ah, then you sin. Where there is no knowledge, sin is not present.

For Annie, politics, friendship and love were always closely intertwined. Her decision in favour of Socialism came about through a close relationship with George Bernard Shaw, a struggling young Irish author living in London, and a leading light of the Fabian Society. Annie was impressed by his work. Shaw sponsored Annie to join the Fabian Society. In its early days, the Society was a gathering of people exploring spiritual, rather than political, alternatives to the capitalist system.

Unemployment was a central issue of the time, and in 1887 some of the London unemployed started to hold protests in Trafalgar Square. Annie agreed to appear as a speaker at a meeting on 13 November. The police tried to stop the assembly. Fighting broke out, and troops were called. Many were hurt, one man died, and hundreds were arrested. Annie offered herself for arrest, but the police refused to take the bait.

The events created a great sensation, and the newspapers dubbed it 'Bloody Sunday'. Annie was widely blamed for it. She threw herself into organising legal aid for the jailed workers and support for their families. Socialists saw the trade unions as the first real signs of working people's ability to organise and fight for themselves. Until now, trade unions had been for skilled workers—men with a craft that might take years to acquire and which gave them at least a little security. The Socialists wanted to bring both unskilled men and women into unions to fight for better pay and conditions.

Her most notable victory in this period was her involvement in the London matchgirls strike of 1888. Annie was drawn into this first really important battle of the 'New Unionism' by Herbert Burrows, a young socialist. He had made contact with workers at Bryant and May's match factory in Bow, London, who were mainly young women. They were very poorly paid. They were also prey to horrendous industrial illnesses, like the bone-rotting Phossy jaw, which were caused by the chemicals used in match manufacture. Some of the match workers asked for help from Burrows and Annie in setting up a union.

Annie met the women and set up a committee, which led the women into a strike for better pay and conditions. The action won enormous public support. Annie led demonstrations by 'match-girls'. They were cheered in the streets, and prominent churchmen wrote in their support. In just over a week they forced the firm to improve pay and conditions. Annie then helped them to set up a proper union and a social centre.

At the time, the matchstick industry was an immensely powerful lobby, since electric light was not yet widely available, and matches were essential for lighting candles, oil lamps, gas lights and so on. Besant's campaign was the first time anyone had successfully challenged the match manufacturers on a major issue, and was seen as a landmark victory of the early years of British Socialism.

### Servant of Humanity

Never yet was a nation born that did not begin in the spirit, pass to the heart and the mind, and then take an outer form in the world of men.

Annie Besant fought for the causes she thought were right. She became interested in Theosophy as a way of knowing God. Theosophical Society was against discrimination of race, color, gender and preached Universal brotherhood. To serve humanity at large was its supreme goal. It was as a member of Theosophical Society of India that she arrived in India in 1893. She toured the entire country of India. It gave her first-hand information about India and middle-class Indians who were affected more by British rule and its system of education. Her long-time interest in education resulted in the founding of the Central Hindu College at Benares (1898). She also became involved in Indian freedom movement. In 1916, she founded Home Rule League which advocated self rule by Indians. She became the President of Indian National Congress in 1917. She was the first woman to hold that post.

### Death

Never forget that life can only be nobly inspired and rightly lived if you take it bravely and gallantly, as a splendid adventure in which you are setting into an unknown country, to face many a danger, to meet many a joy, to find many a comrade, to win and lose many a battle.

Annie Besant died on September 20, 1933 at Adyar (Madras), India.

**Source:** [www.liveindia.com](http://www.liveindia.com),  
**pictures:** [www.ts-adyar.org](http://www.ts-adyar.org)



# Indian Composite Culture—Religions

Radhakrishnan, in his well-known book 'Religion and Culture' remarks, "The need for religion for a system of thought, for devotion to a cause which will give our fragile and fugitive existence significance and value does not need much elaborate argument. It is an intrinsic element of human nature. The question is what kind of religion? Is it a religion of love and brotherhood or of power and hate? Secular ideologies ask us to worship religion or no religion but what kind of religion? "Religions which make for division, discord and disintegration and do not foster unity, understanding and coherence, play into the hands of the opponents of religion". The necessity for a religion which clearly satisfies the above requirements is the need of the hour. Tolerance and acceptance of other religions are the prime requisites. India is a multi-lingual country and has in its fold, at present, eight different religions. They are, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, Christianity, Islam, Zoroastrianism and Judaism. The religions Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism are offshoots of Hinduism and thus indigenous to the country. The other four are of foreign origin. Judaism was the first to arrive in the country. While the religions preach love, compassion, universal brotherhood etc, sometimes passions lead to community clashes, emphasising the need for inter-religious understanding.

## Hinduism

Hinduism is the main religion of our country, India. It will perhaps be more apt to add that Hinduism is a doctrine and way of life. The words Hindu and Hinduism are not Indian in origin. Hinduism is the popular name given to the most ancient of all the living religions today and therefore the mother of all religions; Sanatana Dharma, a religion based on the eternal principles of truth and values in life.

Vedanta is the best among the names given to the religious faith of the Hindus. Asia comprises half the population of the world and here the religions and moral ideas followed are mostly those that originated in India. It is true, ours is a secular state but that does not imply that the majority of the people following Hinduism should give up the spiritual and moral doctrines in which they have been brought up and which forms the basis of their culture. Hinduism derives its strength from the great and sacred literature, the Vedas and Upanishads, the most ancient literature of man. They deal with the fundamental values of life. What is man? What is the nature of this Universe.

What is the destiny of man? What is the relationship between man and man? These questions, which concern the mystery of existence

were answered by the seers and sages as a result of study, and contemplation. Great sages discovered such truths as the spiritual relationship between soul and soul, between individual spirit and the father of all spirits etc. and invite us to follow them and have these truths tested by ourselves. "It is open to every one of us to enter into this great discipline, this great spiritual adventure in the context of our daily life". Hinduism says "Man is essentially Divine; hence the possibility of its experience or realisation". The 'ATMAN' has to be realised and "this is the very centre, very vital conception of Hinduism" said Vivekananda. Thus the whole concept of Hinduism is a constant struggle to become perfect, to become Divine, to reach God and to see God.

Max Muller says "It is surely astounding that such a system as Vedanta should have been slowly elaborated by the indefatigable and intrepid thinkers thousands of years ago, a system that even now makes us feel giddy. None of our philosophers, not excepting Heriditus, Plato, Kant or Hegel has ventured to erect such a spire, never frightened by storms and lightnings. Stone follows stone. But it is clearly seen that in the beginning, there can have been but one, as there will be, but one in the end, whether we call it Atman or Brahman".

We have the following in the Kathopanishad. "The self-existent Lord fashioned the sense organs and mind of man with the initial defect of an outgoing tendency. Therefore man saw things of the external (not self) world, but not the self within. A certain wise man, however, impelled by his desire to seek immortality turned the direction of the energies of his senses and mind inward and realised the Pratyayatman (the immortal and Divine inner self). Thus started man's search for God, truth and fulfilment, forming a new science, Adyatmavidya, the science of the Atman "the science of the study of man and in depth "the science of God" providing a contribution to human knowledge".

The authoritative sources of Hinduism are the classics, the Sruti and the Smrti. The four Vedas are the fountain head, the source of the religion. The secondary scriptures, the Smrtis, the Itihasas, the Puranas, the Agamas and the Darshanas are only developments of the Vedas. The making of man as a perfect spirit like God and one with him, is the common aim of the scriptures. The formula for the Hindu view of life is the Dharma-Artha-Kama-Moksha doctrine. Dharma is righteousness; Artha wealth, Kama desire and Moksha the liberation of the spirit from the bonds of flesh. These four are the Purusharthas or the ends of life. Artha and Kama are to be within the limits of the Dharma law. "Thus Hinduism does

justice to the flesh as well as the spirit of man”.

The cardinal virtues are purity (Saucum), self-control (Samyama), detachment (Asanga or Vairagya), truth (Satyam) and non-violence (Ahimsa). At the other end, the sins are six. Kama, Krodha, Lobha, Moha, Mada and Matsarya, which must be avoided.

The spirit of tolerance, harmony of human life with all created beings, the true balancing of Dharma, Artha and Kama in this life, the cultivation of Dama, Dana and Daya as essential qualities of man, the belief in the law of moderation; these are the aspects of Hinduism which are facing challenges today in this age of modern, science and technology world; but their aspects will never diminish. There is a prevailing notion that the main teaching of Hinduism through Vedanta is retirement from activities of the world. Nothing can be further from the truth. Vedanta does advocate renunciation but this renunciation is of attachment, not abstention from work or duties. The much talked of word Sanyasa is meant only giving up of selfish desires and not giving up action. “Vedanta lays the greatest emphasis on duties in co-operative life and activities and in general interest. It produces the force to reduce our selfishness, egoism, attachment to pleasure and fear of pain”. Vedanta emphasises the clear distinction between the body (the ‘I’) and the soul. A virtuous and pure heart is needed to see the soul within us. The sages of yore first sought an answer to the question ‘was there a first cause?’ This has been raised in the sixth chapter of the Chandogya Upanishad. The world surely did not come out of nothing. The Sages believed that the causeless beginning was Sat i.e. Being with consciousness. This expanded and became light, sound, water and all living forms of the world. Vedanta has no quarrel with the biological theory of evolution based on the spontaneous biogenesis of organic matter. The unexplained factor which brought about this matter first is Sat.

The rather controversial doctrine in Hinduism is Maya. The mistaken impression given is that the doctrine lays down that the world is not real. Far from truth. All the philosophers who stood by the doctrine of Maya and taught it, definitely felt that the world is real. “They took this world and this life and the law of Karma to be hard realities. If they still taught the doctrine of Maya, that everything is an illusion created by the Lord, it means that the apparent with its false values is different from the real and nothing more. When we say ‘I want’, ‘I came’ it is really the act of the soul that brings about the activities of the body. The Lord is a reality and so too are the souls that are his bodies. The Paramatman, the overall soul, permeates and supports all souls, but that does not mean that the latter is unreal. Though the in-dwelling Atman is one and the same, each soul lives a life of separate

HINDUISM  
JAINISM  
BUDDHISM  
SIKHISM  
ISLAM  
CHRISTIANITY

individuality without a sense of identity with others. Herein is the illusion referred to as Maya; to overcome is the aim of the Vedanta” (Rajaji).

Attainment of Moksha is the aim of Hinduism. Moksha is not a place or place of pleasure. It is a state of freedom from the bondage of Maya. When the realisation comes that the soul and the in-dwelling supreme soul are one and the same “the shadow merges in the light. This is Moksha. This Sanskrit word means “liberation”. Purity of life and self-control qualify the individual soul to attain this Moksha”. The Law of Karma, expounded forcibly in Hinduism is the law of cause and effect. Just as in the scientific world, we have the law of action and reaction so too in the spiritual world, the law of Karma operates as the law of cause and effect. It is wrong to think of Karma as fatalism. “Fatalism is breakdown of faith in human effort which is not involved in Vedanta. Karma is the unalterable law of effect following previous causes.

*References are available on request.  
(to be concluded...)*

**-Dr. J. Thuljaram Rao, an Agricultural Scientist with Sugarcane Breeding Institute, Coimbatore, was associated with The Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan at Coimbatore as Honorary Vice Chairman for a period of 22 years till 2003. During the 22 years, Dr. Rao had the unique opportunity**



**to read the Bhavan’s Journal from 1956 for the last 50 years (the store house of the history of Indian culture) covering over 300 issues and books and understand the history of the culture of the country from Rig Vedic times to the present day with its ups and downs in relation to social conditions.**

**Source: Cultural Heritage of India by Dr. J. Thuljaram Rao, Impress, Coimbatore, India, pictures: [www.imgarcade.com](http://www.imgarcade.com), [www.argawise.com](http://www.argawise.com)**

# Maharshi Valmiki Jayanti (Birth Anniversary)

Maharshi Valmiki Jayanti celebrates the birthday of famous poet Valmiki, who is also known as Adi kavi or first poet as he discovered the first Sloka, the first verse which set the base of Sanskrit poetry. It falls on the full moon day (Purnima) in the month of Ashwin. This day is especially very popular in the Northern India and is known as "Pargat Diwas".

## The Ramayana

Valmiki is the author of the famous Hindu epic Ramayana and one of the greatest saints of the ancient world. Valmiki gave shelter to Sita in his own ashram and Luv-Kush were also born and brought up here. His complete life and teachings have always encouraged Humans to fight against the society injustice. In 2014, Valmiki Jayanti falls on 6 October.

## The Sage Valmiki

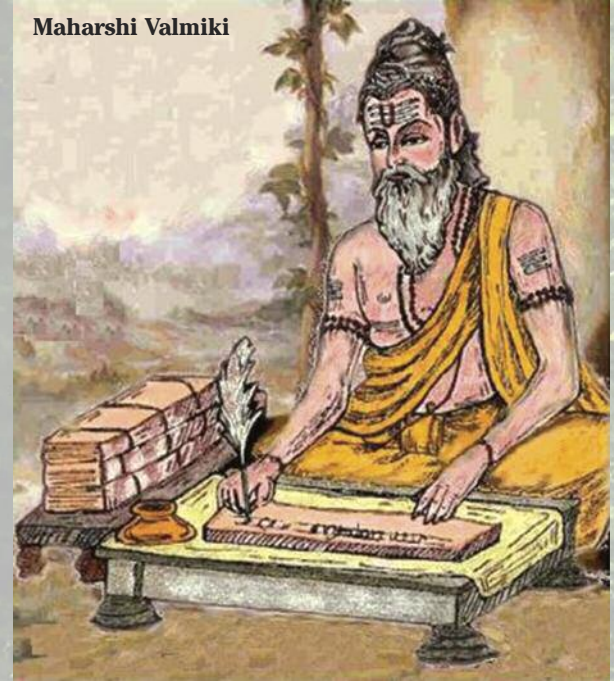
One of the biggest contributions of sage Valmiki to Hindus is the historic epic of Ramayana. Originally Ramayana was written in Sanskrit, by Valmiki in form of slokas and is known as Valmiki Ramayana. It contained 24,000 verses. The Valmiki Ramayana is dated variously from 500 BC to 100 BC, but, over years as there have been many interpolations and redactions it is nearly impossible to date its origin accurately. There is also a religious movement called Valmikism that is solely based on Valmiki's teachings and principles.

## Early Life

Maharishi Valmiki was born as Ratnakara to sage Prachetasa. At a very young age he went to the forest and got lost. A hunter that was passing by saw him and took him under his own care, over the years he forgot his original parents under the parenthood of his newly found parents. Later when he grew up, he was married to a girl from a hunter's family. Being bought up in a poor hunter's family, he didn't have any measures to feed his family, so he started to hunt in the forests. He robbed the people passing through the forests.

## Saint Narada

One day when saint Narada was passing by the forest, he was attacked by Ratnakar. While Narada



Maharshi Valmiki

was playing his Veena and praising Lord Rama, he saw a transformation in Ratnakar. He then asked Ratnakar, if whether the family for which he was robbing others, will share his sins also. Ratnakar went to his home and asked the same question to his family, to which he received a negative answer.

He immediately went back to Narada, Who taught him to meditate with chanting the name of Lord Rama, till he came back. Ratnakar got so immersed in the mediation over years that when Narada returned, he saw that Ratnakar was totally covered by ant-hills. He immediately removed all the ant-hills from his body and told Ratnakar that his Tapasya has paid off and that the Lord was pleased with him. Ratnakara was bestowed with the honour of a Brahmarshi and given the name of Valmiki, since he was reborn from the Valmika (the ant-hill). Sage Valmiki founded his ashram at the banks of River Ganga.

## Ramayana

One day when in the ashram of Valmiki, Narada narrated him the story of Lord Rama. After that Valmiki received a vision from Brahma in which the



lord instructed him to write Ramayana in form of slokas, which he obediently followed.

### First Sloka

Valmiki composed the first ever sloka of Sanskrit literature. History dates that once Valmiki went near river Ganga for his daily chores, a disciple named Bharadwaja was carrying his clothes. Passing through the Tamasa Stream, Valmiki remarked that “the water looks so clean like a good man’s mind; I want to bathe here today.”

Just at that point he heard two birds chirping merrily, he felt very serene at the glance of a happy and joyous couple. Suddenly, one of them fell down; hit by an arrow, a hunter had shot the bird for his food. The bird left alive was crying with agony, Valmiki felt terrible grief at the sight and plight of that bird, and uttered the following words:

*maa nishhaada pratishthaamtva  
magamah shaashvatiih samaah  
yat krauncha mithunaat eka  
mavadhih kaama mohitam*

“Oh! Ill-fated Hunter, by which reason you have killed one male bird of the couple, When it is in its lustful passion, thereby you will get an ever-lasting reputation for ages to come...”

This was the first Sloka of Sanskrit literature.

### Valmiki Ashram

A Valmiki temple is called Ashram, Which means a monastery, which means a communal house for Valmiki’s. Each such Ashram is dedicated to attracting devotees’ concentration and to spread the teachings of Ramayana. All Valmiki ashrams have a special flag called a Nishan Sahib that is placed outside like any other place of worship. The Bow and arrow depict the disciples of Valmiki, namely Luv and Kush. Many devotees are suggested that when the distance of ashram seems unreachable to them, they can simply have a copy of Ramayana placed in their houses.

All Valmiki Ashram’s have common features. For instance, the place of worship is always in a special

room and there are number of other rooms’ set-aside for special purposes. There is a Langar hall where all the devotees congregate for a meal, the community kitchen where devotees help to prepare food for the Langar. There is a classroom and library where the Ramayana is stocked for study and is used for teaching young children apart from a music room where musical instruments such as the Tabla are taught and hymns are practiced for worship. Everyone sits on the floor to show that everyone is equal in the eyes of God, regardless of whether they come from a rich or poor background.

### Celebrations

Valmiki was truly a Maharshi. “He was purity, penance, benevolence and meditation personified and the sole object of his dedication and contemplation was Man, a man leaves his selfish existence and lives for others identifying himself with the composite culture of the cosmic creation.”

Valmiki Jayanti is celebrated with great enthusiasm. Maharshi Valmiki is worshipped and prayed on this day. Shobha yatra, meetings and distribution of free food is arranged in many places. Many devotees also take out processions in honour of Maharshi Valmiki, and offer prayers to his portrait.

There are many Valmiki temples in India, Which are beautifully decorated with flowers and prayers are offered in them, number of incense being lighted fill the atmosphere with purity and happiness. Many devotees go to Lord Rama temples and recite verses from Ramayana in memory of Maharshi Valmiki. Maharshi Valmiki Jayanti is celebrated with immense joy and excitement in Madhya Pradesh. There are many temples dedicated to Valmiki. The celebrations start early in the morning as people from far and wide gather at the temples with flowers and other offerings for the sage. People read verses from Ramayana and worship Valmiki along with Lord Rama.

**Source:** [www.festivalsofindia.in](http://www.festivalsofindia.in),  
[www.indiafun.net](http://www.indiafun.net), [www.hinduism.about.com](http://www.hinduism.about.com),  
**pictures:** [www.krishnamercy.org](http://www.krishnamercy.org)

# Who is Responsible for the Decay of Varna Dharma

Politicians and intellectuals alike say that jati is part of an uncivilized system. Why? Who is responsible for the disintegration of so worthy an arrangement as Varna Dharma?

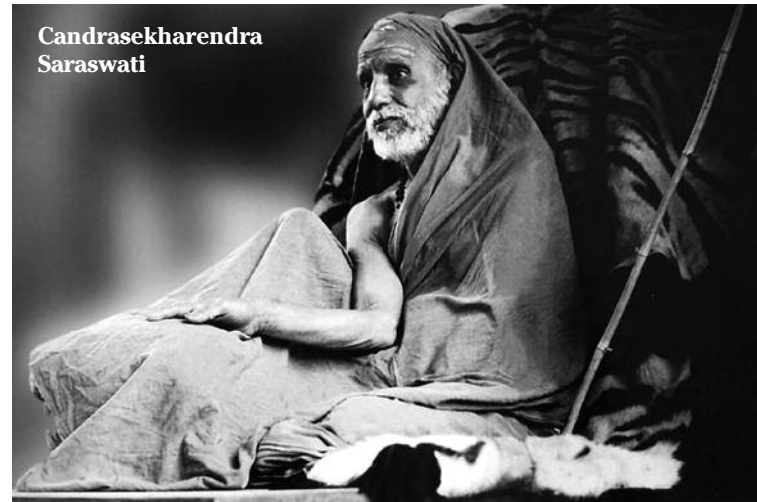
These are questions that I raised earlier and I shall try to answer them. The wrong ideas that have developed about Varna Dharma must be ascribed to the Brahmins themselves. They are indeed responsible for the decay of an ages-old system that contributed not only to our Atmic advancement but also to the well-being of the nation as well as of all mankind.

The Brahmin relinquished the duties of his birth—the study of the Vedas and performance of the rites laid down in the Vedic tradition. He left his birthplace, the village, for the town. He cropped his hair and started dressing in European style. Giving up the Vedas, he took to the mundane learning of the West. He fell to the lure of jobs offered by his white master and aped him in dress, manners and attitudes. He threw to the winds the noble dharma he had inherited from the Vedic seers through his forefathers and abandoned all for a mess of pottage. He was drawn to everything Western, science, life-style, entertainment.

The canonical texts have it that the Brahmin must have no love for money, that he must not accumulate wealth. So long as he followed his dharma, as prescribed by the sastras, and so long as he chanted the Vedas and performed sacrifices, he brought good to the world, and all other castes respected him and treated him with affection. In fact they looked upon him as a guide and model.

Others now observed how the Brahmin had changed, how his life-style become different with all its glitter and show and how he went about with all the pretence of having risen on the scale of civilization. The Brahmin had been an ideal for them in all that is noble, but now he strayed from the path of dharma; and following his example they too gave up their traditional vocations that had brought them happiness and contentment and left their native village to settle in towns. Like the Brahmin they became keen to learn English and secure jobs in the government.

For thousands of years the Brahmin had been engaged in Atmic pursuit and intellectual work. In



Candrasekharendra  
Saraswati

the beginning all his mental faculties were employed for the welfare of society and not in the least for his own selfish advancement. Because of this very spirit of self-sacrifice, his intelligence became sharp like a razor constantly kept honed. Now the welfare of society is no longer the goal of his efforts and his intelligence has naturally dimmed due to his selfishness and interest in things worldly. He had been blessed with a bright intellect and he had the grace of the Lord to carry out the duties of his birth. Now, after forsaking his dharma, it is natural that his intellectual keenness should become blunted.

Due to sheer momentum the bicycle keeps going some distance even after you stop pedalling. Similarly, though the Brahmin seeks knowledge of mundane subjects instead of inner light, he retains yet a little intellectual brightness as a result of the “pedalling” done by his forefathers. It is because of this that he has been able to achieve remarkable progress in Western learning also. He has acquired expert knowledge in the practices of the West, in its law and its industries. Indeed he has gained such insights into these subjects and mastered their finer points so remarkably well that he can give lessons to the white man himself in them.

A question that arises in this context is how Vedic studies which had not suffered much even during Muslim rule received a severe set-back with the advent of the European. One reason is the impact of the new sciences and the machines that came with the white man. Granted that many a truth was revealed through these sciences—and this was all to the good up to a point. But we must remember that

the knowledge of a subject per se is one thing and how we use it in practice is another.

The introduction of steam power and electricity made many types of work easier but it also meant comforts hitherto unthought of to gratify the senses. If you keep pandering to the senses more and more new desires are engendered. This will mean the production of an increasing number of objects of pleasure. The more we try to obtain sensual pleasure the more we will cause injury to our innermost being. The new pleasures that could be had with scientific development and the introduction of machines were an irresistible lure for the Brahmin as they were to other communities. Another undesirable product of the sciences brought by the white man was rationalism which undermined people's faith in religion and persuaded some to believe that the religious truths that are based on faith and are inwardly experienced are nothing but deception.

The man who did not give up his duties even during Muslim rule now abandoned them for the new-found pleasures and comforts. He dressed more smartly than the Englishman, smoked cigarettes and even learned to dance like his white master. Those who thus became proficient in the arts of the white man were rewarded with jobs.

Now occurred the biggest tragedy. Up till now all members of society had their hereditary jobs to do and they did not have to worry about their livelihood. Now, with the example of the Brahmin before them, members of other castes also gave up their traditional occupations for the jobs made available by the British in the banks, railways, collectorates, etc. With the introduction of machinery our handicrafts fell into decay and many of our artisans had to look for other means of livelihood. In the absence of any demarcation in the matter of work and workers, there arose competition for jobs for the first time in the country. It was a disastrous development and it generated jealousy, disputes and a host of other evils among people who had hitherto lived in harmony.

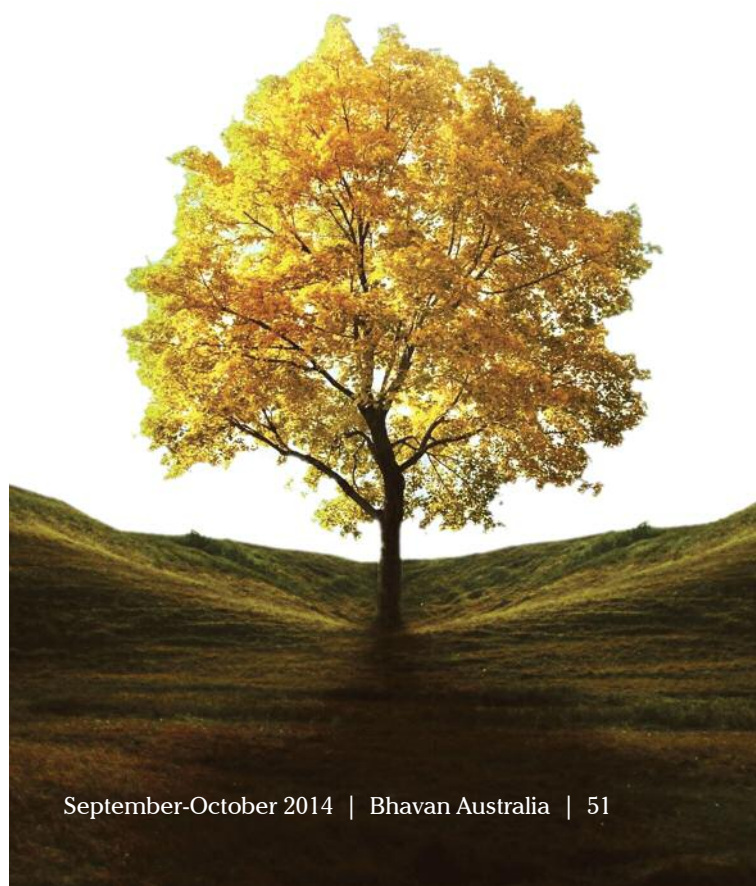
Ill feelings developed between Brahmins and non-Brahmins also. How? Brahmins formed only a small percentage of the population. But they were able to occupy top positions in the new order owing to their intelligence which, as I said before, was the result of the "pedalling" done by their forefathers. They excelled in all walks of life—in administration, in academics, in law, in medicine, engineering and so on. The white man made his own calculations about developing animosity between Brahmins and non-Brahmins and realised that by fuelling it he could strengthen his hold on the country. He fabricated the Aryan-Dravidian theory of races and the seeds

of differences were sown among children born of the same mother. It was a design that proved effective in a climate already made unhealthy by rivalry for jobs.

As if to exacerbate this the Brahmin took one more disastrous step. On the one hand he gave up the dharma of his caste and joined hands with the British in condemning the old order by branding it a barbarous one in which one man exploited another. But, on the other hand, though he spoke the language of equality, he kept aloof from other castes thinking himself to be superior to them. If in the past he had not mixed physically with members of other castes, it did not mean that he had placed himself on a high pedestal. We must remember that there was a reason for his not coming into physical contact with other castes. There have to be differences between the jatis based on food, work and surroundings.

The photographer needs a dark room to develop his films. To shoot a film, on the contrary, powerful lights are needed. Those who work in a factory canteen have to be scrupulously clean; but those who dust machinery wear soiled clothes. This does not mean that the waiter in a canteen is superior to the factory hand who dusts machines. The man who takes the utmost care to keep himself intellectually bright, without any thought of himself, observes fasts, while the soldier, who has to be strong and tough, eats meat.

Why should there be bad feelings between the two, between the Brahmin and the Ksatriya? Does the Brahmin have to come into physical contact with





the Ksatriya to prove that he does not bear any ill-will towards him? If he intermingled with the Ksatriya he would be tempted to taste meat and such a temptation might eventually drag him into doing things that militate against his own duty. Each community

has its own duties, customs and food habits. If all jatis mixed together on the pretext of equality without regard to their individual ways of life, all work would suffer and society itself would be plunged in confusion.

It was with a definite purpose in view that the village was divided into different quarters: the agrahara (the Brahmin quarter), the agriculturists' quarter and so on. Such a division was possible in rural life but not in the new urban way of living. With urbanisation and industrialisation it became necessary for people belonging to various jatis to work together on the same shift, sit together in the same canteen to eat the same kind of food. The Brahmin for whom it is obligatory to observe fasts and vows and to perform various rites was now seen to be no different from others. Office and college timings were a hindrance to the carrying out of these rites. So the Brahmin threw them to the winds. He had so far taken care to perform these rites with the good of others in mind. Like a trustee, he had protected dharma for the sake of society and made its fruits available to all.

All that belonged to the past. Now the Brahmin came forward proclaiming that all were equal and that he was one with the rest. All the same he became the cause of heart-burning among others and—ironically enough—in becoming one with them he also competed with them for jobs. That apart, though he talked of equality, he still thought himself to be superior to others, in spite of the fact that he was not a bit more careful than them about the performance of religious duties. Was this not enough to earn him more hatred?

The Brahmin spoiled himself and spoiled others. By abandoning his dharma he became a bad example to others. Now, after he had divested himself of his dharma, there was nothing to give him distinction, to mark him out from others. As a matter of fact, even by strictly adhering to his dharma the Brahmin is not entitled to feel superior to others. He must always remain humble in the belief that “everyone performs a function in society” and that “I perform mine”. If at all others respected him in the past and accorded him a high place in society it was in consideration of his selfless work, his life of

austerity, discipline and purity.

It is my decided opinion that the Brahmin is responsible for the ruin of Hindu society. Some people have found an explanation for it. The Brahmin, if he is to be true to his dharma, has to spend all his time in learning and chanting the Vedas, in performing sacrifices, in preserving the sastras, etc. What will he do for a living? If he goes in search of money or material he will not be able to attend to his lifetime mission—and this mission is not accomplished on a part-time basis. And if he takes up some other work for his livelihood, he is likely to become lax in the pursuit of his dharma. It would be like taking medicine without the necessary diet regimen: the benign power gained by the Brahmin from his Vedic learning will be reduced and there will be a corresponding diminution in the good accruing to mankind from his work.

This is one reason why Brahmins alone are permitted by the sastras to beg for their living. In the past they received help from the kings—grants of lands, for instance—in consideration of the fact that the dharma practised by them benefited all people. But the sastras also have it that the Brahmins must not accept more charity than what is needed for their bare sustenance. If they received anything in excess, they would be tempted to seek sensual pleasures and thereby an impediment would be placed to their inner advancement. There is also the danger of their becoming submissive to the donor and of their twisting the sastras to the latter's liking. It was with a full awareness of these dangers that in the old days the Brahmins practised their dharma under the patronage of the rajas (accepting charity to the minimum and not subjecting themselves to any influence detrimental to their dharma).

The argument of those who have found an excuse for the conduct of latter-day Brahmins goes thus. “Brahmins ceased to receive gifts from rulers after the inception of British rule. How can you expect them to live without any income? Force of circumstances made them take to English education and thereafter to seek jobs with the government. It is unjust to find fault with them on that score.”

There is possibly some force in this argument but it does not fully justify the change that has come over Brahmins. Before the British, the Moghuls ruled us and before them a succession of sultanates. During these periods a few pandits must have found a place in the darbar. But all other Brahmins adhered to their dharma, did they not, without any support from any ruler? The phenomenon of the Brahmin quarter becoming deserted, the village being ruined, the pathasala (the Vedic school) becoming forlorn and the lands (granted to Brahmins) turning

into mere certificates is not more than a hundred years old. Did not Vedic dharma flourish until a generation ago?

The Vedic religion prospered in the past not only because of the patronage extended to the Brahmins by the Hindu rulers. People belonging to all varnas then were anxious that it should not become weak and perish. They saw to it that the Brahmin community did not weaken and contributed generously to its upkeep and to the nurturing of the Vedic tradition. Today you see hundreds of Vedic schools deserted. There are few Brahmin boys willing to study the scriptures. Who had raised the funds for the Vedic institutions? [In Tamil Nadu] the Nattukottai Nagarattars, Komutti Cettis and Vellalas<sup>1</sup>. The work done by Nagarattars for our temples is indeed remarkable. Throughout Tamil Nadu, if they built a temple they also built a Vedic school along with it in the belief that the Vedas constituted the “root” of the temple. This root, they felt, was essential to the living presence of the deity in the temple and for the puja conducted there. Similarly, the big landowners among the Vellalas made lavish donations to the Vedic schools.

If the Brahmin had not been tempted by the European life-style and if he were willing to live austere according to the dictates of the sastras, other castes would have come forward to help him. It is not that the others deserted him. He himself ran away from his dharma, from his agraharas, from his village and from the Vedic school because of his new appetite for the life of luxury made possible with the new technology of the West. He forgot his high ideals and paid scant respect to the principle that the body's requirements are not more than what it takes in physical terms—to help the well-being of the Self. All told the argument that the Brahmin was compelled to abandon his dharma because he was denied his daily bread does not hold water. We cannot but admit that the Brahmin became greedy, that he yearned far more than what he needed for his sustenance.

Let us concede that the Brahmin left his village because he could not feed himself there and came to a city like Madras. But did he find contentment here? What do we see today in actual practice? Suppose a Brahmin receives a salary of Rs 1,000 in Madras today. If he gets a job in Delhi with double the salary he runs off there. When he goes to Delhi he would abandon totally the dharma he was able to practise at least to a small extent in Madras. Later, if he were offered \$4,000 a month in America he would leave his motherland for that country, lured by the prospect of earning a fortune. There, in the United States, he would become totally alienated from his religion, from his dharma, from all his traditions. The Brahmin is willing to do anything, go to any extent, for the sake of money. For instance, he would

join the army if there were the promise of more income in it. If necessary he would even take to eating meat and to drinking. The usual excuse trotted out for the Brahmin deserting his dharma does not wash.

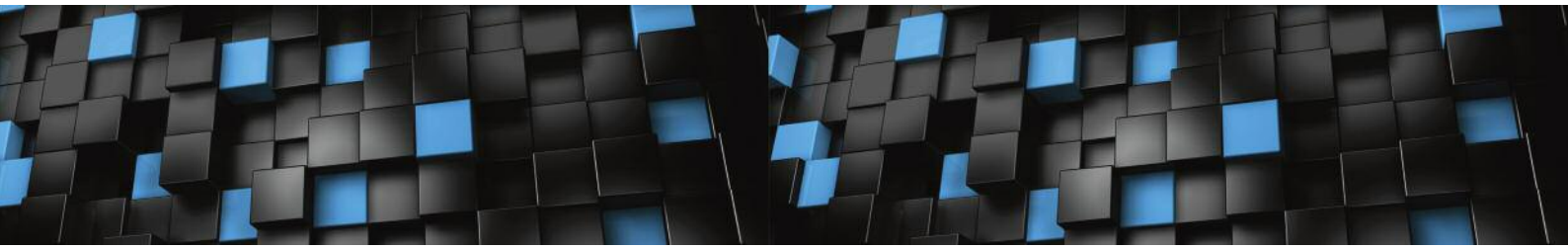


I will go one step further. Let us suppose that, following the import of Western technology, other communities also became averse to observing their respective dharmic traditions. Let us also assume that, with their thinking and feelings influenced by the Aryan-Dravidian theory concocted by the English, these castes decided not to support the Brahmins any longer. Let us further assume that to feed himself (for the sake of a handful of rice) the Brahmin had to leave hearth and home and work in an office somewhere far away from his native village. Were he true to his dharma he would tell himself: “I will continue to adhere to my dharma come what may, even at the risk of death”. With this resolve he could have made a determined effort to pursue Vedic learning and keep up his traditional practices.

There is no point, however, in suggesting what people belonging to the generation that has gone by should have done. I would urge the present generation to perform the duties that the past generation neglected to perform. To repeat, you must not forsake your dharma even on pain of death. Are we going to remain deathless? As it is we accumulate money and, worse, suffer humiliation and earn the jealousy of others and finally we die losing caste by not remaining true to our dharma.

Is it not better then to starve and yet be attached firmly to our dharma so long as there is breath in us? Is not such loyalty to our dharma a matter of pride? Why should we care about how others see us, whether they honour us or speak ill of us? So long as we do not compete with them for jobs they will have no cause for jealousy or resentment. Let them call us backward or stupid or think that we are not capable of keeping abreast of the times. Are we not now already their butt of ridicule? Let us be true to our dharma in the face of the mockery of others, even in the face of death. Is not such a lot preferable to suffering the slings of scorn and criticism earned by forsaking our dharma for the sake of filling our belly?

People nowadays die for their motherland; they lay down their lives for their mother tongue. They do not need a big cause like the freedom of the country



to be roused to action: they court death, immolate themselves, even for a cause that may seem trivial like the merger of a part of their district in another. Was there any demonstration of faith like this, such willingness to die for a cause or a belief, when the British came here with their life-style? At that time did we protect our dharma with courage, in the belief that even death was a small price to pay for it?

The Lord himself has declared in the Gita that it is better to die abiding by one's dharma than prosper through another man's dharma ("nidhanam greyer")<sup>2</sup>. Brahmins who had seen no reason to change their life-style during the long Muslim period of our history changed it during British rule. Why? New sciences and machinery came with the white man. The motor car and electricity had their own impact on life here. Brahmins were drawn to comforts and conveniences not thought of before. This could be a reason for their change of life, but not a justification.

The Brahmin is not to regard his body as a means for the enjoyment of sensual pleasures but as an instrument for the observance of such rites as are necessary to protect the Vedas—and the Vedas have to be protected for the welfare of mankind. The basic dharma is that to the body of the Brahmin nothing must be added that incites his sensual appetite. It was a fundamental mistake on the part of the Brahmin to have forgotten the spirit of sacrifice that imbues his dharma and become a victim of the pleasures and comforts easily obtained from the new gadgets and instruments.

There is pride in adhering to one's dharma even when one is faced with adverse circumstances. Brahmins (during British rule) committed a grave mistake by not doing so and we are suffering the consequences. See the ill-will in the country today among children of the same mother. We have created suffering for others also. At first Brahmins were denied admission to colleges and refused jobs. Now things have come to such a pass that other communities also suffer the same fate.

All was well so long as man, using his own innate resources, lived a simple life without the help of

machines. With more and more factories and increasing machine power, life itself has become complicated. The situation today is such that everyone is facing difficulties in getting admission to college or in getting a job.

People ask me: "What is the remedy today? Do you expect all Brahmins to leave their new life-style and return to Vedic learning?" Whether or not I expect them to do so and whether or not such a step seems possible, I must ask them to do so (to return to their Vedic dharma). Where is the need for a guru-pitha or a seat on which an acarya is installed if I am to keep my mouth shut and watch idly as the dharma that is the source of everything is being endangered? Even if it seems not possible (Brahmins returning to the dharma of their birth) it must be shown to be possible in practice: that is the purpose of the institutions called mathas. They must harness all their energies towards the attainment of this goal.

During the years of the freedom struggle some people wondered whether the white man would quit because of Satyagraha. Many things in this world regarded as not being within the realm of possibility have been shown to be possible. It is not for me to say that this (the return of all Brahmins to the Vedic dharma) is not possible; to take such a view would be contrary to our very dharma. It is up to you to make it possible in practice or not to make it possible. All I can do is to keep reminding you of the message of the dharmasastras.

#### *Note & Reference*

1. Non-Brahmin jatis of Tamil Nadu.
2. sreyan svadharmo vigunah para-dharmat svanusthitat  
Svadharme nidhanam sreyah para-dharmo bhayavahah.  
Bhagavadgita, 3.35.

***Candraksharendra Saraswati***

***Source: Hindu Dharma The Universal Way of Life, Bhavan's Book University, Mumbai, pictures: indianhindudharma.blogspot.com***

# Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi

Every evening, under the Babul tree which was the old Kalupur gate, Gandhi, with Anasuya Sarabhai at his side, would talk to the workers, trying to find a solution that satisfied both sides.

Studying the entire issue carefully, Gandhi felt that the workers were justified and advised them to strike work. This proposal was agreed to, but there was also the fear of being dismissed, of having no work, of starving. Gandhi, realizing their fears, decided to fast himself. Both workers and mill owners were aghast. They could not allow Gandhi to fast. After three days the mill owners and workers agreed to an arbitration much to everyone's relief.

Gandhi's statement that action alone is just which does not harm either party in a dispute was fully justified. Some of the workers even composed poetry and praised the event. "May God give great glory and fame to kind-hearted Gandhi and our sister Anasuya, may their names remain before the world till the day of resurrection."

As soon as the Ahmedabad strike was over, another struggle emerged and Gandhi was naturally called to solve it. There was trouble in Kheda, a district near Ahmedabad. Crops had failed because of the monsoon, and the peasants were on the edge of starvation. Yet, the government demanded taxes. Gandhi advised the people, rich and poor, not to pay the tax. For four months the poor and the rich stopped the payment and finally the government gave in.

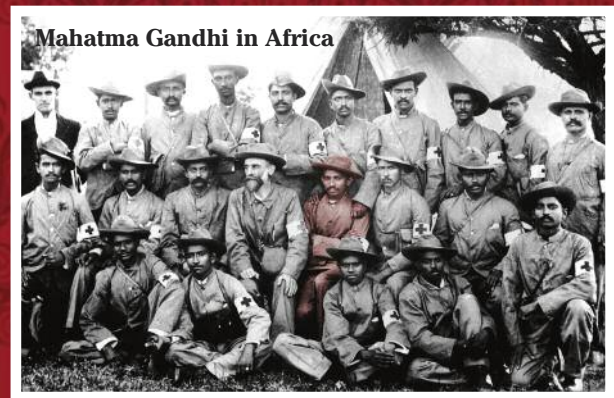
Gandhi's faith in the British still prevailed in spite of all his campaigns. In 1918 the war against Germany began and the British government began a campaign to enlist Indians as soldiers. At a conference on the war in Delhi, Gandhi was invited by the Viceroy of India.

Gandhi, who had been through the experiences of Africa, still had faith in the British sense of justice and called to his countrymen to enlist in the army. As he wrote to his friend Polak, "My recruiting campaign is a religious activity undertaken for the sacred doctrine of ahimsa (non-violence). I have made the discovery that India has lost the power to fight—not the inclination. She must regain the power and then she will deliver to a growing world the doctrine of ahimsa."

Working so hard and travelling constantly he fell seriously ill. He had refused to consume the milk of cows and buffaloes for some time, but his wife Kasturbai persuaded him to try goat's milk, which he agreed to, after much persuasion.



With Gokhale  
in South  
Africa



Mahatma Gandhi in Africa

-To be continued...

***Mrinalini Sarabhai, an internationally recognized dancer and choreographer is a director as well as an author of scholarly books, novels and children's books. She was Chairperson of the Gujarat State Handicrafts and Handloom Development Corporation Ltd and is one of the trustees of the Sarvodaya International Trust, an organization dedicated to promoting the Gandhian ideals of Truth, Non Violence, Peace, Universal Brotherhood and Humanitarian Service. She is closely associated with Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan for the past more than three decades. The Bhavan has published her book 'Sacred Dance of India', 'The Mahatma and the Poetess', a selection of letters exchanged between Gandhiji and Sarojini Naidu edited by Mrinalini Sarabhai.***



***Source: Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi by Mrinalini Sarabhai, Bhavan's Book University, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Mumbai, India***



## Untold Stories of King Bhoja

### Madanarekha Vindicated

"I cannot understand this man's behaviour. If he has developed such a revulsion towards me, what made him extract that promise from me the other day? Apparently, he is turning a somersault. Whatever be the reason for this change, he tries to put on the garb of righteousness. What a lot of trouble have I taken to keep my word? And what does this man talk? How can I possibly tolerate the hypocrisy? I shall now try to provoke him. Then he is likely to come round," Madanarekha thought.

Thinking thus, she addressed the Brahmin boy: "I see it all now. O, poor Brahmin! Since when have you been admitted to the sannyasi order? Have you taken to dieting with a view to reducing your vigour? Has yoga-practice made you repel women? Or, have you got too many girl-friends these days? Perhaps you are afraid of me and fear that my husband will thrash you if he finds out how you have misbehaved? If that is so, my dear friend, I can tell you that I have told my husband everything about you and about my contract with you. Therefore, disabuse yourself of any fear and take me. Hurry up, I have to return as my husband is waiting for me."

The Brahmin boy grew nervous. Thought he:  
"True, I was mad with lust at that time. I realise it now. The effect of that evil mind pursues me.

Otherwise, why should she come here now like a ghost and persist in fulfilling her promise? O, Lord! How shall I put her off?"

Thinking thus, he addressed Madanarekha: "My friend, believe me when I say that I fully realise now that, as my father was your guru, you are my sister. I feel ashamed to own that I tried to misbehave the other day, having been caught in a fit of lust. Even that little mad action is enough sin. I do not know how long its expiation will take. And now you want me to fulfil my part of the obligation, even as you have come here in fulfilment of your pledge. I dread to think of the consequences. Now, will it do if I tell you that your coming to me first by way of keeping your pledge has been sufficient fulfilment so far as I am concerned? And will you accept, it when I say that I completely absolve you from any further obligation? I really congratulate you on your action by which you have vindicated your word. May I tell you sincerely that the people of the land of today and those that come later, will praise you as the model of chastity and truth? May I in the end bless you, as a brother, for your courage and stead-fastness?"

-To be continued...

V.A.K. Ayer

Source: *Untold Stories of King Bhoja*, Bhavan's Book University, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan

## Bhavan's Dimdima

Published by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 'Dimdima' is one of the most renowned magazines for children in India. Dimdima is a Sanskrit word which means 'drumbeat'. In the days of King Ashoka road shows named 'Dimdima' were held to disseminate news of the king's victory.

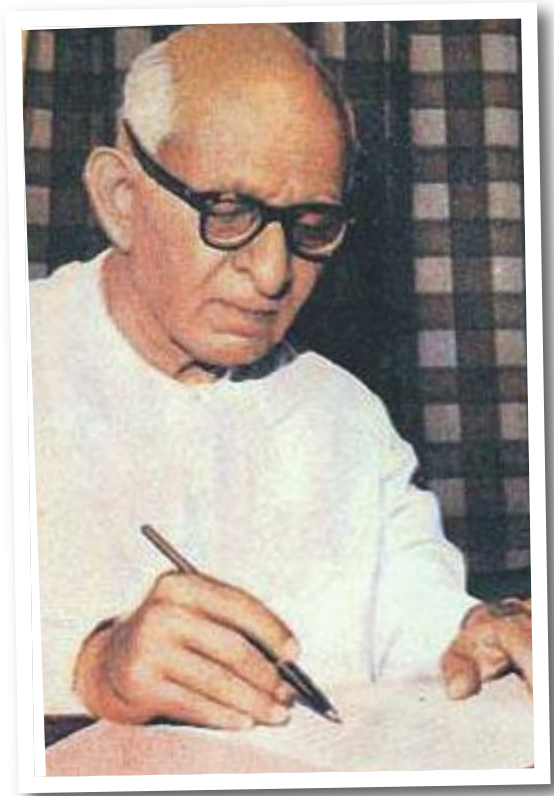
Created by a group of communicators for children including teachers the colourful magazine 'Dimdima' caters to the needs of readers between 8 and 16 yrs. Dimdima must be a part of children's learning environment and when Dimdima is around, it is just a matter of time for them to pick up the reading habit thus empowering them to open the treasure house of knowledge in the coming years. Drawing inspiration from the huge success of the portal, 'www.dimdima.com', Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan started Dimdima magazine to expand its horizons. With its simple and lucid language Dimdima provides infotainment to its young readers. Readers can put on their thinking caps and contribute stories, paintings, poetry and jokes to the magazine.

Available for purchase from:

**Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Australia**, Suite 100 / 515 Kent Street, Sydney NSW 2000  
Ph: 1300 242 826 (1300 BHAVAN) Email: pr@bhavanaustralia.org







# *Kulapativani*

## *Ayurveda*

I cannot imagine any other branch of knowledge which has stood the test of centuries, and yet has suffered so much on account of foreign rule. The attitude of the practitioners of the Western healing art has so upset values that there is more confusion of thought and approach in respect of Ayurveda than of any other subject in India today.

In the past, Ayurveda had a great record of research. Charak, centuries ago, first isolated sugar in diabetes. Bhava Mishra of Kashi, as early as the seventeenth century, studied venereal diseases known as 'Firangi Roga'—the diseases of the Portuguese. It was Trimulbhatt who discovered that arsenic was a remedy for these diseases. Ehrlich used it for the first time only in the twentieth century. Only yesterday 'Sarpagandha', used by Ayurveda for ages for insanity, hysteria and that ailment which we now call blood-pressure, was announced all over the world as a great discovery of modern science: Rauwolfia Serpentina.

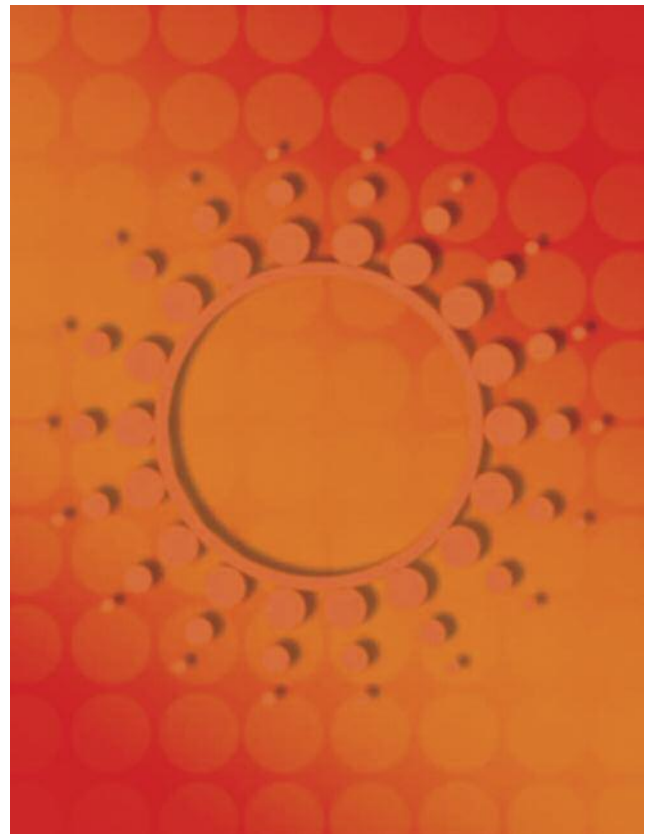
***Dr K.M. Munshi***  
***Founder, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan***

## **The Test of Bhavan's Right to Exist**

The test of Bhavan's right to exist is whether those who work for it in different spheres and in different places and those who study in its many institutions can develop a sense of mission as would enable them to translate the fundamental values, even in a small measure, into their individual life.

Creative vitality of a culture consists in this: whether the 'best' among those who belong to it, however small their number, find self-fulfilment by living up to the fundamental values of our ageless culture.

It must be realized that the history of the world is a story of men who had faith in themselves and in their mission. When an age does not produce men of such faith, its culture is on its way to extinction. The real strength of the Bhavan, therefore, would lie not so much in the number of its buildings or institutions it conducts, nor in the volume of its assets and budgets, nor even in its growing publication, culture and educational activities. It would lie in the character, humility, selflessness and dedicated work of its devoted workers, honorary and stipendiary. They alone can release the regenerative influences, bringing into play the invisible pressure which alone can transform human nature.





*From Bhavan's Journal August 16, 1964  
Reprinted in Bhavan's Journal August 31, 2014*

### *The Devotee*

He is the devotee ....  
Who is jealous of none;  
Who is a fount of mercy;  
Who is without egotism;  
Who is selfless;  
Who treats alike cold and heat,  
happiness and misery;  
Who is ever forgiving;  
Who is always contented;  
Whose resolutions are firm;  
Who has dedicated mind and soul to God;  
Who causes no dread;  
Who is not afraid of others;  
Who is free from exultation, sorrow and fear;  
Who is pure;  
Who is versed in action and yet  
remains unaffected by it;  
Who renounced all fruit, good or bad;  
Who treats friend and foe alike;  
Who is untouched by respect or disrespect;  
Who is not puffed up by praise;  
Who does not go under when  
people speak ill of him;  
Who loves silence and solitude;  
Who has a disciplined reason.

*-Mahatma Gandhi*

### *National Dharma*

I want active co-operation from every child of India to spread the dynamic spirit of Nationality.

A child can never reach youth except when he passes through boyhood. A person can never realise his unity with God, the All, except when unity with the Whole Nation throbs in every fibre of his frame. Let every son of India stand for the service of the Whole, seeing that whole India is embodied in every man.

Almost every town, stream, tree, stone, and animal

is personified and sanctified in India. Is it not high time now to deify the entire Motherland and let every partial manifestation inspire us with devotion to the Whole? Through Prana Pratishtha Hindus endow with flesh and blood the effigy of Durga.

*-Swami Rama Tirtha*

### *Tradition and Progress*

Tradition is like a relay race in which one runner hands on the torch to another, so that the race neither slows down nor pauses. Progress without the back ground and support of tradition would be a risky enterprise, a leap in the dark. As our later beloved Prime Minister has said: A country, especially one with an old civilization has deep roots in the past which cannot be pulled out without great harm, even though many weeds in the form of harmful and out-of-date customs and institutions can and should be pulled out. Even as nature establishes one kind of equilibrium which cannot be disturbed suddenly without untoward results appearing, so also in a community or a country, it is not easy or desirable to upset old ways of living too suddenly.

The attempt to solve a problem in this way might well lead to grave and more difficult problems... We must look to the future and work for it purposely and with faith and vigour, at the same time we must keep our past inheritance and derive sustenance from it." Change is essential but continuity is also necessary. The future has to be built on the foundations laid in the past and the present. To deny the past and break with it completely is to uproot ourselves, and, sapless, dry up.

*-His Eminence Cardinal Valerian Gracias*

◀ ◀ ◀ *Flashback*



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*International Centre of Non-Violence Australia*

[www.nonviolence.org.au](http://www.nonviolence.org.au)

# NONVIOLENCE MONTH

## 2 October - 1 November 2014

It will be an Australia-wide event in collaboration with the major universities in every major City - Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Brisbane, Perth, Hobart, Darwin.

Activities including educational lectures/workshops, talking to prison inmates, Police personnel, some musical and sports activities.

We seek your support / active participation preferably in the following manner:

**Mark any of your proposed activities**

**during the month of October as part of the Nonviolence Month**

**Hold a lecture series on educating the concept of nonviolence and its implementation in day to day life in any university / institution in Australia**

**Dedicate any literary / sports activities at any of the universities / institutions to promotion of the cause of Nonviolence**

**Introduction to any of your high profile peace partners in the manner suitable/ appropriate to you.**



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