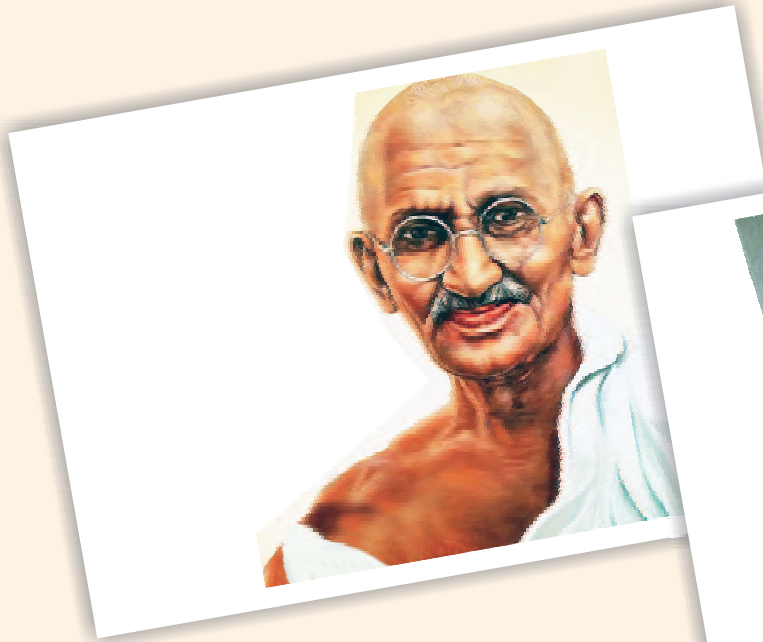


# Bhavan Australia

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

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



voice choice equal citizens democracy  
engagement inclusive power  
freedom elections  
rights fair majority representation  
responsibilities important



Life | Literature | Culture

January / February 2014 | Vol 11 No. 7 & 8 | Issn 1449 - 3551

# Holy & Wise

## ***Ekam Sad vipra bahuda vadanti***

One alone exists, Sages call it by various names.

*An error does not become truth by reason of multiplied propagation, nor does truth become error because nobody sees it. Truth stands, even if there be no public support. It is self-sustained.*

***-Mahatma Gandhi***

*Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable... Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering, and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals.*

***-Martin Luther King, Jr.***



*Our supreme duty is to advance toward freedom—physical, mental, and spiritual—and help others to do so.*

***-Swami Vivekananda***

*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.*

***-Madiba Nelson Mandela***

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

***-Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose***





## *Conscience, Body and Mind*

When we say, “I” am so and so, the “I” refers not to the body or mind. It refers to the quantum of consciousness that resides both in mind and body. Mind and body, therefore, are mere vehicles through which the “I” expresses itself. At best, both of them together only provide the “I” with a physical identity. Even the slightest dysfunction or imbalance in either of them will result in a distorted expression by the “I” in us.

Mind, as well as the body, in order to be effective and adept, require infusion of right, constructive in-puts in the case of the mind and right food in the case of the body. Both also require adequate exercise and training.

During infancy, childhood and teenage, at least till the arrival of adulthood, in order to achieve progressive development, one needs proper guidance and help.

These essential ingredients are made available generally by parents in the first place or even by an older sibling and thereafter by the teachers in school.

Over and above that, there is the overwhelming and overpowering influence of environment and circumstances which plays a very pivotal role in moulding our consciousness and value system.

Paradoxically however, there are innumerable and irrefutable instances which demonstrate how persons born under extremely inimical

circumstances and having grown up in uncongenial and hostile environment, triumphantly emerging not merely as successful individuals wielding authority and power but also as persons who are content, tranquil and at peace with the world and themselves.

On the other hand, we also find persons born in homes of great affluence and luxury and provided with every conceivable opportunity, degenerating into niggardly personalities with insensitive traits, totally devoid of empathy or conscience.

While every child who emerges from its mother’s womb is endowed with very similar capabilities to eventually evolve higher and still higher, only those among them who also possess a will to remain determined and steadfast, triumph over the adverse circumstances by catching the bull by the horn. In other words, it is a matter of either triumphing or succumbing and, in both cases, it is due to the presence or absence of will to succeed. To enable consciousness to have free access to the inexhaustible reservoir of Nature, we have to keep both the mind and body in perfect health, harmony and in resonance with each other.

Then and then alone it can whip up stamina and strength to triumph over circumstances and environment no matter how formidable and inimical the situations may be.

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



# *Essence of Democracy*

On 26 January the modern democracy-Australia is celebrating its National Day and world's largest democracy-India is celebrating its Republic Day. 30 January is also the Remembrance Day being Mahatma Gandhi's Martyr Day.

I thought it would be appropriate to reflect the all-time relevant views of Mahatma Gandhi on democracy.

## **The Test**

The truest test of democracy is in the ability of anyone to act as he likes, so long as he does not injure the life or property of anyone else. It is impossible to control public morals by hooliganism. (Young India (YI), 1-8-1920, p. 4)

The spirit of democracy is not a mechanical thing to be adjusted by abolition of forms. It requires change of the heart..... [It] requires the inculcation of the spirit of brotherhood.... (YI, 8-12-1920, p. 3)

Democracy must in essence ... mean the art and science of mobilizing the entire physical, economic and spiritual resources of all the various sections of the people in the service of the common good of all. (Harijan (H), 27-5-1939, p. 143)

## **Discipline**

The highest form of freedom carries with it the greatest measure of discipline and humility. Freedom that comes from discipline and humility cannot be denied; unbridled license is a sign of vulgarity injurious alike to self and one's neighbours. (YI, 3-6-1926, p. 203)

Democracy disciplined and enlightened is the finest thing in the world. A democracy prejudiced, ignorant, superstitious, will land itself in chaos and may be self-destroyed. (YI, 30-7-1931, p. 199)

## **Responsibility of Individual**

In true democracy every man and woman is taught to think for himself or herself. How this real revolution can be brought about I do not know except that every reform, like charity must begin at home. (H, 14-7-1946, p. 220)

In democracy, the individual will is government and limited by the social will which is the State, which is government by and for democracy. If every individual takes the law into his own hands, there is no State. It becomes anarchy, i.e., absence of social law or State, that way lies destruction of liberty. Therefore, you should subdue your anger and let the State secure justice. (H, 28-9-1947, p. 350)

A born democrat is a born disciplinarian. Democracy comes naturally to him who is habituated normally to yield willing obedience to all laws, human or divine.... Let those who are ambitious to serve democracy qualify

Democracy will break under the strain of apron strings. It can exist only on trust. (H, 16-11-1947, p. 409)

Capital exploits the labour of a few to multiply itself. The sum total of the labour of the co-ops, wisely realized, automatically increases the wealth of the co-ops, therein lies true democracy, true Panchayat Raj. (H, 28-12-1947, p. 488)

## **Representation in Democracy**

I hold it to be an utter delusion to believe that a large number of delegates is in any way a help to the better conduct of business, or that it safeguards the principle of democracy. Fifteen hundred delegates, jealous of the interests of the people, broad-minded and truthful, would any day be a better safeguard for democracy for democracy than six thousand irresponsible men chosen anyhow. To safeguard democracy the people must have a keen sense of independence, self-respect and their oneness, and should insist on choosing as their representatives only such persons as are good and true. (A, p. 369)

The very essence of democracy is that every person represents all the varied interests which compose the nation. It is true that it does not exclude and should not exclude special representation of special interests, but such representation is not its test. It is a sign of its imperfection. (H, 22-4-1939, p. 99)

Claiming the right of free opinion and free action as we do, we must extend the same to others. The rule of majority, when it becomes coercive, is as intolerable as that of a bureaucratic minority. We must patiently try to bring round the minority to our view by gentle persuasion and argument. (YI, 26-1-1922, p. 54)

A living faith cannot be manufactured by the rule of majority. (YI, 16-3-1922, p. 161)

## Intolerance

If we want to cultivate a true spirit of democracy, we cannot afford to be intolerant. Intolerance betrays want of faith in one's cause. (YI, 2-2-1921, p. 33)

I have repeatedly observed that no school of thought can claim a monopoly of right judgment. We are all liable to err and are often obliged to revise our judgments. In a vast country like this, there must be room for all schools of honest thought. And the least, therefore, that we owe to ourselves as to others is to try to understand the opponent's view-point and, if we cannot accept it, respect it as fully as we expect him to respect ours. It is one of the indispensable tests of a healthy public life and, therefore fitness for Swaraj. If we have no charity, and no tolerance, we shall never settle our differences amicably and must, therefore, always submit to the arbitration of a third party, i.e., to foreign domination. (YI, 17-4-1924, p. 130)

Evolution of democracy is not possible if we are not prepared to hear the other side. We shut the doors of reason when we refuse to listen to our opponents or, having listened, make fun of them. If intolerance becomes a habit, we run the risk of missing the truth. Whilst with the limits that nature has put upon our understanding, we must act fearlessly according to the light vouchsafed to us, we must always keep an open mind and be ever ready to find that what we believed to be truth was, after all, untruth. This openness of mind strengthens the truth in us and removes the cross from it if there is any. (H, 31-5-1942, p. 172)

Democracy can only represent the average, if not less than the average. Therefore, a democratic institution to be pure has to attend to the all-round education of the humblest and the lowest. It must take in its sweep all superstition and social abuse. In such a society there will be no Christian and non-Christian; there will be no distinction of sex. (H, 5-5-1946, p. 24)

What is really needed to make democracy function is not knowledge of facts but right education. (H, 29-9-1946, p. 334)

Healthy public opinion has an influence of which we have not realized the full significance.... Public opinion becomes intolerable when it becomes violent and aggressive. (YI, 7-5-1931, p. 103)

## Nature of Power

Possession of power makes men blind and deaf, they cannot see things which are under their very nose and cannot hear things which invade their ears. There is thus no knowing what power-intoxicated government may not do. So...patriotic men ought to be prepared for death, imprisonment and similar eventualities. (YI, 13-10-1921, p. 327)

Power that comes from service faithfully rendered ennobles. Power that is sought in the name of service and can only be obtained by a majority of votes is a delusion and a snare to be avoided... (YI, 11-9-1924, p. 301)

Power is of two kinds. One is obtained by the fear of punishment and the other by arts of love. Power based on love is a thousand times more effective and permanent than the one derived from fear of punishment. (YI, 8-1-1925, p. 15)

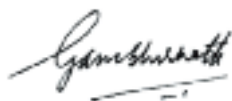
To me political power is not an end but one of the means of enabling people to better their condition in every department of life. Political power means capacity to regulate national life through national representatives. If national life becomes so perfect as to become self-regulated, no representation becomes necessary. There is then a state of enlightened anarchy. In such a state every one is his own ruler. He rules himself in such a manner that he is never a hindrance to his neighbour. In the ideal state, therefore, there is no political power because there is no state. but the ideal is never fully realized in life. Hence the classical statement of Thoreau that that government is best which governs the least. (YI, 2-1-1937, p. 162)

## Democracy and Nonviolence

Democracy and nonviolence can go together. The states that are today nominally democratic have either to become frankly totalitarian or, if they are to become truly democratic, they must become courageously non-violent. It is a blasphemy to say that non-violence can only be practiced by individuals and never by nations which are composed of individuals. (H, 12-11-1938, p. 328)

The true democrat is he who with purely non-violent means defends his liberty and, therefore, his country's and ultimately that of the whole of mankind. (H, 15-4-1939, p. 90)

*Source: The Mind of Mahatma Gandhi, www.mkgandhi.org*



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



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PRIME MINISTER

## AUSTRALIA DAY MESSAGE 2014

Today, at community breakfasts and BBQs, flag raisings and citizenship ceremonies, in backyards and on beaches, millions of our citizens will celebrate being Australian.

While Australia Day formally marks the anniversary of the arrival of the First Fleet, we celebrate something richer and deeper. We celebrate the nation and people we have become.

We are the grateful inheritors of two rich strands of history: a British heritage and an Aboriginal one. Along with the millions of settlers from around the world who have made their home in Australia since 1788, we have become one people sharing the one land. We are fulfilling the aspiration put forward in the opening of the Australian Constitution: 'that the people....have agreed to unite in one indissoluble Federal Commonwealth'.

The twenty three million of us have found unity in our diversity, respect in our differences and have built a modern nation on the idea that anyone can get ahead provided they are prepared to "have a go".

This Australia Day, we welcome thousands of new Australian citizens who have made the choice to "join our team". It is a fitting day to celebrate our new citizens as it was on 26 January 1788 that Australia's first modern migrants arrived.

Like the millions who have given their allegiance to Australia in the past, we know our newest citizens will play their part in building our country and making it their home.

We are a great country and a great people. We believe in work, family, community; doing things for love, not just money; and living our ideals.

This year marks the start of the commemorations to recognise the Centenary of Anzac. I hope all Australians will participate in the events that will take place across Australia.

We will also begin a national conversation about amending our Constitution to recognise Aboriginal peoples as the first Australians. This should be another unifying moment in the history of our country.

On this day and every day, we celebrate the history that has made us who we are; the country that we love and the values and institutions that underpin it.

I wish all Australians a happy Australia Day!

**The Hon Tony Abbott MP**  
**Prime Minister of Australia**





# AUSTRALIA DAY 2014

## Message from the Minister for Citizenship and Communities

As Minister for Citizenship and Communities and Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, I am proud to have the opportunity to wish everyone in New South Wales a happy Australia Day.

This Sunday will represent different things to many different people.

It is a time to recognise and respect our proud Aboriginal brothers and sisters, the first Australians, and acknowledge their Elders past, present and future. It is also a time to acknowledge the contribution of our multicultural communities.

The great diversity of our people makes us a stronger nation. Our outer strength is our diversity; our inner strength in our Australian unity.

For many 26 January will be a day of excitement, as they make their way to their local Town Hall to make the solemn pledge to become an Australian citizen. They may have been born abroad, but today they commit themselves to Australia, with all its responsibilities and privileges.

We may cast our eyes to the Australian flag and be reminded of the contribution of those who have fought and died for our freedom abroad.

We may also think of the thousands of volunteers who give their time to make our communities better, in particular those brave men and women who battled the devastating bushfires that ravaged our Blue Mountains communities late last year.

Australia Day is a time to think about the type of society we would like to leave for the next generation of Australians. It is also an opportunity to thank our older generations for passing on their wisdom and knowledge to our youth.

As we celebrate Australia Day, I encourage you to reflect on the things that make you proud to be Australian. We need to nurture those things that make us great. We can all make a valuable contribution to our country's prosperous future.

Again, I wish everyone in New South Wales a safe and happy Australia Day.



**Hon Victor Dominello MP**  
**Minister for Citizenship and Communities**





THE HON BILL SHORTEN MP  
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION  
MEMBER FOR MARIBYRNONG



MICHELLE ROWLAND MP  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR  
CITIZENSHIP AND  
MULTICULTURALISM  
MEMBER FOR GREENWAY

## THE REPUBLIC DAY OF INDIA

On behalf of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party, we send our greetings to all Australians celebrating The Republic Day of India.

The Republic Day of India holds great significance for the Indian-Australian community, both here and in the Sub-Continent.

Thanks to the efforts of individuals such as the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, India was able to carve its own destiny which led to the creation of the world's largest democracy.

Australia and India share many things: a belief in liberal democracy; a reverence for the natural beauty of our rich and diverse landscapes; a passion for education as the great transformer and, of course, this national holiday.

But the most important thing we share is our people-to-people relationships.

The growing Indian influence in Australia is a phenomenon which we welcome and celebrate. Indeed, the Indian diaspora is one of the great success stories of Australian immigration and multiculturalism.

As we move further into the Asian Century, our collective prosperity and success are becoming more intertwined and we must continue to progress the relationship between our countries for our mutual benefit. This is why Labor championed the Asian Century White Paper with a focus on developing priority languages such as Hindi.

On the eve of Ms Rowland's visit to India, we thank you for your valuable contribution to the Australian community and send our best wishes to your families both here and abroad, and especially to your children.



From the earliest white settlement at the end of the 18th century, Australians have striven to celebrate a national day, and in so doing, define what it means to be Australian. January 26 has traditionally marked the landing of Captain Arthur Phillip at Port Jackson in present-day Sydney.

### **A National Day**

Australia Day has evolved from a small commemorative New South Wales holiday into a major national celebration. It remains the most inclusive celebration of a national day in Australia, expressing the national diversity which has become an important part of the Australian national character. Australia Day today celebrates diversity and tolerance in Australian society. It embraces multicultural Australia, including all ethnic backgrounds, racial differences and political viewpoints.

### **History**

#### **1788 to 1888**

26 January 1788 saw Captain Arthur Phillip take ‘formal possession’ of the Colony of New South Wales. Phillip also became Governor of the colony, which was founded on the harsh grounds at Port Jackson. Slowly, a modern British society, very much based on the distinctions between convicts and settlers, developed. The fledgling colony very soon began to mark the anniversary of 26 January 1788 with formal dinners and informal celebrations. 26 January 1808, the ‘anniversary of the foundation of the colony’ was observed in the traditional manner with ‘drinking and merriment’.

By 1820, Australia was beginning to look prosperous and sentiments of Australian patriotism were being expressed at gatherings of ex-convicts. The sense of belonging to a new nation must have been encouraged in 1817 when Governor Macquarie recommended the adoption of the name ‘Australia’ for the entire continent instead of New Holland.

#### **1889 to 1938**

In 1871 the Australian Natives’ Association (ANA) had been formed in Victoria. This was the first Australian Friendly Society and its motto was

Advance Australia. The group, which had particular influence in the period between the 1890s to around 1914, had strong nationalistic aspirations. In Victoria, ANA Day was celebrated on the 26 January.

#### **1939 to 1988**

The Second World War shifted the focus of Australians from Australia Day to the more sombre ANZAC day. In the years leading up to war, and even during the war, the Australian Natives Association had been working patiently towards the unified naming and dating of national day. In 1946, following their concerted efforts and with the support of similar movements, the Commonwealth Government and all States and Territories finally agreed to observe the same national day—26 January—and to call that day Australia Day.

#### **1989 to Present**

After the 1988 Bicentennial celebrations, the expectation was that the Australian public would not continue to observe Australia Day in such style and with such import. Despite this lack of optimism, each year since 1988 Australia Day celebrations across the country have continued to grow in number and stature and ceremonies have become increasingly appealing to a broad community audience.

### **Celebrations**

Australia Day has become a community day. There are still formal ceremonies throughout the country—flag raising, citizenship ceremonies and the presentation of important community awards such as Citizen and Young Citizen of the Year, but 26 January has become much more for the average Australian. Celebrations now include a strong festive aspect with special events encouraging the participation of the entire family and all members of a community. Australia Day Committees involve their ethnic and indigenous communities, service clubs, sporting and cultural organisations while local government has become increasingly supportive.

### **Invasion Day—The Aboriginal Perspective of Australia Day**

In contrast, Aboriginal people mourn their history and call it ‘Invasion Day’. To many Aboriginal people there is little to celebrate and it is a commemoration of a deep loss. Loss of their sovereign rights to their land, loss of family, loss of the right to practice their culture. The aboriginal people call it ‘Invasion Day’, ‘Day of Mourning’, ‘Survival Day’ or, since 2006, ‘Aboriginal Sovereignty Day’.

**Source:** [www.australiaday.com.au](http://www.australiaday.com.au),  
[www.aiatsis.gov.au](http://www.aiatsis.gov.au)

# Indian Republic Day

## 26 January

Republic Day is one of the greatest national celebrations observed throughout the country on January 26 every year. The country became a sovereign democratic republic with a written constitution and an elected parliament.

At the time of independence from the British rule on 15th August 1947, there were 565 Princely States, big and small, ruled by powerful sovereigns who were protected by treaties of alliance with the British Crown. Without bringing them together, the fundamental unity of the country was not possible. This unification was accomplished by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, whose statesmanship helped to integrate the country into one nation. In a little less than 2 years, all the princely States became a part of the Republic of India.

It was on this day of 26th January in 1927 that the Indian National Congress (INC), then fighting its non-violent war for freedom, voted for complete independence as against 'dominion status'. Members of the INC took the pledge to work towards a 'sovereign democratic republic' of India.

## Celebrations

One of the three national holidays in India, Republic Day is celebrated with great pomp and show throughout the nation each year. Preparations begin almost a month before for the actual day. The day is honored with great joy, pride and vigor across the country as India was also declared a sovereign, democratic and republic state on this very day. The day calls in for grand celebrations, which are evident from the massive parades, cultural programs, recitation of patriotic poems and singing and playing of patriotic songs throughout. Though every Indian state holds its celebrations, but the capital city of New Delhi witnesses a grand parade at India Gate, near the President's Palace.

## Republic Day Parade

The Prime Minister lays a floral wreath at the Amar Jawan Jyoti early in the morning to honor the soldiers who sacrificed their lives for the nation. A two minute silence is observed in their memory and the Prime Minister moves ahead to the main

dais at Rajpath. The President joins there along with the Chief Guest and other dignitaries. The Chief Guest is usually the Head of State or Government from a foreign nation. The President hoists the flag and soon, the National Anthem is played. This is followed by a 21 gun salute. All the major government buildings are beautifully illuminated with lights every evening from 26th to 29th January. On the third day after Republic Day, that is 29th, 'Beating the Retreat' ceremony is conducted consisting of massed bands marching to the popular tunes. The Drummer's Call follows wherein the drummers give solo performances. Thereafter, the Bugle Call follows which is characterized by the band master walking up to the President requesting to take the bands away. This marks the end of the closing ceremony of Republic Day. At 6 pm, the buglers sound the retreat and the National Flag is lowered. With this, the Republic Day celebrations are formally ended.

The patriotic fervor of the people on this day brings the whole country together even in her essential diversity. Every part of the country is represented in occasion.

## Origin of India

The official name India is derived from Sindhu, the historic local appellation for the river Indus and is the most internationally recognisable of the country. The Constitution of India and general usage also recognises Bharat as the other official name of equal status. Bharat comes from the name of an ancient Hindu king and means seeker of knowledge. The third name is Hindustan, meaning land of the Hindus (where Hindu refers to those who dwell to the right of the Indus/Sindhu river) used from the Mughal times onwards.

India, with 5000+ year old History is a civilization united by its diversity, richness of culture, the glory of past, the turbulences and triumphs, the landmarks of each era, the achievements of a change, and the legacy of a regime. India is an amazing discovery and its history is a unique tale of the past.

**Source: [www.festivals.iloveindia.com](http://www.festivals.iloveindia.com),  
[www.festivals.tajonline.com](http://www.festivals.tajonline.com),  
[www.indiabook.com](http://www.indiabook.com)**

# *Gandhi's Granddaughter remembers Mandela at Curtin*

Discrimination and oppression existed in all forms; races were segregated, social classes were divided and extreme poverty was the norm for the majority, this was life in the Apartheid period in South Africa. This unrest sparked an uprising.

Ms Ela Gandhi, granddaughter of peace activist Mohandas 'Mahatma' Gandhi, was part of this uprising; she worked alongside Nelson Mandela in the anti-Apartheid movement and continues her activism work today.

Ms Gandhi was in Perth to speak at Curtin University for a human rights day event to celebrate the tenth anniversary for the Curtin Centre for Human Rights Education.

The event included national and international speakers who spoke about human rights issues prevalent in the world today.

Ms Gandhi spoke about her theory of active participation by the people in a democracy.

"What we are seeing is that most people do not take an interest in social issues unless it personally involves them," Ms Gandhi said.

"An educated, informed and interested population can contribute meaningfully to the debate."

In 1975 Ms Gandhi was placed under house arrest for five years and banned from activism for nine years.

She continued her activism work underground, despite having her son killed and friends imprisoned for being politically involved. She spoke about her experiences as an activist and expressed fond memories of working alongside colleague and friend the late Mr Mandela.

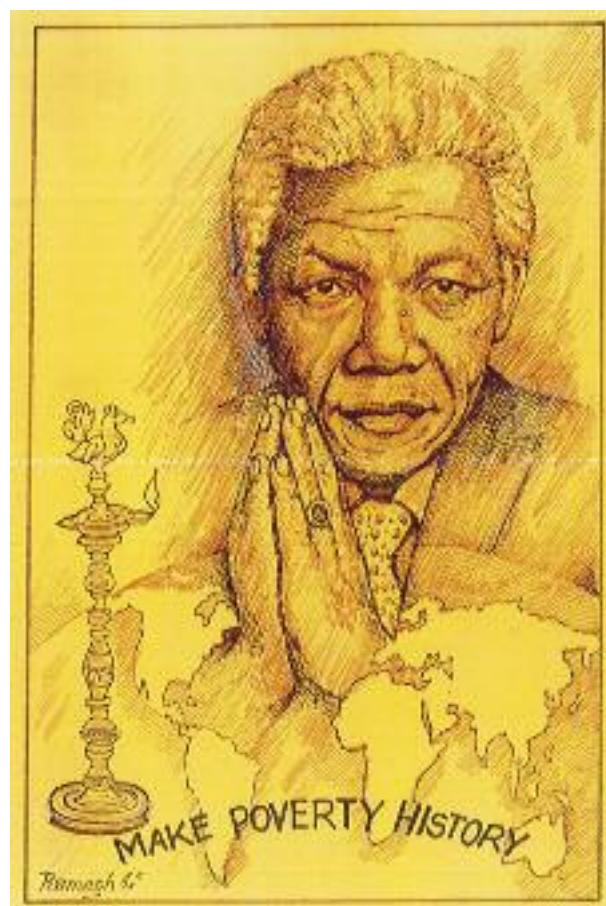
"People were imprisoned and some of them were even killed by the repressive system," Ms Gandhi said.

"It was hard to live in that kind of a system, but it was challenging for us to continue the struggle."

Ms Gandhi's relationship with Mr Mandela started



**Ela Gandhi speaking at Curtin's Human Rights Day Event for 2013**





when she went to visit him in prison with the United Democratic Front of Delegations before his release in 1990.

Ms Gandhi said when she went to see Mr Mandela she was surprised at how optimistic he was despite being imprisoned.

“He told us that love was the key for a democratic government, and it’s only when you learn to love, that you can bring about this change,” she said.

“We were very influenced by his teachings, he was our hero, “My grandfather was the same, my son was killed during Apartheid, and I have to think if I am confronted by the perpetrator, I would forgive and extend a hand of friendship so that that person can transform,” she said.

Ms Gandhi said she was delighted with the work that had been done at the Curtin Centre for Human Rights Education.

“One of the reasons why I feel the model of the centre works is because it is situated in humanities,” she said.

“It is the ideal model and should be implemented by other universities.”  
The event finalised with the audience asking Ms Gandhi questions.



A young girl raised her hand and asked “What is it like being Gandhi’s granddaughter?”

Ms Gandhi laughed and replied, “I feel very privileged to have been born in this family.

“I am just a normal person and I started small, it all depends on the passion that you have.”

**Story: Jessica Ibacache,  
Photography: Gaylene Galardi**

**Source: [www.news.curtin.edu.au](http://www.news.curtin.edu.au)**

**Portrait of Nelson Mandela handcrafted  
by Ramesh Alandkar.**

# *Kashmir Issue*

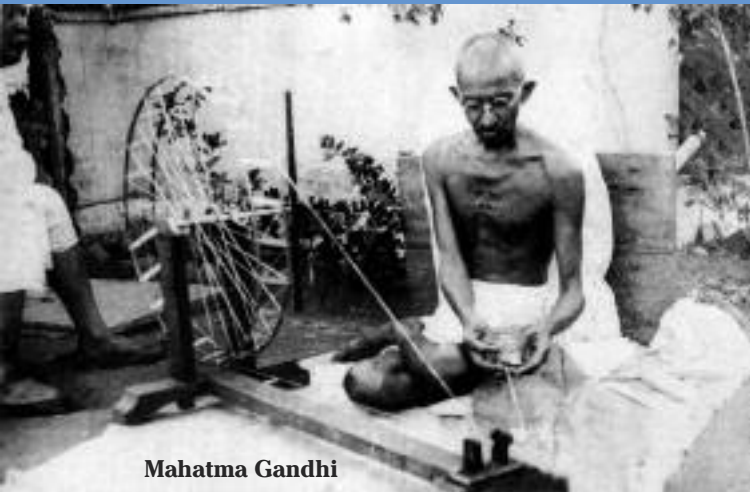
Today there is talk of war everywhere. Everyone fears a war breaking out between the two countries. If that happens it will be a calamity both for India and for Pakistan. India has written to the U.N. because whenever there is a fear of conflict anywhere the U.N. is asked to promote a settlement and to stop fighting from breaking out. India therefore wrote to the U.N.O. however trivial the issue may appear to be, it could lead to a war between the two countries. It is a long memorandum and it has been cabled. Pakistan's leaders Zafrullah Khan and Liaquat Ali Khan have since issued long statements. I would take leave to say that their argument does not appeal to me. You may ask if I approve of the Union Government approaching the U.N.O.

I may say that I both approve and do not approve of what they did. I approve of it, because after all what else are they to do? They are convinced that what they are doing is right. If there are raids from outside the frontier of Kashmir, the obvious conclusion is that it must be with the connivance of Pakistan. Pakistan can deny it. But the denial does not settle the matter. Kashmir has acceded the accession upon certain conditions. If Pakistan harasses Kashmir and if Sheikh Abdullah who is the leader of Kashmir asks the Indian Union for help, the latter is bound to send help. Such help therefore was sent to Kashmir. At the same time Pakistan is being requested to get out of Kashmir and to arrive at a settlement with India over the question through bilateral negotiations. If no settlement can be reached in this way then a war is inevitable.

It is to avoid the possibility of war that the Union Government has taken the step it did. Whether they are right in doing so or not God alone knows.

Whatever might have been the attitude of Pakistan, if I had my way I would have invited Pakistan's representatives to India and we could have met, discussed the matter and worked out some settlement. They keep saying that they want an amicable settlement but they do nothing to create the conditions for such a settlement. I shall therefore humbly say to the responsible leaders of Pakistan that though we are now two countries—which is a thing I never wanted—we should at least try to arrive at an agreement so that we could live as peaceful neighbors. Let us grant for the sake of argument that all Indians are bad, but Pakistan at least is a new-born nation which has more ever come into being in the name of religion and it should at least keep itself clean. But they themselves make no such claim. It is not their argument that Muslims have committed no atrocities in Pakistan.

I shall therefore suggest that it is now their duty, as far as possible, to arrive at an amicable understanding with India and live in harmony with her. Mistakes were made on both sides. Of this I have no doubt. But this does not mean that we should persist in those mistakes, for then in the end we shall only destroy ourselves in a war and the whole of the sub-continent will pass into the hands of some third power. That will be the worst imaginable fate for us. I shudder to think of it. Therefore the two Dominions should come together with God as witness and find a settlement. The matter is now before the U.N.O. It cannot be withdrawn from there. But if India and Pakistan come to a settlement the big powers in the U.N.O. will have to endorse that settlement. They will not object to the settlement. They themselves can only say that they will do their best to see that the two countries arrive at an understanding through mutual discussions.



**Mahatma Gandhi**

Let us pray to God is to grant that we may either learn to live in amity with each other or if we must light to let us fight to the very end. That may be folly but sooner or later it will purify us. Now a few words about Delhi. I came to know of the incidents which took place last evening through Brijkishan. I had gone to the Camp for the evening prayer. I came away after the prayer but he had stayed over to talk to the people in the Camp. There are some Muslim houses at as little distance from the Camp. About four or five hundred inmates of the Camp mostly women and children but also some men—issued out of the Camp to take possession of the houses.

I am told they did not indulge in any kind of violence. Some of the houses were vacant. Some were occupied by the owners. They tried to take possession even of the latter. The police were near at hand. They immediately went to the spot and brought the situation under control at about 90' clock according to the information I have. The police have stayed on there. I understand they had to use tear gas. Tear gas does not kill but it can be pretty painful. I am told that something has happened today again.

All I can say is that is a matter of great shame for us. Have not the refugees learnt even from their immense suffering that they have to exercise some restraint? It is highly improper to go and occupy other people's houses. It is for the Government to find them shelter or whatever else their need. Today the Government is our own. But if we defy our own Government and defy the police and forcibly occupy houses the Government is not likely to continue for long. It is still worse that such things should happen in the capital city of India where there are so many ambassadors from all over the world. Do we want to show them the spectacle of people occupying what-ever they can?

It is all the more regrettable that women and children were used as a shield. It is inhuman. It is like Muslim rulers keeping a herd of cows in the vanguard of their armies to make sure that the Hindus would not fight. It is uncivilized, barbaric behavior. It is still more barbaric to put women and children in front to provide against the police making a lathi charge. It is abuse of womanhood. I must humbly ask all the refugees—women and children—not to behave in this way. Let them settle down. If they don't, then apart from a war between Indian and Pakistan, we may kill ourselves in mutual strife. We may lose Delhi and make ourselves the laughing-stock of the world. If we want to keep India a free country, we must stop the things that are at present going on.

***-Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi***

***(Speech At The Prayer Meeting on 4th January 1948)***

***Source: Collected works-Vol. 90, Pp 356-58, [www.mkgandhi.org](http://www.mkgandhi.org)***



# *Dr. Kanhaiyalal Maneklal Munshi (KM Munshi)*

## **Award Or No, Munshiji is A Bharat Ratna**

The past twelve months have been eventful and memorable for Bhavanites all over India and across continents.

Throughout the year, Bhavan Kendras organised functions, cultural festivals and educational programmes as part of the twin anniversaries marking the Platinum Jubilee of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan and the 125th Birth year of Kulapati K.M. Munshi, who founded the institution ten years before independence anticipating the kind of cultural degeneration that would follow freedom from foreign yoke and the need to prevent the eventuality.

As one of the tallest leaders of independent India in its early years—along with Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Patel—Kulapati Munshi played several roles as litterateur, social reformer, educationist, administrator, Union Minister besides much else. But unarguably, his greatest act of foresight and service to the country was the founding of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan as an institution to preserve and promote the country's priceless heritage and the legacy of the new nation's old cultural and spiritual traditions. He laid a firm foundation for Bhavan to grow into an institution embodying all that is best in India's history, culture and fine arts. Bhavan's educational institutions numbering over a 100 have been centres of excellence at very affordable fees, serving children from the middle and lower classes of society.

There can be only one reason why Kulapati Munshi has not been awarded Bharat Ratna—the sheer lack of a sense of history among the ruling classes that dominated politics for the past three decades and more.

Indian establishment has to atone this sin of negligence by according the highest civilian honour to this immortal statesman and cultural vanguard.

The absence of qualified and worthy political leadership to judge the credentials of a person like Munshi should not deprive award from reflecting the honour at Kulapati Munshi more than deserved.

As once averred in this column, the fact that he is a shining Ratna in the pantheon of Indian



**Dr. Kanhaiyalal Maneklal Munshi**

democracy's greatest architects and builders, should be duly acknowledged by the nation.

The world is about to enter a new year after spending a comparative year of peace and crisis-free political and economic progress.

India will have a new national government a few months from now; for the first time the prospect of regional parties and political players playing a major role in the formation of a national government, looms large.

But Indian democracy has proved that diversity is no antithesis of unity. The nation continues to defy doom-sayers' prophecy of India's imminent disintegration.

## ***K.M. Munshi: An Icon for a New Generation of Politicians***

When I read in the papers that 50 per cent of Lok Sabha members and 17 per cent of Rajya Sabha have criminal cases against them and another 16 per cent have "serious criminal cases" against them, I keep wondering of those great days in pre-independence times when to be a people's representative was an honour and among them were some of the best and brightest who fought for



freedom, many giving up their careers. When I think of them my mind automatically focuses on one who has long been one of my own favourites.

Kanhaiyalal Maneklal Munshi (1887-1971), one of the greatest of his generation, established the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan in November 1938 with the blessings of Mahatma Gandhi, seven years prior to Independence; today it is the only organisation which can boast of 119 Kendras (branches) and over 350 constituent institutions that are engaged either in teaching or researching a range of subjects from science, arts, commerce, communication, engineering, management, yoga, karate, to technology, Ayurveda, chartered accountancy, personality development, Vedas and Upanishads, tribal culture, even tailoring! (1) Performing Arts (Dance, Music, Drama...), (2) Social Service (Widow Empowerment Centre in Kochi, Hospital for poor in Secunderabad and several other such activities).

The Bhavan must be the one of its kind in the world. If I am referring to the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan today, I have a special reason; it is celebrating its Platinum Jubilee, truly a tribute to its founder, Munshiji, lawyer, scholar, patriot, educationist and an out-of-the box thinker, if ever there was one!

A Gandhian, he had given up his lucrative career as a lawyer to be a freedom fighter and understandably suffered imprisonment. Broad-minded, the motto he chose for the Bhavan's Journal reflects his catholicity: *Aa no bhadrahratavoyantuviswataha* (Let noble thoughts come to us from all sides). One of the earliest institutions Munshiji set up after the establishment of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan was the Mumbadevi Adarsh Sanskrit Mahavidyalaya in 1939. Then came the Munglal Goenka Institute of Post-Graduate Studies & Research (1939), the Sanskrit Vishwa Parishad (1951) and the Saral Sanskrit Pariksha Vibhag (1952).

Munshi looked upon Indian culture as essentially Sanskritic and held that "Sanskrit is indispensable to the intellectual and spiritual growth of India". A thinker in his own right, he had differences with none other than Mahatma Gandhi himself and Jawaharlal Nehru, especially with Nehru who, as the then Prime Minister of India smelt 'Hindu revivalism' in Munshiji's attempts at renovating the decrepit Somnath Temple in Gujarat.

To him, Munshiji wrote frankly; "It is my faith in our past which has given me the strength to work in the present and to look forward to the future".

But Munshiji was no Hindu fundamentalist. To him, as Sardar K.M. Panikkar noted, "tradition of tolerance added to the richness and variety of

Indian life". At the Bhavan, every public meeting began with prayers from Hindu, Muslim and Christian texts. To him, the world was one family—*vasudaivakutumbakam*. As the Bhavan's Kulapati, he led from the front. As a legal expert, his contribution to the framing of the Indian Constitution was indeed notable.

He wrote several volumes. His classic work *Krishnavatara* published in seven long volumes displayed his deep scholarship. His historic work *Jay Somnath* won him followers throughout Gujarat. His novel *Prithvi Vallabh* was made into a movie of the same name twice. One was directed by Sohrab Modi. It was to become controversial for showing excessive sex and violence and one was wanted everywhere.

Nehru appointed him Governor, United Provinces(UP) when he became automatically ex-officio Chancellor of Allahabad, Lucknow and Agra Universities, during which period he chalked out a programme for youth which not only involved doing physical labour, but participation in cultural discourses on the Gita, Upanishads and Vedic literature.

Munshiji believed in the ultimate establishment of universal peace, despite contemporary socio-political churning which he dismissed as part of the larger *samudramanthan*.

He supported the ageless message of Faith, Self-Discipline and Dedication-Shraddha, *Sayyamaand Samarpana*.

In many ways he was a social revolutionary and perhaps one can attribute this to the fact that at Baroda College he studied under Aurobindo Ghosh, the revolutionary who was to become Sri Aurobindo the saint.

He championed the cause of widow re-marriage—and that, too, in the first decade of the twentieth century when it required extraordinary courage to stand by such a principle. But he not only stood by his view, he had the courage to himself marry a widow in 1926.



*Munshiji believed in the ultimate establishment of universal peace, despite contemporary socio-political churning which he dismissed as part of the larger samudramanathan*

Leelavati Sheth, as she was known, was to stand by him through thick and thin in his later years when he had the further courage of his convictions to quit Congress and help found the Swatantra Party along with his dear friend C. Rajagopalachari (Rajaji). The point is that he had a vision and the courage to follow it. His faith in India's past led him to fashion his thought for the present and plan institutions for the future.

Throughout what stood out was his self-evident pragmatism. It is that, one suspects, that saw the growth of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan from being a modest Indological research institution into a comprehensive, cooperative apolitical national movement with an international outlook, seeking to inculcate a value-based life and the promotion of ethical and spiritual values in everything it does.

What more can one expect not just from Munshiji, the great thinker and activist, but from his successors who have outdone him? Munshiji stands as a role model for the new generation of politicians who have no leadership worth the name. Munshiji provides the answer. He has shown what one man can do, and how to do it. As he once stated, "the real strength of the Bhavan lies in the character, humility, selflessness and dedicated work of its devoted workers... and not in the volume of its assets". That said, everything is said.

Today we need, not one Munshiji, but the ones like him in dozens, and let it not be said that the Gen Next has not been kept informed. Jai Kanhaiyalaji, Jai Munshiji. Jai Bharat. -M.V. Kamath

**Kulapati and The Philosopher-President**

In 1968, almost a year after Dr. Radhakrishnan had laid down office as President of India, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan honoured him with the title 'Brahma Vidya Bhaskara',—the Sun of Spiritual Knowledge. It took place at a simple function at Dr. Radhakrishnan's residence 'Girija' in Chennai. Significantly, Dr. S. Gopal, son and biographer of his illustrious father, makes a special mention of this function in his classic biography. It would appear that Dr. Radhakrishnan himself, then not in the best of health and spirits, and the

members of his family, very much appreciated this noble and appropriate gesture.

It was timely, as we learn from Dr. Gopal, but, more importantly, the feelings and thought that inspired it came from a kindred soul. For, among the great whom Munshiji cherished, Dr. Radhakrishnan had an exalted place as 'guide, philosopher and friend.'

The reversal of the order of words in the familiar phrase is not without reason. Munshiji wrote: "To us in the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Dr. Radhakrishnan has been a guide, philosopher and friend. Ever since its inception he has appreciated the Bhavan's purpose to function as an independent national institution to preserve, to promote and to propagate our ageless culture and has encouraged us in our efforts by his guidance."

Munshiji and Radhakrishnan were influenced in their outlook, views and convictions by the best of ancient Indian thought and values and modern Western (English) philosophy and literature. Religion was a vital part of their lives and the culture (or way of life) it gave rise to energise their activity in national life.

Guidance does not fall like manna from heaven but comes mostly from parents, teachers, friends and well-wishers. And Munshiji's friendship with Dr. Radhakrishnan, in terms of intimacy, was on par with his relationship with Gandhiji and the Sardar.

There was, however, one difference: with Gandhiji, 20 years older than him, it was paternalistic; with the Sardar, 13 years older, it was brotherly; with Dr. Radhakrishnan, who was about eight months younger, it was friendly.

Patriotism and moral grandeur, drew Munshiji to the Mahatma; selflessness, sacrifice, organisational ability and practical realism attracted him towards the Sardar; common intellectual traits and shared interests in culture, religion, philosophy and education forged the links between him and the 'Brahma Vidya Bhaskara'. Numerous are the Bhavan's functions with which Dr. Radhakrishnan was associated.

No two careers diverged like a cleft stick as those of Dr. Radhakrishnan and Munshiji. Dr. Radhakrishnan began as a teacher and no teacher seems to have climbed to such dizzy heights as he did by sheer merit-scholarship extraordinary, speech fluent, writing profound and prodigious, and labour unremitting.

The first Vice-Chancellorship (Andhra University) came within his grasp when he was only 43. He rounded off his scholarly career at 60 with the chairmanship of free India's first University Education Commission.

He lived up to his own conception of education, based on Indian tradition, that he formulated in the Commission's report: "Education is not merely a means to earn a living; nor is it only a nursery of thought or a school for citizenship. It is initiation into the life of the spirit (emphasis added), a training of human souls in the pursuit of truth and the practice of virtue.

It is a second birth-divityamjanma". The rest of Dr. Radhakrishnan's career as a diplomat, as Vice-President and as President was but a recognition of his contribution to human thought in the fields of religion, philosophy and ethics.

Hailing from a family of lawyers 'for generations', Munshiji chose the legal profession and made a mark in it by the time he was in his early thirties. He built up such a lucrative practice that he could reject the offer of a judgeship, the most coveted prize by a lawyer and the most respected office by the people during British rule.

Of his advocacy, his junior who was acclaimed as a highly principled judge of the Supreme Court, J.M. Shehat, wrote: "A little turn of the head and a movement of the hand as quick as quicksilver, the plea penetrated like a sharp dart into the armour of the other side. And yet, he had an advocacy which had the style of a virtuoso on a violin, discursively developing an unexpected but an intriguing theme, and a mind so fertile that it seemed to impoverish the soil of those around him".

If Munshiji's speech was thus adapted to a court of law, persuasive and lucid, Dr. Radhakrishnan's oratorical style was adapted to an audience of students and academics, stately and sparkling with epigrams. Like Dr. Radhakrishnan, the philosopher-teacher who ended up as one of the moulders of the higher educational system, Munshiji the lawyer became one of the makers of the Indian Constitution, the basic law of the land. Munshiji's interests were not restricted to law but covered a much wider field that encompassed religion, philosophy, culture and history. He was thus one with Dr. Radhakrishnan in the latter's exaltation of the spiritual destiny of man.

Dr. Radhakrishnan, in developing his original and challenging conception of the 'spiritual' philosophy of religion, took as his starting point the evolutionary process indicated in the Taittiriya Upanishad: Annam, Pranam, Manas, Vijnanam and Anandam, interpreted as matter, life, perceptual—instinctive consciousness, reflective consciousness and spiritual or creative consciousness.

In the cosmic process we have the successive emergence of the material, the organic, the animal, the human and the spiritual orders of existence" ('Fragments of a Confession'). Following the clue

given in the Kena Upanishad that the spirit is 'that by which the mind is thought', Dr. Radhakrishnan pinpoints the importance of the spirit: "If the Spirit were not in us we would not have thrilled with joy when face to face with the great works of art, science and life' (See *An Idealistic View of Life* (1932) for an elaborate treatment of the subject, the spiritual as the real.)

If Dr. Radhakrishnan's approach to reality is philosophical and idealistic, Munshiji's approach is historical and pragmatic. Munshiji viewed history as the record of the progress or regression of man in terms of his self-fulfillment; it is the unfolding of the spirit as the moving force.'

This unfoldment takes place through myriads of lives and their ceaseless struggles against the evil and error, fear and violence, which thwart the destiny of man'.

He identified the Supreme spirit with Absolute Beauty compounded of Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram—Truth, Love and Beauty. According to Munshiji, we need to contemplate beautiful ideas, study beautiful works, appreciate beautiful lives and then pass on to a life lived in Absolute Beauty.' This in his view, is the process of 'spiritual' transformation. (See Munshiji's 'Bhagavad Gita and Modern Life' for an elaboration of his view). Munshiji was evidently influenced by his favourite scripture, the Bhagavad Gita. verse 41 of ch10, which says: "Whatever is endowed with extraordinary glory (Vibhuti), attractiveness or beauty (Srimat) and vigour (Urjitam) know all that to be born of a fragment of My splendour."

The Munshi-Radhakrishnan friendship was productive of so much public good that it provided a practical illustration of the Vedic exhortation:

"May you come together, speak in unison, (your) minds understand alike, even as the gods of yore, in agreement, took their offering".-(Rig-Veda x.191:2)-V. Sivaramakrishnan

**Source: Bhavan's Journal, December 31, 2013**



# Our Culture

## General

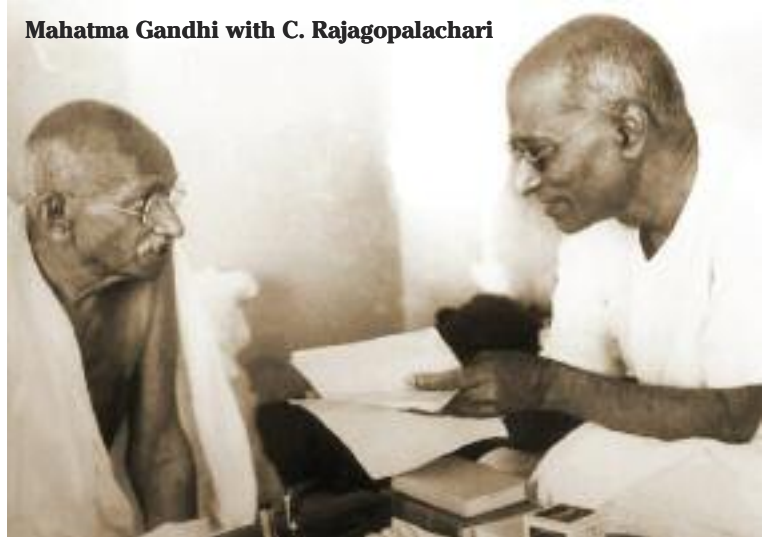
I am not a cultural virtuoso. I have not cultivated any special capacity for the appreciation of artistic excellences. I am not a musician or painter or critic of music or other arts. There are many who could have done better justice to this invitation of the Bhavan to deliver a series of lectures on Culture. I presume I am not expected to speak on culture as the word is understood in the allotment of subjects to the Central Minister for Cultural Affairs. Nothing can be expected from me on music, dance, the theatre or the silver screen.

Culture on which I shall attempt to say something is the sum-total of the way of living built up by groups of human beings and transmitted from one generation to another. People each with their own long history build up separate patterns of cultures. There is much that is common, but also a great deal that is particular to each nation.

Before dealing with what may be called the culture of India, let us look a little at what is common in the culture of all nations.

We should not use words vaguely, whatever language we speak, we should try to be precise with our words. When we say a man is a cultured man or that he is an uncultured person, we don't mean to say he is a good man or a bad man. The two things are different. Good is different from cultured. There are good people, very good men and women, who are not what we call cultured persons. Culture is not literacy or ability to play on the *veena*. It has to do with general behaviour, speech and conduct, and is different from goodness and badness of character. I can illustrate the difference by means of an analogy. Bodily cleanliness is different from cleanliness in dress. A man may be clean in body; but he may not have clean clothes to wear. And one may wear very clean clothes; he may not bathe everyday, but put on good clean clothes. The two kinds of

Mahatma Gandhi with C. Rajagopalachari



cleanliness may be much connected with each other, yet they are different.

Culture is not just character or morality. Character is the inside of a man. Culture is external rather than internal. Culture has more to do with behaviour and way of living than with character. Broadly speaking, culture is external though of course it has much to do with character too. Because, the outside has always much to do with the inside.

Man is endowed by nature with the senses: the eyes, the nose, the palate and the tongue, the ears, the fingers that feel. The senses give him the power among other things to find pleasure in life and incentive to live. Power corrupts men, we have been told, and so often reminded. The statement is usually associated With Lord Acton. But the fact is a very old fact and Acton referred to it in connection with politics. We are dealing here with a different kind of power. Man has the power to derive pleasure from the senses. The senses have certain functions to perform which are necessary for life. But they are the springs of physical pleasure also. Like all power, this power that the senses endow man with tends to corrupt him. The human animal unlike his brothers in the dumb world is inclined to overdo the use of his senses under the influence of the pleasures derived therefrom.

Civilization seeks to curb this tendency and put it down. Civilization in the true sense of the word is the development of restraint. The consensus of society, the total combined will of the people living together, seeks to curb the individual's tendency to overdo the use of his senses. This is the difference between civilization and barbarism. An individual may be a civilized person or he may be a crude and uncivilized man. Whole groups of people too may be civilized or uncivilized. When the total conscience of the people living together seeks to curb indulgence in sensual pleasure and direct the activities of individuals into refined channels, those people are considered to be a civilized people. The effort to control and keep within limits the use of the senses for individual pleasure and the willing and intelligent submission to that control is given the name of civilization. The term 'civilization' is used to denote other things too, but the truer and more important sense of the word is this control of the senses and willing acceptance of it.

Civilization is not mere advance in technology and in the material aspects of life. We should remember it is an abstract noun and indicates a state of living and not things. Mainly, civilization connotes the curbing of wildness, barbarity and over-indulgence of passions and appetites.

Civilization has two instruments to achieve the object of curbing the sensual instincts and preventing or deterring over-indulgence. One instrument is Government, which is an essential part of all civilization, and which works externally. The force and compulsory power of the state are set up by consent of the people as a whole to do this curbing of the individual's tendencies. The total good sense prevails over individual appetite and that good sense takes the shape of government. Excesses of all kinds are brought under the penal laws. Men submit to these penal laws or they are kept apart from society by excommunication as in the old days, or by confinement within prison walls.

The other instrument of civilization is culture—which acts through family training, tradition, religious belief, literature and

education. Culture puts down over-indulgence acting as an internal force, as distinguished from penal laws which operate from outside. Where it fails, it acts through social obloquy and, in very bad cases, through social ostracism.

Government and laws use physical force and compel people to restrain themselves. Culture is a subtle instrument. It acts silently. It makes people feel they are not forced to obey, but do it of their own free will and gives them a sense of pride in good behaviour. When any one acts contrary to the general wish and falls much below standard, the others look down upon him, shun him or otherwise make him feel that he is not liked.

We all know how strong this sanction is; often it corrects where force does not correct. Force generates a reaction of obstinacy. But the subtle forms of the displeasure of society are very effective, as they give a chance to the culprit to improve without a confession of guilt. They do not generate obstinacy.

The discipline for self-control voluntarily imposed on oneself is *Tapasya*. *Tapasya* involves pain. But many of the legitimate means of developing self-control give a kind of pleasure at the same time and are not painful. The fine arts, music, dance and painting and entertainments of many kinds are all cultural means, not merely to give pleasure, but operate to control and limit indulgence in sensual pleasures. Incidentally they give pleasure, but the main purpose is sustained control of the instinct for sensual pleasure.

Religion too gives joy while it helps self-control. The bhakti types of religion in particular give intense joy—pleasure of a high order. The churches and temples with their impressive atmosphere and beauty help to keep men off from over-indulgence of their power to derive pleasures from the senses. They serve to prevent the vicious over-contemplation of pleasures even when not enjoying them. The refined means of satisfying the various appetites train the senses to find enjoyment, without over-indulgence or indulgence in crude forms. The fine arts may be looked upon thus as instruments of



restraint. They shape persons inclined to excessive indulgence into cultured men and women.

Indeed, it may be truly said that culture is the habit of successful self-control; and that nothing that reduces self-control or which does not help self-control is culture.

Culture and character, as I have already explained, are not the same thing, though, of course, there is no harm in occasionally confusing one with the other and using the two terms loosely and giving to culture the same importance as to character. The peel encloses the fruit. The orange or the banana peel carries a delicate variation of the quality of the fruit enclosed within it. Often, the aromatic smell of the peel is even more pleasant than the inside of the fruit. Cultured behaviour is often more pleasant than even solid virtue. Culture is a social virtue and therefore comes to notice and pleases more clearly than virtue. Peel and fruit grow together from tiny beginnings to the ripe state. So also do character and culture, the mind inside and the external activities, conduct and behaviour, grow together. Culture would be hypocrisy if the inner character does not correspond to it. And hypocrisy is not culture. It is the opposite of it.

Self-restraint in expression is one of the main forms of culture. Self-restraint in conduct is a sign and an essential of what is called culture. But self-restraint in thought is at the root of both!

*Atmaupamyam*, finding out what is right and what is wrong by putting yourself in the position of the other person, referred to in the Gita VI 32 is Yoga of the highest type.

Sita admonishes Ravana to do this introspection and be happy with his own wives. Consideration for the feelings of others, for the rights of others, for the faults of others, these are the highest marks of culture, without which a man would be definitely uncultured. Humility is an essential part of true culture—*vidyaavinayasampannebraahmane* (Gita V 18). *Vidya* and *vinaya*, knowledge and

humility, together form the *sampat*, wealth, for the *Braahmana*. Without humility there is no culture. A boastful man is wanting in culture. Humility should be honest and shown in behaviour and action and not expressed merely in words. It results from innate consideration and respect for others and a sense of true values. The humility of the cultured man is more likely to be near the actual truth than the self-estimate of the boastful man even if he be a gifted person. Humility is not the humility of Uriah Heep, but what makes the other man feel easy with you though you may be definitely superior to him.

What makes community-life pleasant, what adds to joy in life, over and above feeding and clothing the body and satisfying the appetites—all these together make up culture.

***-Chakravarti Rajagopalachari, popularly known as "Rajaji" or "C.R." was a great patriot, astute politician, incisive thinker, and one of the greatest of Indians. As a close associate of Mahatma Gandhi, as an ardent freedom-fighter, as Chief Minister of Madras, as Governor of West Bengal, as Home Minister of India and as the first Indian Governor-General of India he rendered yeoman service to India and left an indelible impress on our contemporary life. Rajaji's books on Marcus Aurelius, the Bhagavad Gita and the Upanishads are popular. In Mahabharata and Ramayana he displays his inimitable flair for story-telling and applying the moral of stories to the needs of modern times. The thought-processes of this patriarch retained their sharp edge, while the notes of his silver tongue did not lose any of their charms even when he was a nonagenarian. He passed away in 1972 at the age of 94.***

*(To be continued...)*

**Source: 'Our Culture' book by C. Rajagopalachari, Bhavan's Book University, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Bombay (Mumbai), India**



# *Upanishadic Message in Wordsworth's Poetry*

German scholars played a pivotal role in the dissemination of Indian philosophy in the West. However, it was England which first brought Indian spiritual treasures to the attention of Europeans in the 18th century.

In the field of English literature, it was the advent of the Romantic period in the middle of the 18th century that heralded the golden era of entry of Upanishadic thoughts in English poetry.

Two significant events were mainly responsible for the introduction of Vedanta (Upanishads) in English literature. One was the founding of the Royal Asiatic Society in Calcutta in 1784 by Sir William Jones, an epoch-making event in the meeting of East and West on both intellectual and spiritual levels. Sir William, a multi-linguist with scholarship in English, Spanish, French, Greek, Latin, Hebrew and Arabic, came to India in 1783 at the instance of the East India Company to take up the post as a Judge of the Supreme Court, Calcutta. He was a great indologist, having worked hard to disseminate India's spiritual treasures to the West through his books and through the society's journal "Asiatic Researches".

Secondly, the publication of Sir Charles Wilkins' English translation of the Bhagavad Gita and Hitopadesha as well as an authoritative Sanskrit grammar in London sometime between 1785 and 1787 became the basis for all later indologists to work.

Among the several English poets belonging to the Romantic period of English literature like Coleridge, Shelley, Keats, Wordsworth etc, probably the most aspiring voice came from Wordsworth who sought to bridge matter and thought. He was a seer poet who wrote poetry not merely to entertain his readers, but to elevate the readers from mundane to spiritual heights.

Thoughts on Vedanta or the Upanishads pervaded his prose and poetry. His youthful enthusiasm for the French Revolution gradually matured into a desire for universal brotherhood and peace which is the very foundation on which our Upanishads rest.

Wordsworth fully believed that eternal happiness and peace of mind could be achieved only through

the refinement of the senses (what the Upanishads call as "Samskara" in Sanskrit) and the creative use of imagination.

There is no direct proof that Wordsworth was familiar with the Upanishads but there is no doubt that he too benefited from the works of the Upanishads. As emphasised in Vedanta, he saw nature, not as a lifeless, static and material substance but as the exterior and interior immanence of a Supreme Reality.

Simply put, he saw divinity in nature. His eminent voice on behalf of nature was so highly evolved that he was able to poetise the spirit of the Upanishads from the works of Sir William Jones without studying the Upanishads.

This is amply evident in the following lines from his poem "Tintern Abbey Lines" written in 1798:

*"And I have felt  
A presence that disturbs me with joy  
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime,  
Of something far more deeply interfused,  
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns;  
And the round ocean and the living air,  
And the blue sky and in the mind of man;  
All thinking things, all objects of all thoughts,  
And rolls through all things".  
-Wordsworth in 'Tintern Abbey'*

These lines reveal how the sublime spirit of Upanishadic teachings alleviated the depressed mind of Wordsworth, a sober political and spiritual visionary.

Once Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi recited some selected lines from the composition of Manickyavachakar, one of the 63 Tamil Shaivite saints called 'Nayanmars'.

Ramanar was eulogising the great ability of the saint where he spoke of the condition of the soul melted in love with the divine. Hardly had the Maharishi recited a few lines, there was brilliance radiating from his face of Ramana (what is called as 'Brahma Tejas' in Vedanta). A peace that passes all understanding pervaded the whole atmosphere. For more than an hour there was total silence. When the atmosphere was disturbed by a new visitor,

*Among the several English poets belonging to the Romantic period of English literature like Coleridge, Shelley, Keats, Wordsworth etc, probably the most aspiring voice came from Wordsworth who sought to bridge matter and thought*

Ramana returned to the mundane plane.

Swami Sri Siddeshwarananda of the Sri Ramakrishna Mission, Paris, was present in the hall. When the Swamiji saw the serene face of Ramana and saw tranquillity conquering the entire environment, he was reminded of a parallel verse from the poetry of Wordsworth in his poem "The Excursion" which he recited:

*"In such access of mind, in such high hour,  
Of visitation from the living God,  
Thought was not, in enjoyment it expired  
Rapt in still communion, that transcends  
The imperfect offices of prayer and praise,  
His mind was a thanksgiving to the power  
That made him, it was blessedness and love!"*

Bhagavan Ramana followed these lines of Wordsworth very appreciatively and remarked to the Swamiji in Malayalam "How nicely they too have expressed the same high sentiments". These were the very lines which when uttered by Scottish Professor William Hastie drove Vivekananda (then Narendra Nath), his student, to the feet of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa in 1881 in whom he found all the attributes mentioned therein about the state of Reverie or Samadhi.

According to Vedanta, deep meditation or reverie is necessary to realise Truth when the state of mind is totally oblivious to the external surroundings.

Under this state of mind, the seeker of Truth feels identity with the sought and consequently is lost in the world of names and forms. Wordsworth describes such a condition of mind in his poem, "The Reverie of Poor Susan":

*"She looks and her heart is in heaven, but they fade,  
The mist and the river, the hill and the shade,  
The stream will not flow, and the hill will not rise,  
And the colours have all passed away from her eyes"*

Lord Krishna with Arjuna



These lines describe the super conscious state of Susan into which she has been transported as a result of her meditative flight. She has no thought of the world but of heaven alone.

For a person cast in the Vedantic mould, an inquisitive and searching mind is necessary (what is called as 'Vichara Manthana' in Sanskrit). Wordsworth himself fulfills this condition. He had a searching mind and an enquiring temperament right from his young age.

Even as a boy he created poetry which bears the mark of his searching mind.

For him, the definition of poetry was 'powerful emotions recollected in tranquillity'.

Wordsworth records such an impression in the following lines of his autobiographical poem "The Prelude":

*"but after I had seen  
That spectacle, for many days, my brain  
Worked with a dim and undetermined sense  
Of unknown modes of being; over my thoughts*





*There hung darkness, call it solitude  
Or blank desertion.*

Solitude and quietness of environment provides a conducive environment for self-realization. This is evident from the fact that in ancient times our great sages and seers used to have their hermitage in far-off forest in the midst of abundant natural beauty or on the banks of a river, to avoid disturbance to their mental tranquillity. This would withdraw the attention of the seeker from ‘the world of eyes and ears’.

Wordsworth does the same and discovers joy in it, as is evident from the following lines of his poem “The Daffodils”:

*“For oft, when on my couch  
I lie  
In vacant or in pensive mood  
They flash upon my inward eye  
Which is the bliss of solitude.  
And then my heart with pleasure fills  
And dances with the daffodils”.*

He contemplates Truth behind the existence of



Daffodils and derives joy out of it. The Upanishads teach that basically all creations of Nature are divine and blissful. But we forget this basic fact of life on account of the play of Maya. When we forget our divine nature, what results is the sorrow of life since the joy of divinity is replaced by the worldly pleasures. The poet says that the homely Nurse (we may compare her to the Maya of Vedanta) makes the growing child gradually forget his divine nature. Let us read how Wordsworth conveys this idea in his poem “Ode to Immortality”

*“The homely Nurse doth all she can  
To make her foster child,  
her Innate Man,  
Forget the glories he hath known  
And that imperial palace whence he sprung”*  
Wordsworth believes in the reincarnation of birth, for he observes in the same poem:  
*“Our birth is but a sleep and forgetting  
The soul that rises with us, our life’s star  
Hath elsewhere its setting”*

Among the several popular poets of the Romantic period like Shelly, Keats, Coleridge, etc it is only in Wordsworth’s poetry we notice maximum usage of Upanishadic concepts. Most of his works have been recognised as of the highest excellence. No wonder that in 1843 he was appointed Poet Laureate. His most obvious service to English poetry was to free it from the bondage of the artificial diction which the school of Pope had hardened into a convention. But his greatest gift was the union of the high imaginative powers with a rare faculty of simple expression.

**- B.M.N. Murthy**

**Source: Bhavan’s Journal, July 31, 2013**

# Martyrs' Day



Mahatma Gandhi

The Nation pays homage to the martyrs who suffered and died for the freedom, welfare, and progress of the country, on January 30 every year. It was on January 30, 1948 that Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated a little before the sunset when he was going to attend his evening prayers.

Mahatma Gandhi was the greatest among the lakhs and lakhs of martyrs and freedom fighters who sacrificed everything for the country's Independence, welfare and progress. Since Mahatma Gandhi's martyrdom on January 30, 1948 this day was declared as the Martyrs' Day. Since then every year the Nation pays homage to the Mahatma and other martyrs on this day.

On Martyr's Day, the President, the Vice President, the Prime Minister, the Defence Minister, and the three service Chiefs gather at the Samadhi of Mahatma Gandhi at Rajghat and lay wreaths on the Samadhi decorated with multi-colour flowers. The armed forces personnel blow the bugles sounding the Last Post. The inter-services contingent reverse arms as a mark of respect to the martyrs.

A two-minute silence in memory of the Father of the Nation and other martyrs is observed throughout the country at 11 a.m. At Rajghat, in front of the



Amar Jawan Jyoti

Samadhi of Mahatma Gandhi, all-religion prayers are held and bhajans dear to him sung.

January 30, 1948 is the saddest and most poignant day in our history. For on this day, 78-year old Mahatma Gandhi was killed in Birla House (now known as Gandhi Smriti) when he was going to join his evening prayers.

This was the biggest tragedy that the Nation faced after we achieved our hard-won Independence under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. I was a few yards away when this tragedy occurred. Like other days, I was slowly walking behind the Mahatma towards the prayer ground. I saw a well-built, tall young man, clad in khaki, rushing from the peaceful crowd of men, women and children, who came to attend the prayers, towards Mahatma Gandhi. Mahatma Gandhi was then ascending the steps to the prayer ground. The restless young man tried to touch Mahatma Gandhi's feet.

Mahatma Gandhi's grand daughter-in-law, Ava Gandhi and grandniece, Manu Gandhi told him that Mahatma Gandhi did not like people touching his feet. They both tried to stop the man and told him not to delay the Mahatma who was already late for the prayers. But the man pushed them aside and

the prayer books and other things which they were carrying fell on the ground.

The young man, who had a pistol, suddenly fired three shots from close range at Mahatma Gandhi. The Mahatma fell on the ground, his white khadi dress soaked in blood. A man of prayer, Mahatma Gandhi remembered God and said, "Hey Ram: Hey Ram." It was 5.17 p.m.

Men, women and children, who came to join the prayers, were shocked and wept aloud to see the Father of the Nation being killed in front of their eyes.

A bleeding Mahatma Gandhi was rushed to the room where he was staying. The news of his assassination spread like a fire. Despite one of the coldest nights in India's capital, thousands of people crowded in front of Birla House and wanted to have Mahatma Gandhi's darshan.

Inside the room there were tragic scenes. Pandit Nehru, our first Prime Minister, wept like a child. Sardar Patel was seen consoling him. Doctors rushed into the room. They examined Mahatma Gandhi. They remained dumb. Slowly, they signified that the Mahatma was dead.

This was my worst and saddest reporting of the Mahatma after about four years' tour as the United Press of India correspondent with him in various parts of the country. I wept but I had to do my duty. After flashing the news to my office, I rushed to the room where Mahatma Gandhi's body was lying. Recitations from the Gita and other scriptures were going on.

I remained whole night in that room. Lights in the room were switched off. An oil lamp was lit. There was darkness everywhere. Sitting in the room, I wrote an article titled "That Darkest Night" which was well published.

Outside the room, there was a huge waiting and weeping crowd. The people were shouting in choked voice "Allow us to have last darshan of our beloved Babuji". The entire area rent with repeated cries of "Mahatma Gandhi ki Jai".

In order to allow the people to have darshan of the Mahatma, his body was placed on the high table in the adjacent room. A powerful lamp was lit so that the people could have an easy darshan. As the doors of the room were opened, there was a huge rush. Everybody wanted to touch Mahatma Gandhi's feet. An old woman fell down in the rush and fainted. There was so much confusion that the doors of the room had to be closed. Then Mahatma Gandhi's body was taken to the roof of the house and placed under powerful light to enable the vast

multitude of people have a last glimpse of him.

In bitter cold, Mahatma Gandhi was given a bath at 1 a.m. The blood-soaked clothes were then removed from his body. I then saw three bullet wounds on his body. Two bullets had pierced through his body. The third bullet remained in his body. The wounds were still bleeding. The scene was tragic.

After the bath, Mahatma Gandhi was dressed in khaddar loin cloth presented to him on his last birthday. He was garlanded with a hank of hand-spun thread. He was decorated with flowers and garlands. Mahatma Gandhi's favourite Ram Dhun and bhajans were recited. Mahatma Gandhi's watch then struck 3.30 a.m. Everyday, he was used to hold his morning prayers at that time. All-religion prayers were held that day as well.

As the prayers were going on, the first rays of the sun entered the room. That dreadful night, which the whole nation passed in anguish and tears, came to an end. Preparations for Mahatma Gandhi's last journey to Rajghat were being made.

A mass of humanity had crowded in Delhi on that occasion. The cremation at Rajghat was attended by world dignitaries. Mahatma Gandhi, alongwith lakhs of men and women who sacrificed for the country's cause, became a martyr.

The cellular dark jails of the Andaman Islands, where the freedom fighters were kept, are full of stories of the martyrs. The stone walls of the jail echoe the sufferings and torture of the freedom fighters, many of whom were killed inside the jail.

The Martyrs' Day is an occasion to remember all our martyrs and work for the country's peace, unity, progress and welfare. During the last eventful phase of his life, Mahatma Gandhi worked for establishing peace, amity and brotherhood among people and died while working for this mission. Let us remember his work for peace, amity and brotherhood.

***-Sailen Chatterjee, veteran journalist, freedom fighter and a close associate of Mahatma Gandhi who died in July, 2001. He was an eye witness to Mahatma Gandhi's assassination. He would be long remembered for his coverage of Mahatma Gandhi's peace mission in the Noakhali district of undivided Bengal, where communal frenzy before independence and partition had created an atmosphere of unprecedented violence. That mission from December 1946 to March 1947 restored the confidence of the people to a large extent and brought the Hindus and Muslims together.***

**Source: [www.pib.nic.in](http://www.pib.nic.in)**

# Subhas Chandra Bose

Subhas Chandra Bose



*"Freedom is not given, it is taken."*

**-Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose**

Subhas Chandra Bose was the most visionary and fierce activist in the pre-independence era. Affectionately called as Netaji, he was one of the most prominent leaders of Indian freedom struggle. The contribution of Subhas Chandra Bose is no less but he has been denied his rightful place in the annals of Indian history. He founded Indian National Army (Azad Hind Fauj) to overthrow British Empire from India and came to acquire legendary status among Indian masses.

## Early Life

Subhas Chandra Bose was born on January 23, 1897 in Cuttack, Orissa. His father Janaki Nath Bose was a famous lawyer and his mother Prabhavati Devi was a pious and religious lady. Subhas Chandra Bose was the ninth child among fourteen siblings. Subhas Chandra Bose was a brilliant student right from the childhood. He topped the matriculation examination of Calcutta province and graduated with a First Class in Philosophy from the Scottish Churches College in Calcutta.

He was strongly influenced by Swami Vivekananda's teachings and was known for his

patriotic zeal as a student. To fulfill his parents' wishes he went to England in 1919 to compete for Indian Civil Services. In England he appeared for the Indian Civil Service competitive examination in 1920, and came out fourth in order of merit. However, Subhas Chandra Bose was deeply disturbed by the Jallianwalla Bagh massacre, and left his Civil Services apprenticeship midway to return to India in 1921.

### The Freedom Struggle

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

After returning to India Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose came under the influence of Mahatma Gandhi and joined the Indian National Congress. On Gandhiji's instructions, he started working under Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das, whom he later acknowledged his political guru. Soon he showed his leadership mettle and gained his way up in the Congress' hierarchy. Chandra Bose was jailed during Civil Disobedience movement in 1930. He was released in 1931 after Gandhi-Irwin pact was signed. He protested against the Gandhi-Irwin pact and opposed the suspension of Civil Disobedience movement especially when Bhagat Singh and his associates were hanged.

*"You give me your blood and I will give you Independence!"*

Subash Chandra Bose was soon arrested again under the infamous Bengal Regulation. After a period of one year he was released on medical grounds and was banished from India to Europe. He took steps to establish centres in different European capitals with a view to promoting politico-cultural contacts between India and Europe. Defying the ban on his entry to India, Subash Chandra Bose returned to India and was again arrested and jailed for a year. After the General Elections of 1937, Congress came to power in seven states and Subash Chandra Bose was released.

### World War II

During World War II he brought a resolution to give the British six months to hand India over to the Indians, failing which there would be a revolt.

There was much opposition to his rigid stand, and he resigned from the post of President and formed a progressive group known as the Forward Block.

Subhas Chandra Bose now started a mass movement against utilizing Indian resources and men for the great war. There was a tremendous response to his call and he was put under house arrest in Calcutta. In January 1941, Subhas Chandra Bose disappeared from his home in Calcutta and reached Germany via Afghanistan.

Working on the maxim that "an enemy's enemy is a friend", he sought cooperation of Germany and Japan against British Empire. In January 1942, he began his regular broadcasts from Radio Berlin, which aroused tremendous enthusiasm in India. In July 1943, he arrived in Singapore from Germany. In Singapore he took over the reins of the Indian Independence Movement in East Asia from Rash Behari Bose and organised the Azad Hind Fauj (Indian National Army) comprising mainly of Indian prisoners of war.

He was hailed as Netaji by the Army as well as by the Indian civilian population in East Asia. Azad Hind Fauj proceeded towards India to liberate it from British rule. Enroute it liberated Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The I.N.A. Head quarters was shifted to Rangoon in January 1944. Azad Hind Fauj crossed the Burma Border, and stood on Indian soil on March 18, 1944.

### Death

Bose is supposed to have died in a plane crash over Taiwan while flying to Tokyo. However, his body was never recovered, and conspiracy theories concerning his possible survival abound. One such claims that Bose actually died in Siberia, while in Soviet captivity. Taiwan Government clarified that Bose could not have died in a plane crash in the country, stating that there "were no plane crashes at Taipei between 14 August and 20 September 1945." Despite this testimony three separate Indian government investigations have concluded that Bose died in the plane crash. Accordingly he was killed in an air crash over Taipei, Taiwan (Formosa) on August 18, 1945.

**Source: [www.iloveindia.com](http://www.iloveindia.com),  
<http://profiles.incredible-people.com>**

# Martin Luther King Jr.

*Darkness cannot drive out darkness;  
only light can do that.  
Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.*  
-Martin Luther King, Jr.

Martin Luther King Jr. was born in Atlanta, Georgia in the large twelve room house of his parents on January 15, 1929. His grandparents also lived in the house. He was born during a time when black people did not have the rights which they have today. M.L., as he was called, first experienced racial discrimination when their white neighbors refused to let him play with their boys. This was hard for him to understand because the boys had grown up as neighbors and had played together for years. At a later time he and his father were asked to move to the back of a shoe store to be fitted with shoes. They left without buying anything. These early incidents made a deep impression on the young boy.

## Early Life

When he was five years old his mother persuaded the first grade teacher, Miss Dickerson, to make room for him in her class. Even though he started several weeks after the other children, he soon caught up with them academically and even surpassed them before the year was over.

*He who passively accepts evil is as much involved in it as he who helps to perpetrate it.  
He who accepts evil without protesting against it is really cooperating with it.*

He attended Oglethorpe Elementary School which was a private school associated with Atlanta University. His parents paid \$25 a year which covered all his expenses. Miss Lemon, his teacher taught him to be independent. She taught him if there was an injustice, he could rebel, but still keep his dignity and find quiet ways to resist. She inspired her students to learn about black history and take pride in their heritage. She took the class on field trips to visit with successful black businessmen and professionals. Her students started each day by singing the song, Lift Every Voice and Sing.

He attended Booker T. Washington High School in Atlanta. He was younger than most of the students and also skipped some subjects because he already knew the subject matter.



Martin Luther King Jr.

## The Discrimination

On one occasion he and his teacher were riding on a bus. When the bus filled up with people, the driver asked them to stand up and let two white people have their seats. It was the law. Martin saw the injustice of it, and he never forgot that incident. When he was 15 years old he entered Morehouse College. After two years in school he decided he could best serve others by becoming a Minister. He became Assistant Minister of the Ebenezer Baptist church where his father was Minister. The following year he graduated from college. He was only 19 years old.

## Mahatma Gandhi

He attended Crozer Theological Seminary in Chester, Pennsylvania. While he was at Crozer he began to study the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi, a man who brought about changes in India through "passive resistance". Gandhi urged people to not fight, but to protest peacefully. Martin saw this method of non-violent resistance as the answer to the unfair treatment blacks received in America.

When he was a senior at Crozer he was elected class President and also won an award as the most

outstanding student. He worked on his Ph.D. at Boston University. It was there he met Coretta Scott who would become his wife. They would eventually have four children; two boys and two girls. When he graduated from Boston University he became the Minister of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama.

Blacks and whites were segregated in Montgomery, attending different schools and sitting in separate sections on buses. Sometimes blacks would be forced to stand on a bus even though there were empty seats in the “white” section at the front of the bus. On December 1, 1955 Mrs. Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a bus. The police were called and she was arrested. This event led to a revolt all over America.

### **The Boycott**

E.D. Nixon, who was a train porter, bailed Rosa out of jail, and he started contacting others about starting a boycott of the buses. “Boycott” means they would refuse to ride the buses until they received fair treatment. The newspapers heard of the plan and wrote an article. This article was very helpful in getting the word out about the boycott.

The black leaders were asking for courteous treatment from the drivers and seating on a first-come, first-served basis, with whites filling the buses from the front of the bus and blacks from the rear. No one was to be asked to give up a seat for someone else. They also wanted black drivers in the areas where they lived.

The boycott lasted for more than a year and they walked, rode bicycles, and rode in car pools to get to work. In December of 1956 the Supreme Court ruled that bus segregation was unlawful. In 1957 Dr. King helped establish the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and became its President. Black students began to stage “sit-ins” at lunch counters. Up until this time they had been forbidden food service at eating places.

Then the “freedom riders” began riding buses from state to state and doing “sit-ins” at lunch counters and “white” waiting rooms. The Jim Crow laws that said blacks were to be denied certain rights began to be challenged in many cities in America. Peaceful marches were organized and people were arrested because they were taking part. Even little children were sprayed with water hoses and arrested! On August 28, 1963 Martin Luther King and other

leaders led a march into Washington D.C. Over 200,000 people marched from the Washington Monument to the Lincoln Memorial. It was here Dr. King delivered his “I Have a Dream” message.

### **Nobel Peace Prize**

In 1964 he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in Norway. He gave the \$54,000 prize money to the civil rights groups which were working to secure the rights blacks deserved.

### **Final Days**

*The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.*

Dr. King was put in jail 30 times for his resistance. Some people tried to kill him. In an attempt to raise money for the campaign, King accepted an invitation to speak in support of Memphis sanitation workers on March 18, 1968. A mishandled demonstration on March 28 collapsed in disorder. King planned a new, better-organized demonstration and gave a very moving address to an audience of 500 at Memphis Temple on April 3. He spoke of and accepted the possibility of his own death, a recurring theme in his speeches. The following evening, shortly after 5:30 pm, King was shot and killed on the balcony outside his motel room.

King’s assassination led to disturbances in well over 100 cities and, before the violence subsided on April 11, there were deaths of 46 people (mostly African Americans), 35,000 injuries, and 20,000 people jailed. On April 9 King’s funeral was held in Ebenezer; in addition to the 800 people crammed into the sanctuary, a crowd of 60,000 to 70,000 stood in the streets. He was buried in Southview Cemetery, near his grandmother. On his crypt were carved the words he often used: “Free At Last, Free At Last Thank God Almighty I’m Free At Last.”

In 1986 Martin Luther King Jr.’s birthday became a national holiday. While alive, King became the symbol of hope for African Americans and for America as a whole that brotherhood and sisterhood could be obtained. The quintessential black leader, King’s legacy reminds one of how far America has come, and how far it still has to go.

**Source:** <http://gardenofpraise.com>,  
[www.gale.cengage.com](http://www.gale.cengage.com)

# Medicine—Too Much, Too Bad

*“Medical science is making such remarkable progress that soon none of us will be well.”*

**-Aldous Huxley**

At long last the West has woken up to the reality that in our reductionist science of medicine, use of chemical drugs of all hues and colours as therapeutic tools has resulted in more sorrow and death than cure or healing! Recently there was a big conference in Hanover organised by the British Medical Journal, Consumer’s Reports, and Dartmouth and Bond Universities to look into this problem of too much medicine! The unanimous opinion of the conference participants, of which there were more than six hundred scientists, specialists and pharmaceutical representatives, was that too much medicine is too bad. Be that as it may, let us look at the down side of too much interventions, too much investigations and too many drugs for even imaginary diseases called pre-disease states.

The area needing urgent attention to reduce this menace, in my opinion, is to leave the well segment of the population alone lest they should become patients for life long drugging without, in the first place, having any illness at all, all because of this screening industry.

Many of my regular readers would know about my relentless campaign to educate the public about the drug menace brought on by the greedy drug industry aided and abetted by the vested interests that stand to benefit from this human misery.

Routine screening of the apparently healthy has no place in medical care as repeated studies have shown that while the so called risk factors can all be controlled with drugs and other interventions, the real risk, if any, of precocious death, remains unaltered!

The largest multiple risk factor intervention trial (MRFIT), followed for 25 long years at a phenomenal cost to the American Tax payer, made it loud and clear the message of futility of screening efforts save the added death and disability caused by adverse drug reactions, which incidentally happens to be one of the leading causes of death in the world.

Now let us glance at the recent conference conclusions:

- “With very few exceptions, the early screening and intervention touted by preventive medicine has turned out to be an oversold, dangerous, and expensive flop.
- Routine PSA screening for prostate cancer is the clearest example. It used to be recommended that men of a certain age be tested yearly. It is now recommended that the test not be done at all unless a man has a family history or other special risk factors.
- Definitive long term studies prove that the test doesn’t save lives and instead ruins them by triggering invasive interventions with painful complications. Screening is usually too late to stop fast spreading tumours and too good at identifying slow growing ones that don’t count and are better left alone. If they live long enough, the majority of men will develop an incidental and benign prostate cancer before they die from something else. Picking up these tumours early causes great grief for no return.
- Lowering the thresholds of disease definitions has identified diseases that don’t exist. The dream was that getting there early would help prevent the development of severe heart problems, hypertension, diabetes, osteoporosis, and a score of other illnesses. The reality is that getting there too early misidentifies too many people who are not really at risk and then subjects them to needless and harmful tests and treatments.
- The technology is out of hand. If we do enough CT scans we can find structural abnormalities in just about everyone. But most findings are incidental and don’t have any real clinical meaning. Paradoxically, lots of otherwise healthy people will get dangerous cancers from the CT radiation that served no useful purpose.
- Doctors have gotten into the habit of ordering huge batteries of laboratory tests and treating the results while ignoring what is best for this particular patient. There needs to be retraining of those already in practice, a change in how medicine is taught to new doctors, and a realignment of financial incentives to promote best care, not excessive care.
- Except for hospice care, it has become almost impossible to die in a dignified, humane, and cost effective way. Hospitals have become frenetic torture chambers that make dying much worse than death and cost an obscene fortune.
- Curing medical excess will not be easy. Harmful over testing and over treating is promoted and protected by the enormous economic and



political power of the medical industrial complex. Here's just a beginning list of what needs to be done.

- Tame and shame Big Pharma. Prohibit all Pharma contributions to professional associations and consumer groups. Regulate and make transparent all the marketing ploys used to mislead doctors. Force the publication of all clinical research trial data.
- Recognise that all existing medical guidelines that define disease thresholds and make treatment recommendations are suspect. They have been developed by experts in each field who always have an intellectual conflict of interest (and often enough also have a financial conflict of interest) that biases them toward over-diagnosis and overtreatment in their pet area of research interest. New diagnostic standards are as dangerous as new drugs and need the same careful and independent vetting to tame unrealistic diagnostic enthusiasm.
- Employers, insurance companies, and government payers should be smarter consumers of health services and should stop paying for tests and treatments that do more harm than good and are not cost effective.
- Consumers should be smarter consumers and not buy into the idea that more is always better.
- Medical journals need to be more sceptical of the medical research enterprise and should look toward the harms, not just the potentials, of each new purported advance. They should stop drum beating each new study as if it is another big step toward the cure for cancer-which has proven more elusive than anyone imagined.
- The media needs to expose the real harms, not just the imagined wonders, inherent in medical procedures.
- We need to provide more resources to treat the really sick who now often get very inadequate care and at the same time need to protect the really well from getting what is often excessive and harmful care. It is wonderful that medical knowledge and tools have advanced so far, but disheartening that we are so bad at distributing them rationally.
- A great deal of progress has already been made. Fifty medical professional associations in the US have seen the need to cut back on inappropriate testing and treatment. Their 'Choosing Wisely' initiative is a terrific start in reforming the disaster of our medical non system. See <http://www.choosingwisely.org/>. The British Medical Journal and Consumers' Reports have already



played a catalytic role and are powerful platforms for spreading the evidence to physicians and patients.”

Now I am sure the western slavish mentality among our own colleagues will make them sit up and take note as this message has come from the west.

There were people from 28 countries in this conference in Hanover, although the problem of over diagnosis and over treatment is acute in the USA. India is catching up very fast and will soon over take USA as there are no official audits of treatment outcomes in India unlike the IOM audits in the USA. That worries me a lot.

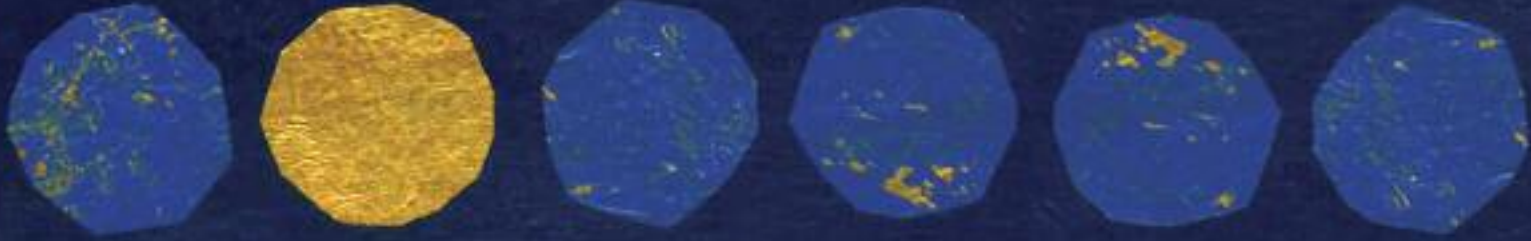
That was the reason why I was belling the cat for the last four decades starting with my article in 1967 on: Should we be drugging every marginally elevated blood pressure? This, of course brought me lots of troubles. Coming from the western sources the above message (repeated verbatim in this write up) should have an impact. “It was a lie but he believed in telling lies to people. Truth telling and medicine just didn't go together except in dire emergencies, if then.”

*-Mario Puzo, The Godfather.*

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**Source: Bhavan's Journal, December 31, 2013**



## *In Defence of Karna*

The longest Sanskrit epic Mahabharata, written two millenniums ago, is regarded as one of the greatest literary masterpieces of the world as no other work brings out the complexity of human problems and relationships in such profundity and with such incisive and penetrating insight and that too in such an enchanting and entertaining way. Human life is full of grey areas where nothing can be said with certainty one way or the other. The Mahabharata shows us the application of philosophy when it comes to deciding between the right and the wrong when we are faced with such dilemmas in different situations.

Besides Lord Krishna, the four most striking characters in Mahabharata are Arjuna, Karna, Drona and Bhishma. While Krishna was divinity incarnate, the other four, though mortal, were perhaps the four greatest warriors of the era, who were also learned and lived by the principles each held close to his heart. Mahabharata shows that each of them was great in his own way, but three of them failed to follow dharma in its true sense and reached futile ends, their lives not serving the greater good or the cause of humanity at large.

Though Arjuna is regarded as standing out as the hero who future generations of Hindus would admire the most and the other three as tragic heroes, their names are held in as much respect and awe, if not more.

Even so Karna's is the most fascinating character, who was known for his generosity as much as he was the most invincible warrior. In many ways he was greater than Arjuna. The two have been equal as archers, but physically Karna was by far the stronger of the two. And even unflinching as he was in sticking to his principles, Karna is admittedly more steadfast in comparison with Arjuna. Karna even earned the respect and esteem of Lord Krishna, his divine status notwithstanding, who, at the time of Karna's death extols to the Pandavas—especially Arjuna—the virtues of Karna, thus: "Following a path of righteousness like a Brahmin, being kind and giving charity even to his enemies and foes and for being a true friend—for all these qualities Karna is to be revered."

Lord Krishna himself said that even in death the victory had been Karna's.

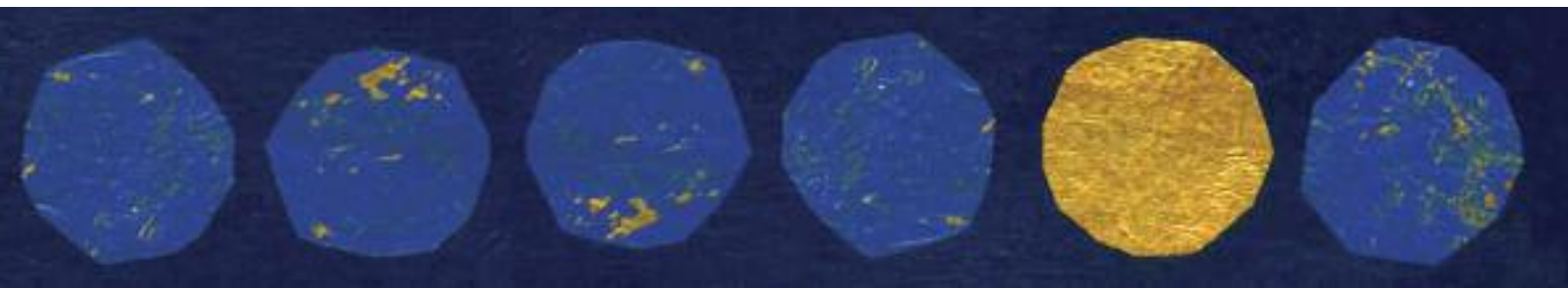
What is it that made the Lord admire Karna to the extent He did in preference to the rest of them? Bhishma was mighty, learned and respected and never performed a selfish act and stood by his personal oath of loyalty to the throne till the very end. Drona, an outstanding warrior, well versed in morality, swore by his loyalty towards his employer and stood by him till he was alive. Arjuna was a great man no doubt; but he too had a foolhardy streak in his character. He had weaknesses too that were actually absent in Bhishma, Drona and Karna and was given to saying and doing stupid things that could land his brothers and himself in serious trouble. Considering all these aspects of these great men, Karna, indeed, stands the tallest of them all.

Karna was a great and distinguished warrior, an invincible fighter, a selfless person, a true friend, a kind soul, a true leader...the list is endless. To top it all, he was virtuous and had several qualities of head and heart that were not only unmatched but rarely found even among the greatest of heroic men in such an abundant measure and in such a unique combination as in him. His greatest virtue, perhaps, was "his ability to give all his possessions without any reservation, even to his foes and enemies".

Karna was brought up by a charioteer and his wife—Adhirath and Radha. He spent his childhood practising and learning the art of archery and warfare. On the day Adhirath took Karna to the kingdom of Hastinapur, Karna bade a tearful farewell to his foster mother.

The envious cousin princes, Kaurvas and Pandavas, were training under their Guru Drona. Adhirath requested him to teach Karna, but he refused because Karna was born of low caste. Karna felt helpless. He saw the brilliant shining sun and decided to make him his Guru. He turned his desperation into determination and through sheer practice became more than a match to Arjuna.

When the Kauravas and Pandavas were displaying their skills and Arjuna was declared as the best, Karna arrived on the scene and showed that he was no less a match to Arjuna, Guru Drona stepped forward and asked Karna to disclose his caste, apparently to discourage him. The Pandavas were dejected too to know that there was a warrior better



**Indra gives  
Indrashakti to Karna**

than Arjuna even as Kunti recognised her abandoned son by the golden armour he was born with.

At the marriage of beautiful princess Draupadi, Karna made his way towards fulfilling the conditions of marrying her, but she rejects him by saying that she would not marry a person of low caste and humiliated him.

Later, when at the dice game, Pandavas lost everything, including Draupadi to the Kauravas and she was rudely disrobed by the latter in the assembly, Karna protected her chastity with the only sacred garment he had.

Disguised as a sage, Indra asked Karna for the golden armour while he was offering his early morning prayers, Karna realised that the sage was none other than Lord Indra himself, but true to his word, he made the biggest sacrifice of his life. The armour and the earrings refused to part with his body; but he cut them off with a knife and gave them to Indra.

By parting with them he not only gave away his invincibility, but in fact, presented to the Pandavas, their victory. Indra, shamed by the generosity shown by Karna's gesture granted him the boon of using his most powerful weapon but only once.

Karna lost the opportunity to use Indra's weapon against Arjuna when Duryodhan asked him to save them from Ghatotkacha, the half-asura son of Bhima. Killing an asura at night would require a divine weapon, though Karna had the choice to use it only once. Without his golden armour and earrings, Karna had to take on Arjuna, widely equipped with divine weapons, in the battlefield. But by using Indra's weapon against Ghatotkacha, Karna lost his lone weapon for Arjuna's death.

Thinking that he is a Brahmin, Parshurama agreed to teach Karna. Once when tired, the sage went to sleep having laid his head in Karna's lap. Even after being severely bitten by an insect that led to Karna bleed profusely, he remained unmoved lest Parshurama's sleep got disturbed. In return Parshurama cursed him that at the crucial moment in his life Karna forget the lessons he had taught him, for having lied to him.

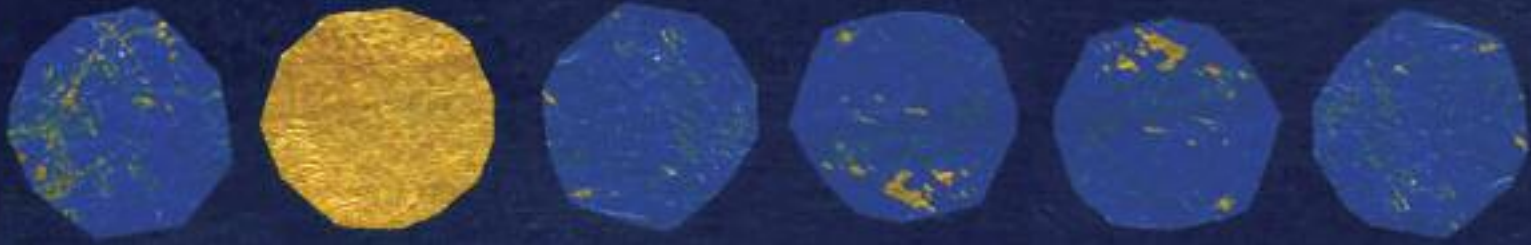
In order to avert the impending fierce battle at Hastinapur, Krishna and Kunti went individually to Karna and told him of his real parentage. Karna, however, told them that the knowledge had come to him too late. But he was indebted to his friend Duryodana and that it would be cowardly to let him down at the last moment. Nonetheless, he did not disappoint Kunti and promised that she would continue to be the mother of five sons apart from Arjuna. He also agreed to use the Nagastram against Arjuna only once. Karna also requested his mother to guard the secret of his birth until he died.

While the war was on and Karna was made the chief of Kaurvas army, Yudhishtira, Bhima, Nakula and Sahadeva, one by one, all came face to face with Karna, but due to his promise to Kunti, he spared their lives.

In the fierce battle that ensued between Karna and Arjuna, the wheels of Karna's chariot got stuck in the mud. Arjuna taking advantage of the situation attacked him from all sides at the behest of Lord Krishna even as Karna pleaded for a war of equality and equity. Having realised that his end was near, Karna lay down his arms. Arjuna shot an arrow at the hapless and helpless Karna and tragically ended his life.

When Karna was in his dying breath, Krishna assumed the form of a poor Brahmin and approached him and asked for gold in order to perform the marriage of his son. He implored Karna, saying that He had heard a lot about him and not knowing his plight had come to ask for the favour. "Oh what a pity! Please go to my wife, she will give you as much gold as you need", said Karna.

The Brahmin broke into laughter. He said, "For the sake of a little gold have I to go all the way to Hastinapura? If you say, you are not in a position to give me what I ask, I shall leave you." Karna declared, "As long as breath remains in me, I will not say 'no' to anyone." Karna opened his mouth, showed the gold fillings on his teeth and said, "I shall give this to



you. You can take them.”

Assuming atone of revulsion, Krishna said, “What is it you suggest? Do you expect me to break your teeth and take the gold from them? How can I do such a wicked deed? I am a Brahmin.”

Immediately, Karna picked up a stone nearby, knocked out his teeth and offered them to the Brahmin. Krishna in his guise as Brahmin wanted to test Karna further. “What? Are you giving me as gift golden teeth dripping with blood? I cannot accept this. I am leaving”, he said.

Karna pleaded, “Swami, please wait for a moment.” Even while he was unable to move and was writhing with pain, Karna took out an arrow and aimed it at the sky. Immediately rain dropped from the clouds. Cleaning the teeth with the rain water, Karna offered the teeth with both his hands. Krishna then reveals himself to Karna.

The character of Karna evokes profound sadness. This is because he stuck to his principles and performed his duty without even a trace of selfishness or manipulation and undeterred of the consequences that eventually befell him.

Even Lord Krishna and King Indra manipulated his generosity and kind acts to give Arjuna the advantage.

The great Bhishma refused to fight along with Karna. By refusing to side with his brothers even after learning the truth about his parentage and continuing to side with Kauravas, Karna symbolised the true spirit of friendship. During the battle between Karna and Arjuna, Krishna intervened and helped Arjuna escape. And while Karna was struggling with his chariot stuck in mud, Krishna urged Arjuna to shoot him with an arrow. Karna remains unruffled even as he is ridiculed at every step by all the prominent people.

As in life, so in death, Karna was all poise. Karna and Lord Krishna had a lot in common. Both being of divine origin, brought up by foster parents, warring with their own relatives, one despite being the king of Anga, was called the son of a charioteer throughout his life, while the other, being the supreme Lord Himself, became a charioteer in war himself.

But Karna, unlike Krishna, did not even wish to forget his foster parents and beloved of that Suta

caste. Krishna never tried to alleviate the pain caused to Karna throughout his life.

But He callously asked him to change sides in the war by revealing facts about his birth. All the same Krishna begged for forgiveness to Karna, something he did not do from any other individual who lost his life in the war.

Karna was so virtuous and so transparent in his conduct that there was no need for him any explanations unlike Krishna, who blamed on “maya” every uncomfortable question or situation that He had caused and was called upon to explain. As always, the generous Karna, fully aware that Krishna had caused his cruel death, forgave Krishna. This sign of the extreme generosity which has not been seen in either epic before, or even in any of the Gods, made Karna even superior to them, if one may say so.

But then Karna indicted Krishna and asked of him questions that will always remain unanswered. “Why did He not slay Jarasandha with the infallible discuss? Why did He flee from Mathura? How could Jarasandha, whom Karna defeated, defeat Krishna? And above all, who was Krishna?”

Krishna then grants Karna the sight of His Viswaroopa—the vision of the mighty Lord Vishnu. Even Vishnu is overwhelmed by Karna’s generosity. Karna is sent straight to heaven, a place the Pandavas would have great difficulty getting in.

“The miracle is not to fly in the air, or to walk on water, but to walk on the earth” goes a famous Chinese saying. Judged by this yardstick, of all the characters in Mahabharata, it is no doubt Karna, who has performed the miracle of true living on earth. The sentiment of virtue is a reverence and delight in the presence of laws of divinity. Karna had thrown open his mind and heart to the sentiment of virtue and had experienced its sweet and overpowering beauty.

Whether in simple innocence, or by intellectual perception, he elevated himself to the attainment wherefrom he could say with proven confidence,—‘I love the right; truth is beautiful within and without, forevermore. Virtue, I am thine: save me: use me: thee will I serve, day and night, in great, in small, that I may not be just virtuous, but virtue incarnate;’—then is the end of the creation answered, and God is well pleased.

**Source: Bhavan’s Journal, November 30, 2013**

# Philosophers—Spiritual Leaders—Cultural Ambassadors

The philosophy of Madhvacharya is termed 'Dwaita' in view of the contention that the Supreme Lord is different from the soul and matter.

## Ramanuja

The two major cults of Hinduism are Saivism and Vaishnavism. In the south under Saivism, a distinction is made between religious teachers (Samayaacharyas) and philosophers (Santana acharyas). Likewise in Vaishnavism there are the two distinctions—Saints, Alvars, twelve in number and philosophers mainly the Acharyas, Shri Ramanuja belongs to this class of Vaishnavite Acharyas who expounded the philosophy of southern Vaishnavism known as Visishtadvaita.

Ramanuja was born in 1017 AD at Sriperumpudur, near Chennai. He was given the required training under five Acharyas, on philosophy and Vaishnavism and he chose Srirangam as the seat of his activities. But he was forced to leave Srirangam due to the hostility of the Chola ruler to Vaishnavism and remained for nearly two decades in Mysore. After the death of the king he returned to Srirangam and spent the rest of his life consolidating his missionary work and establishing 74 spiritual centres in different parts of the country to popularise Visishtadvaita. He ended his career in 1137 AD at the age of 120.

Ramanuja was between Sankara and Madhya not only chronologically but also philosophically. He combined the views of his predecessors with the vedantic ideas of Sankara's higher pantheism so as to make his advaita or non-dualism become Visishtadvaita or qualified non-dualism. He accepts three entities, of matter (cit), individual self (acit) and Brahman. The cit and the acit constitute the sarira of Brahman. The sarira-sarir's relationship (often called body-soul relationship) constitutes the very essence of Visishtadvaita and serves as a key to solve many apparently spiritual contradictions. To Ramanuja, Brahman is Narayana whose consort is Sri or Mahalakshmi and who is by nature devoid of all evil and possesses auspicious (mangala) attributes, innumerable and unsurpassable in excellence. The faith in Sri as the embodiment of Kripa or Daya (Grace) is one of the cardinal ideas of Ramanuja. The Lord and Sri are dual but individual personalities, blending justice and love. Bhakti is the most suitable means to attain purity, sinlessness and selflessness and is the best means of attaining salvation. Prapatti or self-surrender has also been suggested as a means

of salvation. "It is a deathless faith in the soaring grace of God and the realisation of the nothingness and unworthiness of finite life".

Of the three realities (tatvatriya), God (Isvara) soul (cit) and matter, (acit) God alone is an independent reality; the other two are dependent on him. These two are distinct from God but not separable from him. It is an internal relation which governs them (aprthak-siddhi). "The relation of aprthak-siddhi is the pivot on which the Visishtadvaita philosophy turns". When it is said 'The cow is white' or, "Devadatta is a man", a mode (prakara) or quality (visesana) is predicted in each case of a substance. The relation of substance-qualification is an inseparable relation. God as qualified (Visistha) by the world of souls and matter non-dual (advaita).

Karma, Jnana and Bakti are the ways to Moksha. The purification of the mind is through performance of duty without any selfish motive. Bhakti signifies the souls' feeling of love and dependence on God. When Bhakti matures and becomes complete, the soul has a vision of God. But the release is only when the body perishes. So there is no Jivan-Mukthi, according to Visishtadvaita. Karma has to be performed till the end even after attaining Jnana and Bakthi.

Ramanuja was a reformer as well. He established the right of untouchables to enter the temple of Yadavadripathi (Mysore State) three days in a year. Ramanuja's magnum opus is his Sri Bhashya on Brahma sutra. His other contributions are Bhagavad Gita Bhashya, Vedanta Dipa, Vedanta Sara, Vedanta Saagraha and others.

## Vallabhacharya

Vallabhacharya is the originator of the Suddhadvaita philosophy. He was born in 1535 at Champaranya on the banks of the Mahanadi river. Due to the Muslim invasions, the parents had to run away from home leaving the child under a tree. But when they returned after a while they were astonished to find the child encircled by the lustrous waves of fire. They lived in Varanasi and the boy became proficient in all scriptures. He was inclined towards Lord Krishna. According to his doctrine of Suddhadvaita, the visible world is real and the living beings are the forms of the Lord - BhagavatSwarupa and the ultimate association-Sayujya of Sree Krishna dwelling or pervading in loka in the real mukthi-salvation. A living creature is as real as God but in reality it is only a part and it is to serve Him. Complete surrender to God is Brahma-Sambanda. Sree Krishna is our protector. Vallabhacharya laid the foundation of Pustimarga of devotion and expressed his full confidence in the divine sport of the Lord revealed in BhagavatPurana.

## Ramakrishna Paramahansa

The following are extracts from the article entitled 'My master' by Swami Vivekananda (Bhavan's Journal Jan.1-15, 1987)

"A child was born of poor Brahmin parents on the eighteenth of February, 1836 in one of the remote villages of Bengal. The father and mother were very orthodox people. The child remembered his past birth and was conscious for what purpose he came into the world". After a short time the boy became fully convinced that the aim of all secular learning was mere material advancement and nothing more and he resolved to give up study and devote himself solidly to the pursuit of spiritual knowledge. He went to a place near Calcutta and became a temple priest. In the temple was the image of 'Blissful Mother'. The boy had to conduct the worship morning and evening and by degrees this one idea filled his mind, "Is there anything behind this image? Is it true that there is a Mother of Bliss in the universe? Is it true that she lives and guides the universe or is it all a dream? Is there any reality in religion?" This idea took possession of the boy and his whole life became concentrated on that. This thought whether God can be seen, which was uppermost in his mind, gained in strength everyday until he could think of nothing else. And that one idea was in his mind everyday. "Is it true that Thou exist, O Mother? Why don't thou not speak? Art thou dead?" He then left the temple and lived in a nearby wood.

He had heard that the Mother never comes until everything had been given up for her. The moment people really wanted her with their whole soul, and nothing else, that moment she would come. So he wanted to be exact even on the place of matter. He threw away all the little property he had and took a



Ramanuja

vow that he would never touch money and this one idea 'I will not touch money' became a part of him.

The other idea that came to his mind was that lust was the other enemy. Man is a soul and soul is sexless, neither man nor woman. The idea of sex and the idea of money were the two things he thought, that prevented him from seeing the mother. Every woman was his mother; he must bring himself to the state when he would see nothing but Mother in every woman. He carried it out in his life.

So days, weeks, months passed in a continuous struggle of the soul to arrive at truth. The boy began to see visions. Mother herself became the teacher and initiated the boy into the truths he sought. Later, a sanyasi began to teach the boy the philosophy of the Vedas.

He was married early and when the wife learnt that her husband had become a religious enthusiast, she resolved to learn the truth. When she stood in her husband's presence, he at once admitted her right to his life. The young man fell at the feet of his wife and said "As for me, the Mother has shown me that she resides in every woman and so I have learnt to look upon every woman as Mother. That is the one idea I can have about you, but if you wish to drag me into the world, as I have been married to you, I am at your service". She quickly told him she had no wish to drag him down to a life of worldliness, but that all she desired was to remain near him to serve him and to learn, from him. She became one of his most devoted disciples.

The next desire that seized the soul of this man was to know the truth of various religions. From actual experience, he came to know that the goal of every

religion is the same, that each is trying to teach the same thing, the difference being largely in method and still more in language.

His hard earned jewels of spirituality for which he had given three quarters of his life were now ready to be given to humanity and there began his mission. His principle was first, form character, earn spirituality and results will come of themselves. His favourite illustration was, "when the lotus opens, the bees come of their own accord to seek the honey, so let the lotus of your character be full blown and the results will follow".

The idea which is perhaps the most vital is the wonderful truth, that the religions of the world are not contradictory or antagonistic. They are but phases of an eternal religion. Therefore we must respect all religions and we must try to accept them all with their differences.

The other idea of his life was intense love for others. The first part of my Masters life was spent in acquiring spirituality and the remaining years in distributing it. He had throat disorder but would insist in seeing all. When expostulated he replied, "I do not care, I will give up 20,000 such bodies to help one man. It is glorious to help even one man. When asked why he could not cure his disease, being a yogi he gently said, 'This mind has been given to the Lord. Do you mean to say that I should take it back and put it upon the body which is but a mere cage of the soul'".

Today the name of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa is known all over India to its millions of people. Nay, the power of that man has spread beyond India and if there has been a word of truth, a word of spirituality that I have spoken anywhere in the world, I owe it to my master; only the mistakes are mine. (Vivekananda).

The Ramakrishna Math has its permanent home in Belur on the banks of the Ganges in West Bengal with branches in different parts of the country and abroad as also the Ramakrishna Mission. The objectives of the Mission are (1) to conduct the activities of the movement for the establishment of fellowship among followers of different religions knowing them all to be so many forms of one eternal religion (2) to train men so as to make them competent to teach such knowledge or sciences as will be conducive to the material and spiritual welfare of the masses (3) to promote and encourage arts and industries and (4) to introduce and spread among the people in general, Vedantic and other religious ideals in the light of the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. With the realisation of the non-dual spirit, Ramakrishna's life had become full.

#### **Swami Vivekananda**

Swami Vivekananda, Narendranath Datta, as he was

called in his premonastic days, was born on January 12, 1863. Right from childhood, Narendranath was attracted to spiritual matters and stories of the epics left a deep impression on him. In 1881 Narendranath first met Sri Ramakrishna and asked him 'Sir, have you seen God?' The reply was "yes, I have seen him as only more intensely". Narendranath felt here was one whocould assure him from his ownexperience that God existed.

Gradually, Narendranath was drawn to Sri Ramakrishna and became his disciple. After the passing away of the Master, Narendranath travelled within the country with a desire to know India better. In 1890, taking leave of Mother Sarada Devi he travelled on a pilgrimage and coming to Kanyakumari swam across the sea to a rock and sitting there spent the night in deep meditation. He took the decision to go to the West to seek help for the poor of India and thus give shape to his life's mission. At the place of the Maharaja of Khetri, he assumed the name of Vivekananda.

*(To be continued...)*

*- 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*

# Frontier Concepts in Education: The Agenda

The outcome of university education in this new era of globalization should reflect the following:

- to provide general education of the highest quality and bring forth a new generation of holistically educated persons who would apply what they learn to the lives they wish to lead
- to provide knowledge that is most valuable, enduring and timeless that will prepare students to live a full and rich life
- to satisfy the human spirit in its quest for knowledge, “to strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield” (Alfred Tennyson)
- to develop reasoning faculty through discussion with fellow students and faculty members
- to develop sensitivity to arts and culture that will act as insurance against barbarism and inhumanity
- to be in touch with great ideas and forces that have shaped human civilization
- to take to learning purely for the sake of learning
- to cultivate ‘thinking’ and ‘thinking ethically’
- to understand life beyond borders and
- to cultivate humanity.

## Importance of Liberal Studies

The new agenda seeks to introduce Liberal Studies to achieve breadth of knowledge, effective citizenship, appreciation of pluralism and multiculturalism, leading to a global perspective and a synergy of varying ideas that have shaped human civilization. Mentkowski, Director of Research, Alverno College, sums it well: “What is needed to prepare students for today’s world is to integrate the liberal arts and the professional school. The liberal arts have to do what the professional school does; the professional school has to do what the liberal arts school does.”<sup>1</sup>

Universities must look at new approaches to undergraduate and graduate courses with a strong focus on Liberal Studies. A four year BA (Hons) degree programme in Liberal Studies would be one way of achieving the objectives listed above. This starts with the premise that learning should be de-linked from utilitarian purpose. It is to be free from ‘technogenic’ and ‘sociogenic’ models as learning is not to be wholly linked either with practical subjects such as Business or Commerce or Management nor is it to be meant only for social upgradation. The present article seeks a return to university learning as it was originally conceived-to be concerned with issues which are “fundamentally important to know in order to be a human being, a humane citizen of this world.”<sup>2</sup>

The aim of these degree courses should be to promote cultural literacy. It is an integrated approach to studies in different disciplines replacing either/or choice to ‘both’. Education here is both ‘inclusive’ and ‘exclusive’. It is inclusive in its study of different civilizations relating to Literature, Arts, Philosophy, Politics, Sociology, Economics and Sciences in order to develop a well-reasoned regard and respect for pluralism and multiculturalism. The course is exclusive as the students can choose any one of the disciplines to major in it. The students are taught to understand the history and tradition of the field he/she selects, the social and economic dimensions that impacted the development in that field (art/literature/science), through several centuries and the inherent ethical and moral issues. The emphasis is on both ‘breadth’ and ‘specialization’ with its focus on:

- holism
- connected learning and
- a wide-ranging intellectual analysis.

## The Curriculum for 4-year Degree Course in Liberal Studies

The four year first degree courses comprising eight semesters will be based on credit system with 70 per cent of the credits to be acquired in the papers related to the major disciplines. The other 30 per cent is to be from disciplines allied to, but other than the one the student chooses to major from.



The allied courses (other than the 'major' student opts for) to be pursued for the 30 per cent credit will be for all the four year and involve:

#### First year:

- Writing skills (Research papers, science reports, political analysis, book review, etc.)
- Software programming for academic purposes and judicious skill in the selection of Internet references
- Logical and Critical thinking in relation to select texts
- Students will be examined in all these three units for 30 per cent of the required credits. A minimum of 60 per cent or 'A' grade is required in the Allied Courses to be eligible for a degree.

#### Second year:

- Applied Ethics
- World History of Music/Dance/Theatre
- World History of Painting and Sculpture
- World History of Architecture
- Archaeology
- Environmental sustainability
- Gender Studies

Students must attend all the lectures and choose *any two units* for written assignments and oral presentations for 30 per cent of the required credits. A minimum of 60 per cent or 'A' grade is required in the Allied Courses to be eligible for a degree.

#### Third Year:

- History of Ideas
- Cultural Studies
- History of Religion and Philosophy
- Human Motivation, Behaviour and Development
- Sciences in relation to Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Since Industrial Revolution)
- Impact of Science and Technology on Arts, Literature, Religion and Human Behaviour

Students must attend all the lectures and choose *any two areas* for a short term paper with evidence of study and research—This is also towards 30 per cent of the required credits. A

minimum of 60 per cent or 'A' grade is required in the Allied Courses to be eligible for a degree.

#### Fourth Year:

##### *Dissertation*

In the final year, students have to submit a mini-dissertation on any one of the above topics and this should be an Interdisciplinary Project for the required 30 per cent credits. A minimum of 60 per cent or 'A' grade is required to be eligible for a degree. Major disciplines for 70 per cent Credits can be from Humanities or Social Science or Natural Sciences.

**Dr. Hema V. Raghavan**  
*retired from Delhi*  
*University where she served*  
*as Dean of Students'*  
*Welfare and also as*  
*Principal of Gargi College.*  
*She continues her passion*  
*to educate the youth to*  
*'cultivate humanity'*  
*through her writings,*



*lectures and personal interaction. She has written a book on Samuel Beckett and many articles on English Literature. Her book on The Grotesque as Style in the Plays of Beckett is under print. She has edited a book on Fostering Consumerism. Currently she is engaged in writing a book on To Deny Religion its Nothingness as a part of a project on promoting interfaith Harmony.*

**Source: Frontier Concepts in Education, a book by Dr. Hema V. Raghavan, WordsWorth India, Delhi, India**

##### *References:*

1. Mentkowski, M., 'Accessible and adaptable elements of Alverno student assessment-as-learning: Strategies and Challenges for peer review', in C. Bryan & K. Clegg (Eds.), *Innovative Assessment in Higher Education* (pp. 48-63). London, 2006.
2. Allan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind* op. cit.

# Ramakrishna Paramhansa

*God can be realized through all paths. All religions are true. The important thing is to reach the roof. You can reach it by stone stairs or by wooden stairs or by bamboo steps or by a rope. You can also climb up by a bamboo pole.*

**-Ramakrishna Paramhansa**

Ramakrishna was one of the greatest religious leaders ever born in India. He believed that every individual must have only one aim in life i.e., the realization of the Ultimate Reality. To achieve this aim, one of the preconditions is the purity of mind. He also played a significant role in the Bengal Renaissance of the 19th century. His disciple, Swami Vivekananda, founded the Rama Krishna Mission after his demise, to propagate his teachings throughout the world.

## Early Life

If you first fortify yourself with the true knowledge of the Universal Self, and then live in the midst of wealth and worldliness, surely they will in no way affect you.

The original name of Ramakrishna Paramhansa was Gadadhar Chattopadhyay. He was born into a poor and orthodox Brahmin family on 18 February, 1836 in Kamarpukur, Hooghly district of West Bengal. His parents were Khudiram Chattopadhyaya and Chandramani Devi.

Though Gadadhar was very reluctant going to school, he had a God-gifted ability of painting and creating clay models. He was also good at learning things. He easily mastered the tales, based upon the religion. Young Gadadhar loved the nature so much that he used to spend much of his time in orchards and on the river-banks. After the death of his father in 1843, the responsibilities of the family were handled by his elder brother Ramkumar. Ramkumar left home for Calcutta and started teaching Sanskrit in a local school. Ramkumar also served as a priest at different socio-religious functions. Young Gadadhar, back in his village started performing regular worshipping of their family-deity.

## Dakshineswar

To work without attachment is to work without the expectation of reward or fear of any punishment in this world or the next. Work so done is a means to the end, and God is the end.



Few months later, Ramkumar was invited to Dakshineswar temple by Rani Rasmoni, the founder of the temple. Ramkumar was appointed as the chief-priest of the temple. In 1852, Ramakrishna went to Calcutta and started assisting his brother at the same temple. In 1856, after the death of Ramkumar, Ramakrishna took his place as the chief-priest of the Kali temple. It is believed that the name Ramakrishna was given to Gadadhar by the son-in-law of Rani Rasmoni.

After being given more responsibilities, Ramkrishna began to spend much time in the "Thakur-Ghar" (home of the Deity). He considered Goddess Kali as the mother of all. He wanted to see the glimpse of the God. At times, he would go into the jungle and spend the entire night worshipping Goddess Kali. The activities of Ramakrishna were viewed by many as gimmick. Many believed that Ramakrishna had lost his sensibilities. With an effort to bring Ramakrishna back into the normal life, her mother began to search for a bride. In 1859, Ramakrishna was married to five year old Sarada.

Sri Ramakrishna was the most 'rational mystic'. With scientific precision he put forward in most simple terms, as parables and stories, the eternal truth regarding God and God realization. He talked about

*His disciple, Swami Vivekananda, founded the Rama Krishna Mission after his demise, to propagate his teachings throughout the world*

God only after directly experiencing the reality of God. To get rid of the thought that he belonged to a higher brahmanical caste, he began to eat food cooked by the shudras or lower-caste.

#### **Advaita Vedanta**

A wandering monk, known as Totapuri, initiated Ramakrishna in the Advaita Vedanta. The initiation took place in the city of Dakshineswar. It is said that after being initiated by Totapuri, Rama Krishna remained in a state of absolute meditation, for a period of approximately six months.

#### **Sarada Devi**

At the age of eighteen, Sarada, the bride of the Ramakrishna, was sent to Dakshineswar to join her husband. It was believed that the Ramakrishna regarded Sarada as the holy mother. Sarada Devi is considered as the first disciple of Ramakrishna. Even after Ramakrishna's death in 1886, Sarada Devi led the movement and worked hard to make it a success.

#### **Vivekananda**

Ramakrishna met Vivekananda for the first time in November 1881 when Vivekananda visited Dakshineswar to know if the God really exists. In his reply Ramakrishna said, "Yes, I see God, just as I see you here, only in a much intense sense. God can be realized."

At first Vivekananda did not believe Ramakrishna. He felt, how such a simple man could see the God. But, gradually he started developing faith in Ramkrishna. Few days later, Vivekananda realized that Ramakrishna's words were honest and uttered

*With scientific precision he put forward in most simple terms, as parables and stories, the eternal truth regarding God and God realization*

from a deep experience. Vivekananda started visiting Dakshineswar frequently and a relationship of "Master and disciple" developed between the two.

#### **Final Days**

Travel in all the four quarters of the earth, yet you will find nothing anywhere. Whatever there is, is only here.

In 1885 Ramakrishna suffered from throat cancer. In order to consult the best physicians of Calcutta, Ramakrishna was shifted to Shyampukur by his disciples. But with the time, his health started deteriorating and he was taken to a large house at Cossipore. His condition worsened and on 16 August, 1886, he expired at the Cossipore garden house. After the passing away of Ramakrishna, Sarada became a religious leader in her own right. With time, Ramakrishna came to be known as Ramakrishna Paramahansa. The monastic disciples formed a fellowship at a half-ruined house at Baranagar, headed by Vivekananda. This was the initial stage of Ramakrishna Mission.

#### **Ramakrishna Mission**

Many good sayings are to be found in holy books, but merely reading them will not make one religious.

Swami Vivekananda, the foremost disciple of Ramakrishna Paramahansa, founded the Rama Krishna Mission to promote the teachings of his Guru. Headquartered at the Ramakrishna Ashram of Belur, the mission aims at helping people in attaining salvation.

**Source: [www.culturalindia.net](http://www.culturalindia.net), [www.iloveindia.com](http://www.iloveindia.com)**

# Festivals of the Month—Australia

## Cygnnet Folk Festival—10-12 January 2014

Cygnnet Folk Festival celebrated at the small village of Cygnnet, situated in the Huon Valley in the bay of Port Cygnnet, presents a tremendous variety of music, dance, and related arts, over three wonderful days.



Cygnnet Folk Festival



Flickerfest

## Flickerfest 2014, 23rd International Short Film Festival—10-19 January 2014, Bondi Beach, Sydney

Australian & International Short Film Festival is an Academy-accredited short film festival with films in competition. The Flickerfest programme consists of shorts films screening in competition and non-competitive showcases.



The Illawarra Folk Festival



Sydney Festival

## The Illawarra Folk Festival—16-19 January 2014, Bulli Showgrounds, Wollongong

The Illawarra Folk Festival is an annual event presented by volunteers from the Illawarra Folk Club. The festival is 4 days of folk, world, acoustic, Celtic, traditional folk concerts, dances, workshops, parades, sessions with over 150 international, national and local acts.

## Sydney Festival—9-26 January 2014

Each year every January, Sydney Festival enlivens and transforms Sydney with a bold cultural celebrations including events with artists from Australia and abroad covering dance, theatre, music, visual arts, cross media and forums.



Earth Frequency

## Australia Day—26 January 2014

26 January, Australia Day which also happens to be Indian Republic Day, is one of the greatest national celebrations observed throughout Australia and abroad every year. Australia Day celebrations include theatrical performances, music, sporting events, speech days, multicultural and indigenous performances. Both Australia Day and Indian Republic Day are celebrated with great pomp and gaiety by the people and the respective governments across the nations.

## The Riverboats Music Festival—14-16 February 2014—Echuca-Moama, Melbourne

The Riverboats Music Festival is the Murray River's premiere contemporary music event staged in the twin-towns of Echuca-Moama.

## Earth Frequency—14-17 February 2014—South-East Queensland

Earth Freq is a music, arts, lifestyle and environment festival. The concept of Earth Freq is not just a festival or party, but a gathering of different tribes and a weekend of connection, intention and inspiration.

## National Multicultural Festival—7-9 February 2014—Canberra

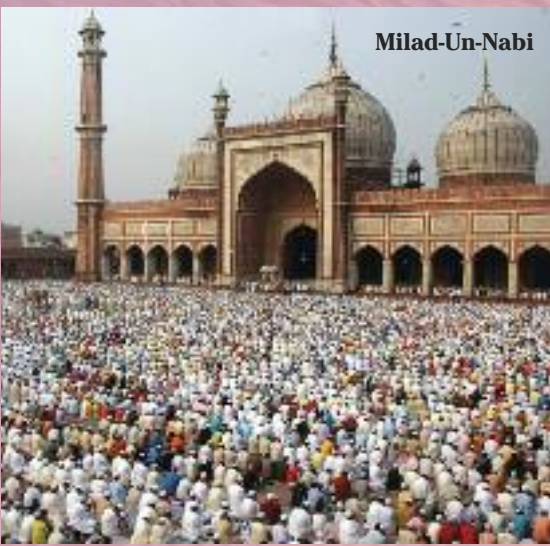
A multicultural kaleidoscope of colours, sounds, sights, flavours and fun will transform Canberra at 2014 Centenary National Multicultural Festival at city centre in Canberra.

Source: [www.festivalaustralia.com.au](http://www.festivalaustralia.com.au)



**Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam**  
"The Whole world is but one family"

# Festivals of the Month—India



## Milad-Un-Nabi—13 January 2014

Milad-Un-Nabi, Barawafat or Mawlid meaning “Birth of the Prophet” is the observance of the birthday of the Islamic prophet Muhammad.

## Lohri—13 January 2014

Lohri celebrated every year on 13th of January is a festival to worship fire.

## Makar Sankranti—14 January 2014

Makar Sankranti is a major harvest festival celebrated in various parts of India. This festival comes as Thanksgiving to Mother Nature for an abundance of crops, wellbeing and prosperity.

## Pongal—14 January 2014

Pongal festival is one of the biggest festivals celebrated in South India and is a thanksgiving for the plentiful harvest received.

## Vasant Panchami—4 February 2014

Vasant Panchami, or India’s spring festival, is a Hindu event that includes special rituals and

highlights the start of spring.

## Guru Ravidas Jayanti—14 February 2014

Guru Ravidas Jayanti is celebrated to commemorate birthday of Guru Ravidas who preached social harmony and stood against caste discrimination and social injustice.

## Maha Shivaratri—27 February 2014

Maha Shivratri is a Hindu festival celebrated in reverence of Lord Shiva meaning the great night of Shiva. Devotees who perform sincere worship of Lord Shiva on the auspicious day of Shivaratri are absolved of sins and attain moksha.

Source: [www.panchangam.org](http://www.panchangam.org),  
[www.islamiccentre.org](http://www.islamiccentre.org),  
[www.mahashivratri.org](http://www.mahashivratri.org),  
[www.hindudevotionalblog.com](http://www.hindudevotionalblog.com),  
[www.drikpanchang.com](http://www.drikpanchang.com)

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# Vedanta and Modern Science

Knowledge, according to Vedanta, comprises the owing of *kshetra* and of *kshetrajna*. The physical sciences provide us only the knowledge of *kshetra*. Then there is the knower consciousness, the observer. A full picture of reality will include both these kinds of knowledge.

Swami Ranganathananda explains: “Till now Western physical science considered only one aspect of reality. The objective world observed by the senses and studied by the mind of the scientist. Even if there is an observer, it is converted to be a form of the *kshetra*. *Kshetra* in another form is the *kshetrajna*, they will say, following the nineteenth century materialistic theory.

But this is slowly changing. They are finding it impossible to convert consciousness into a piece of matter, impossible to derive consciousness from some material powers or forces. After a mature conclusion, they will recognise the truth that is expounded in the Gita. “Here is *kshetra*, here is *kshetrajna*, and when you investigate this *kshetrajna*, it looks as if there are so many *kshetrajnans*, but really there is only One *kshetrajna* and that manifests through all the *kshetras*”. Swami Ranganathananda thus argues that today’s knowledge of physical science is incomplete, because it knows only the *kshetra* and considers *kshetrajna* as a transformation of *kshetra*: “just Chemistry and Physics transformed into the brain and its thinking Power”.

A modern scientist studies the objective world. He does not take himself into account. He discovers many things about the world.

But the scientist as the observer or knower, as the Self, is ignored. “The observer is a tremendous datum, and cannot be reduced to a mere part of the observed data”.

It is a happy sign that science today attempts to extend the limits of man’s knowledge of cosmic unity. This basic unity towards which all knowledge leads to, was discovered by the *Upanishads* through the study of mind and through inward meditation.

As Swami Ranganathananda observes: “Modern science started with the exploration of the mysteries of external nature; but at the farthest end of this exploration, it finds itself face to face with the mystery of man and his mind, the deepest mystery of all.

It is there that we can discern the steady convergence of two of the greatest human disciplines—the *ancient Vedanta and modern science*” (*The Message of the Upanishads*, Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1980, p.111).

According to Vedanta, the universe as perceived by our senses, is only an appearance. It is not what it seems. The modern scientist will agree with this.

Vedanta asserts that, beneath this appearance, this flux, there is an essential, unchanging Reality, which it calls Brahman. But at the mention of Brahman, the scientist becomes skeptical. “And rightly so; for none of his apparatus is capable of detecting the existence of this fundamental Reality....because scientific analysis depends, necessarily, upon the evidence of the five senses, and Brahman is beyond all sense perception” (Christopher Isherwood, “*What Is Vedanta? An Introduction*,” *Living Wisdom: Vedanta in a World Community*, Mylapore: Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1995, p.14). “Long before post-Newtonian Physics ‘discovered’ that matter is essentially energy in drag:  $E = Mc^2$ , the sages had intuited that the physical universe is an emanation of that omnipotent Force, which they called Shakti (Richard Schiffman, “The Wisdom Teachings of India”, *Living Wisdom: Vedanta in a World Community*, p.65). *Taittiriyanopanishad* teaches us that “Brahman is he from whom all beings arise, by whom all beings are sustained, into whom all beings enter ...” (3, 1).

Creation, according to this view, “is neither static, nor at base even material, but a dynamism of ceaseless transformation, the ecstatic dance of the Divine Mother, Kali.

The astrophysicist, the molecular biologist, the sub-atomic physicist, could only agree!” For they now believe that “matter only appears solid and continuous from the Vantage point of our narrowly time-bound and sense-bound mind ...” (Richard Schiffman, “The Wisdom Teachings of India”, *Living Wisdom: Vedanta in a World Community*, p.65). Schiffman further observes: “The sages would have found nothing to be surprised at in this! But unlike the material scientist, who has still proceeded no further than seeing the physical creation as a complex fabric of transmutation—vibratory energy in different modes and frequencies of expression—the ancients did not stop there. They went on to trace the arising waves and currents of *Shakti*, divine force, back to their origin, the shoreless

expanse of oceanic Consciousness, the supersubstance of creation itself. And then they went still further, tracing consciousness back to its transcendent source, the incomprehensible fullness of the Absolute..." (Ibid. p.65).

Swami Swahananda explains: "Modern science now accepts the theory that the essence of all matter is energy, a theory which unifies the physical world. Long before the birth of Einstein, this unity was declared by the sages of the Upanishads who realised this through Inspiration, or intuition." ("Peace", *Living Wisdom: Vedanta in a World Community*, p. 90).

Vedanta held the faith that unity in variety is the plan of nature. And man can approach this unity from the outside as well as from the inside. Swami Ranganathananda explains: "All science is the search for unity. Vedanta discovered this unity in the Atman; it followed its own method relevant to this field of inquiry. But it illustrated its conclusions with whatever positive knowledge was available at the time. In recent centuries, this knowledge has been advanced radically and vastly by modern science, the impact of which on Vedanta, however, has been most wholesome. In fact, Vedanta hopes for and welcomes further radical advances in modern science by which its own spiritual vision of the One in the many may be corroborated by positive scientific knowledge, so that the spirituality of science and the spirituality of religion may flow as a united stream to fertilize all aspects of human life" (*The Message of the Upanishads*, p.7).

Swami Vivekananda briefly sums up this idea thus: "All science is bound to come to this conclusion in the long run. Manifestation, and not creation, is the word of science today, and the Hindu is only glad that what he has been cherishing in his bosom for ages is going to be taught in more forcible language, and with further light from the latest conclusions of science" (*Complete Works*, Vol. I, Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, Eleventh edition, 1991, p.15).

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan explains this idea further in his masterpiece *Indian Philosophy*. According to him, the *Gita* recognises two kinds of knowledge—"that which seeks to understand the phenomena of existence externally through intellect and that which by the force of intuition grasps the ultimate principle behind the apparent series." He elaborates the idea thus: "When subject to the logical intellect, the spirit of man tends to lose itself in nature and identify itself with its activities. To

grasp the truth of existence in its source and reality within, it has to free itself from the snare of false identification" (*Indian Philosophy Vol I* Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 555).

Dr. Radhakrishnan here finds distinction between the two terms—*Vijnana* and *Jnana*. According to him, while *Vijnana* is the intellectual apprehension of the details of existence, *Jnana* is the integral knowledge of the common foundation of all existence. And both have the pursuit to realise the oneness of the things in the internal spirit.

Scientific knowledge, Dr. Radhakrishnan says, is said to be dominated by *rajas*, while spiritual knowledge is permeated by the quality of *sattva*. "If we mistake the partial truths of science for the whole truth of spirit, we have the inferior knowledge, where the lowest quality of *tamas* predominates" (*The Gita XVIII*. 20 - 22).

The powers of science respecting nature and technology "are awesome, but its parade of marvels proceeds from a line of inquiry that is powerful and at the same time limited. The usual way to register its limitation is to say that science can't deal with values and existential meanings, but the more important likelihood is that there are things it cannot connect with—things that are as real as material objects, and that affect us as much if not more, but which scientific instruments don't register" (Huston Smith, "*Religion in the Twenty-First Century*", *Living Wisdom: Vedanta in a World Community*, p. 118). As Smith puts it, "this withdrawal of science to its important but not omniscient domain allows religion more intellectual room than the twentieth century recorded it, for religion specialises in the invisibles that science cannot touch. The stage is being set, it seems, for the twenty-first century to accept religion (and its ally, art) as equal partners to science in discerning the full range of reality".

As Whitefield once observed, "the future of civilization depends, more than on anything else, on the way the two most powerful forces of history, science and religion, settle into relationship with each other" (qtd. In Huston Smith, "*Religion in the Twenty—First Century*", *Living Wisdom: Vedanta in a World Community*, p.119).

**-V. Nithyanantha Bhat, Director, Sukrtindra Oriental Research Institute, Kochi, India**

***Bhavan's Journal, May 15, 2013***

# Healthy Yoga Lifestyle—Simplified for Lifestyle Disorders\*

Thanks to automation in the name of convenience and comfort, nuclear family with consumeristic and self-centric living style which have affected human physical, emotional and spiritual health. Fast paced life and excess use of junk foods and modern gadgets namely the car, TV, cell phone, microwave oven, refrigerator, air conditioner etc. with cordless & remote controls leading to sedentary and addictive lifestyle, causing serious lifestyle disorders with life threatening morbidity and even death. Environmental pollution due to automobile exhausts and industrial effluents, electromagnetic radiation and stressful living are distancing the man away from nature contributing to increased risk of non-communicable diseases namely cardiovascular diseases (heart attack and stroke), cancers, chronic respiratory diseases (COPD and asthma) and diabetes. Role of industrial farming and production of foods with extensive use of insecticides, storage and processing of fast foods with chemical cocktail followed by excess consumption, need extensive study in understanding the possible reasons for the increase in cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, obesity, allergy etc.

Obesity, stress, wrong food habits, lack of exercise, sedentary lifestyle are playing a major role in causing type 2 diabetes, hypertension and cardiac problems. Yoga Way of Life— means the way of life based on the vision of Oneness. It is a complete science for living a simple life in harmony with nature and whole creation. Nature, they say heals. It is a stress buster too. Childhood and adult obesity have become endemic in developed and developing

countries due to consumerism aggressively pursued by processed food industry with chemicals acting as slow poisons. Stress, a man made health problem is increasing due to competitive, fast moving and ambitious lifestyle.

Globalization of unhealthy lifestyles away from nature will lead to increased cardiovascular disease and diabetes. Tobacco accounts for almost 6 million deaths every year. About 3.2 million deaths annually can be attributed to insufficient physical activity. Approximately 1.7 million deaths are attributed to low fruit and vegetable consumption. In terms attributable deaths, the leading NCD risk factor globally is elevated blood pressure (to which 13% global deaths are attributed) followed by tobacco use (9%), raised blood glucose (6%), physical inactivity (6%) and overweight and obesity (5%) ([www.who.int](http://www.who.int)).

World health statistics 2012 report puts the spotlight on the growing problem of the non-communicable disease burden. It is estimated that mortality from diabetic and heart disease cost India about \$210 billion every year and is expected to increase to \$335 billion in the next ten years. The Harvard School of Public Health has, in a study on economic losses due to non-communicable diseases (NCDs), estimated that the economic burden of these ailments for India will be close to \$6.2 trillion for the period 2012-30, a figure that is equivalent to nearly nine times the total health expenditure during the previous 19 years of \$710 billion. NCDs, chiefly cardiovascular diseases (including heart





disease and stroke), diabetes, cancer and chronic respiratory diseases, are defined as diseases of long duration and generally slow progression. They are the major cause of adult mortality and illness worldwide.

Yoga based lifestyle is an old traditional and spiritual way of living for prevention and management of chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, asthma, obesity, neuromuscular and psychiatric illnesses. Yoga in addition to physical postures and breathing techniques to tune the body, includes meditation which helps in control of mind and blissful living. Yoga's ability to reduce stress and improve the quality of life is well recognized.

Patanjali defines yoga as a process of gaining control over mind with power of concentration. Yoga based lifestyle consists of mainly (1) Yama (principles of moral code); (2) Niyama (personal discipline); (3) Yogic asanas and (4) Pranayama (breath control), for body tuning; (5) Pratyahara (detachment); (6) Dharana; (7) Dhyana and (8) Samadhi (Meditation for relaxation and blissful feeling).

Meditation is conscious sleep, while sleep is unconscious meditation. It is the journey toward Self, transcending body and mind. It is an art of living in the present moment with cessation of thoughts. Meditation (Vipassana, Yognidra or Mindfulness) has become an important component of mind-body medicine for promotion of optimal

health. Mindfulness based stress reduction programme (MBSR) is being practiced in over 200 hospitals in US and is currently the focus of a number of research studies. Dean Ornish has proved that Yogic Way of Life, vegetarian diet and stress management causing reversal of blockages in the coronary arteries. Yoga based lifestyle may be simply described as simple living and positive & spiritual thinking, regularity in food & exercise, devotion and commitment to the task undertaken, yogasana, Pranayama and meditation at least 30 min in a day for integration of Body-Mind-Soul, contented life with service to the needy community. Yoga based lifestyle promotes innate immunity, strengthens resistance to infections, prevents lifestyle disorders and thus leads to a healthy, peaceful and productive living.

**Dr. B.C. Harinath, Director,  
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of Medical Sciences,  
Sevagram (Wardha), India**



*\*paper accepted for presentation at 10th International Conference on Ayurveda & Lifestyle Disorders, February 15 – 16, 2014 organized by AAPNA in collaboration with Bharat Seva Sansthan, Lucknow.*



# *Farewell to the Man Known as Mr Multiculturalism - Dr Stepan Kerkyasharian AO*

On Tuesday 10 December a myriad of ethnic, religious and community leaders gathered at the Le Montage Function Centre in Lilyfield to celebrate the achievements of Dr Stepan Kerkyasharian AO, the retiring Chairperson of the NSW Community Relations Commission. The special guests on the evening were the Minister for Citizenship and Communities the Hon. Victor Dominello and Senator Concetta Fierravanti-Wells, representing the Prime Minister Tony Abbott.

The evening was a night to celebrate a man who has dedicated himself to the public service for the last 34 years and since 1989 as the Chair of the Community Relations Commission, previously known as the Ethnic Affairs Commission. It was a night filled with energetic dance from the Armenian Dance Company, followed by beautiful opera singers and a number of speeches all paying tribute to the successes of Stepan Kerkyasharian.

Stepan Kerkyasharian, who is of Armenian descent, arrived in Australia in 1967 with a dream to build himself a better life. He was born in Cyprus the son of Armenian refugees. At the age of 17 he moved to England where he worked, and later married before deciding that his future was in Australia.

He was associated with the Armenian community firstly in Melbourne where he taught in their community language school. Then in radio through SBS where he was a key player in helping to establish SBS television.

In 1989 he was appointed to the Chair of the Ethnic Affairs Commission where he has seen it evolve into something that the state of NSW can be truly proud of - the Community Relations Commission (CRC). He has served seven state premiers and numerous ministers over the years. But the key focus has always been to promote community harmony through difficult times.

The Community Relations Commission under the leadership of Stepan Kerkyasharian has taken a leading and proactive role to ensure that racism has no place in our multicultural society. Importantly, he helped enshrine in law the principles of multiculturalism. He, along with his fellow



**Dr Stepan  
Kerkyasharian  
making his  
farewell speech**

commissioners, has assisted communities through the grants program administered through the CRC. He established inter-faith dialogue amongst the various religious organisations in NSW. Along with the National Multicultural Marketing Awards, Premiers Harmony Dinner and Multicultural Media Awards, all which have been put in place to promote the benefits of multiculturalism in an ever increasing globalised world.

Many people do not realise that behind the scenes, the Community Relations Commission has fostered the need to face challenges of racism and discrimination when they arise. Situations like the Cronulla Riots, the attacks on Indian students, the after-effects of the Bali Bombing, the repercussions of Nine-Eleven in New York. All these issues have an effect on the fabric of our society in NSW, and the CRC, in conjunction with various groups such as the NSW Police, religious leaders and community groups, continually work together to overcome misunderstandings within the wider community.

The culturally diverse communities of NSW have benefitted over the years through the various Government grant programs provided by the CRC. These grants, supported by the NSW Government



**Members of the NSW Federation of Community Language Schools with Dr Kerkyasharian with his wife Hilda and the Hon. Victor Dominello**

through the Community Relations Commission, have provided funding for numerous cultural and festive events that occur in NSW such as the Chinese New Year Celebrations, Polish Christmas in Darling Harbour, and for many other community groups to enhance the benefits of multiculturalism. For example, the sponsoring of the annual conference for community language schools which helps provide professional development training for over 56 language groups. All of the investment in multiculturalism will have a long term economic advantage to the NSW economy because if we are to succeed in a global economy we have to have the skills to harness these benefits.

The way Stepan Kerkyasharian has given his time and energy to make NSW a model of multiculturalism is not an understatement. His leadership has enabled so many ethnic groups to be part of Australian society but retain their identity of where they have come from. As a nation of migrants and with one in four of the people of NSW born overseas, Stepan Kerkyasharian felt it is important that the CRC continue to grow and develop to serve the ever changing demographics and communities of NSW.

Stepan Kerkyasharian's retirement will be a loss to NSW, but he leaves the State in a much better place with policies and procedures there to overcome any new challenges that arise. We sincerely wish him well in his retirement and now he will no doubt have more time to spend with his family after all those dedicated years of service.



**Stepan Kerkyasharian with the delegates from the NSW Federation of Community Language Schools**



**The organising committee with—centre front—Dr Kerkyasharian flanked by the Hon. Victor Dominello and Senator Concetta Fierravanti-Wells**



## *The Moral Basis of Vegetarianism*

*(Speech delivered by Mahatma Gandhi at a Social Meeting organised by the London Vegetarian Society, 20 November 1931)*

Mr, Chairman, Fellow Vegetarians, and Friends,

When I received the invitation to be present at this meeting, I need not tell you how pleased I was because it revived old memories and recollections of pleasant friendships formed with vegetarians. I feel especially honoured to find on my right, Mr. Henry Salt. It was Mr. Salt's book 'A Plea for Vegetarianism', which showed me why apart from a hereditary habit, and apart from my adherence to a vow administered to me by my mother, it was right to be a vegetarian. He showed me why it was a moral duty incumbent on vegetarians not to live upon fellow-animals. It is, therefore, a matter of additional pleasure to me that I find Mr. Salt in our midst.

I do not propose to take up your time by giving you my various experiences of vegetarianism nor do I want to tell you something of the great difficulty that faced me in London itself in remaining staunch to vegetarianism, but I would like to share with you some of the thoughts that have developed in me in connection with vegetarianism. Forty years ago I used to mix freely with vegetarians. There was at that time hardly a vegetarian restaurant in London that I had not visited. I made it a point, out of curiosity, and to study the possibilities of vegetarianism and vegetarian restaurants in London, to visit every one of them. Naturally, therefore, I came into close contact with many vegetarians. I found, at the tables, that largely the conversation turned upon food and disease. I found also that the vegetarians who were struggling to stick to their vegetarianism were finding it difficult from the health point of view.

I do not know whether, nowadays, you have those debates, but I used at that time to attend debates that were held between vegetarians and vegetarians and between vegetarians and non-vegetarians. I remember one such debate, between Dr. Densmore

and the late Dr. T.R. Allinson. Then vegetarians had a habit of talking of nothing but food and nothing but disease. I feel that that is the worst way of going about the business. I notice also that it is those persons who become vegetarians because they are suffering from some disease or other—that is, from purely the health point of view—it is those persons who largely fall back. I discovered that for remaining staunch to vegetarianism a man requires a moral basis.

For me that was a great discovery in my search after truth. At an early age, in the course of my experiments, I found that a selfish basis would not serve the purpose of taking a man higher and higher along the paths of evolution. What was required was an altruistic purpose. I found also that health was by no means the monopoly of vegetarians. I found many people having no bias one way or the other and that non-vegetarians were able to show, generally speaking, good health. I found also that several vegetarians found it impossible to remain vegetarians because they had made food a fetish and because they thought that by becoming vegetarians they could eat as much lentil, haricot, beans and cheese as they liked. Of course those people could not possibly keep their health.

Observing along these lines, I saw that a man should eat sparingly and now and then fast. No man or woman really ate sparingly or consumed just that quantity which the body requires and no more. We easily fall prey to the temptations of the palate, and therefore when a thing tastes delicious we do not mind taking a morsel or two more. But you cannot keep health under those circumstances. Therefore I discovered that in order to keep health, no matter what you ate, it was necessary to cut down the quantity of your food, and reduce the number of meals. Become moderate; err on the side of less, rather than on the side of more. When I invite friends to share their meals with me I never press them to take anything except only what they require. On the contrary, I tell them not to take a thing if they do not want it.



**Mahatma Gandhi at the LVS meeting,  
with Henry Salt to his right**

What I want to bring to your notice is that vegetarians need to be tolerant if they want to convert others to vegetarianism. Adopt a little humility. We should appeal to the moral sense of the people who do not see eye to eye with us. If a vegetarian became ill, and a doctor prescribed beef tea, then I would not call him a vegetarian. A vegetarian is made of sterner stuff. Why? Because it is for the building of the spirit and not of the body. Man is more than meat. It is the spirit in man for which we are concerned. Therefore vegetarians should have that moral basis—that a man was not born a carnivorous animal, but born to live on the fruits and herbs that the earth grows. I know we must all err I would give up milk if I could, but I cannot. I have made that experiment times without number. I could not, after a serious illness, regain my strength, unless I went back to milk. That has been the tragedy of my life. But the basis of my vegetarianism is not physical, but moral. If anybody said that I should die if I did not take beef tea or mutton, even on medical advice, I would prefer death. That is the basis of my vegetarianism.

I would love to think that all of us who called ourselves vegetarians should have that basis. There were thousands of meat-eaters who did not stay meat-eaters. There must be a definite reason for our making that change in our lives, from our adopting habits and customs different from society, even though sometimes that change may offend those nearest and dearest to us. Not for the world should you sacrifice a moral principle. Therefore the only basis for having a vegetarian society and proclaiming a vegetarian principle is, and must be,

a moral one. I am not to tell you, as I see and wander about the world, that vegetarians, on the whole, enjoy much better health than meat-eaters. I belong to a country which is predominantly vegetarian by habit or necessity. Therefore I cannot testify that that shows much greater endurance, much greater courage, or much greater exemption from disease. Because it is a peculiar, personal thing. It requires obedience, and scrupulous obedience, to all the laws of hygiene.

Therefore, I think that what vegetarians should do is not to emphasise the physical consequences of vegetarianism, but to explore the moral consequences. While we have not yet forgotten that we share many things in common with the beast, we do not sufficiently realise there are certain things which differentiate us from the beast. Of course, we have vegetarians in the cow and the bull—which are better vegetarians than we are—but there is something much higher which calls us to vegetarianism. Therefore, I thought that, during the few minutes which I give myself the privilege of addressing you, I would just emphasise the moral basis of vegetarianism. And I would say that I have found from my own experience, and the experience of thousands of friends and companions, that they find satisfaction, so far as vegetarianism is concerned, from the moral basis they have chosen for sustaining vegetarianism. In conclusion, I thank you all for coming here and allowing me to see vegetarians face to face. I cannot say I used to meet you forty or forty-two years ago. I suppose the faces of the London Vegetarian Society have changed. There are very few members who, like Mr. Salt, can claim association with the Society extending over forty years.

***Mr. Henry S. Salt was Assistant Master at Eaton 1875-1884, Honorary Secretary of the Humanitarian League, 1891-1919. He had been a vegetarian for over fifty years, and had never had reason to doubt the superiority of the diet. He was an octogenarian at the moment of Gandhi's speech and a writer whose opinion of the present 'civilisation' may be gathered from the title of his book 'Seventy years among Savages'.***

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

# *The Return of the Ugly American*

*New Delhi:* Nearly a month after American authorities arrested India's deputy consul general in New York, Devyani Khobragade, outside her children's school and charged her with paying her Indian domestic worker a salary below the minimum wage, bilateral relations remain tense. India's government has reacted with fury to the mistreatment of an official enjoying diplomatic immunity, and public indignation has been widespread and nearly unanimous. So, has an era of steadily improving ties between the two countries come to an end?

Judging from Indian leaders' statements, it would certainly seem so. India's mild-mannered Prime Minister Manmohan Singh declared that Khobragade's treatment was "deplorable." National Security Adviser Shivshankar Menon called her arrest "despicable" and "barbaric," and Foreign Minister Salman Khurshid refused to take a conciliatory phone call from US Secretary of State John Kerry.

Emotions have run high in India's Parliament and on television talk shows as well. Writing to her diplomatic colleagues after her arrest, Khobragade, who has denied the charges against her, noted that she "broke down many times," owing to "the indignities of repeated handcuffing, stripping, and cavity searches, swabbing," and to being held "with common criminals and drug addicts." A former Indian foreign minister, Yashwant Sinha, has publicly called for retaliation against gay American diplomats in India, whose sexual orientation and domestic arrangements are now illegal after a recent Supreme Court ruling. The government has not taken him seriously, but his suggestion indicates how inflamed passions have become.

Some retaliation has occurred. The initial American rationale (that foreign consuls in the US enjoy a lower level of immunity than other diplomats) led India's government to re-examine privileges enjoyed

by US consular officials that are unavailable to their Indian counterparts in the US. These privileges—including full-fledged diplomatic ID cards, access to the restricted customs areas of airports, tax-free shipments of items for personal consumption, and no questions asked about the terms of their employment of local domestic staff—were swiftly withdrawn. The cardinal principle of diplomatic relations is reciprocity, and India realized that it had been naïve in extending courtesies to the US that it was not receiving in return.

Likewise, the police have removed bollards and barriers that the US Embassy had unilaterally placed on the street in front of its complex in New Delhi, creating an obstacle to free circulation on a public road that India had tolerated in a spirit of friendship. (The government has, however, reiterated its commitment to the US Embassy's security, even reinforcing the police presence outside.)

Tempers remain inflamed, with US Ambassador Nancy Powell, in a New Year's message to Indians, ruefully acknowledging that ties have been "jolted by very different reactions to issues involving one of your consular officers and her domestic worker." Kerry has also expressed "regret" over the incident. But the US has shown no signs of moving to drop the charges to defuse the crisis.

Indians remain bewildered that the US State Department would so willfully jeopardize a relationship that American officials had been describing as "strategic" over a practice routinely followed by foreign diplomats for decades. Most developing-country diplomats take domestic staff with them on overseas assignments, paying them a good salary by their national standards, plus a cost differential for working aboard. In Khobragade's case, perquisites included a fully furnished room in a pricey Manhattan apartment, a television set, a mobile phone, medical insurance, and tickets home.

The cash part of the salary may be low by US standards—Khobragade herself, as a mid-ranking Indian diplomat, earns less than what the US considers a fair wage—but, with the other benefits, the compensation is attractive for a domestic helper. More to the point, Khobragade did not find her maid in the US labor market and “exploit” her; she brought her from India to help her in her representational duties, on an official passport, with a US visa given for that purpose. In almost no other country are local labor laws applied in such a manner to a foreign diplomat’s personal staff.

Privately, US diplomats express frustration at their helplessness in the face of theatrical grandstanding by the ambitious federal prosecutor, Preet Bharara, an Indian-American who has launched a series of high-profile cases against Indians in America. For once, however, the zealous Bharara seems to have slipped up, because Khobragade was arrested at a time when she enjoyed full diplomatic (not just consular) immunity as an adviser to India’s United Nations mission during the General Assembly. The State Department’s handling of the matter—which included approval of Khobragade’s arrest—has been, to say the least, inept.

Worse, just before the arrest, the maid’s family was spirited out of India on US visas for victims of human trafficking. The implication that an Indian diplomat in a wage dispute with her maid is guilty of human trafficking understandably riles Indian diplomats as much as the treatment of Khobragade after she was detained. The American habit of imposing its worldview self-righteously on others is deeply unwelcome. To most Indians, common discourtesy cannot be repackaged as moral virtue.

Indian-American relations had been strengthening, owing to both sides’ shared commitment to democracy, common concerns about China, and

increasing trade and investment. The Khobragade affair suggests, however, that all of this is not enough: sustaining a strategic partnership requires, above all, mutual respect.

India had handled American diplomats with a generosity of spirit that it felt the bilateral relationship deserved. Now, with the same spirit shown to be lacking from the other side, the friendship has suffered. Until the US displays appropriate deference to the sensitivities, pride, and honor of other peoples and cultures, it will continue to be resented around the world.

***Shashi Tharoor, a Minister of State for Human Resource Development and a former UN Under-Secretary General, is the Author of a dozen books, including India from Midnight to the Millennium and Nehru: the Invention of India and his most recent, Pax Indica: India and the World of the 21st Century.***



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# The Idea of God

Man was perhaps never more inspired than when he thought of the idea of God or Supreme Power masterminding the cosmos, creating it, supporting it, destroying it and restarting it and so on *ad infinitum*.

The earliest evidence of this idea can be traced to the most ancient literature of the world, namely the Vedas.

Our ancestors had not developed a scientific understanding of natural phenomena such as lightning, thunder and rains which happened arbitrarily and were sometimes beneficial, sometimes devastating and destructive. The best explanation they could think of was that these phenomena were the work of a higher and more powerful class of beings existing beyond the skies.

From this idea, the next step was to propitiate these beings through sacrificial rituals such as offering of oblations etc.

In due course, these higher beings came to be classified as Devas, numbering 33 in all, namely 8 Vasus in the terrestrial sphere, 11 Rudras in the atmospheric region, and 12 Adityas in the outer space. These three worlds were described as *Prithvi* (Earth), *Dhyau* (Heaven) and *Antariksha* (Sky).

Agni was considered the most powerful of the Vasus, Sankara among the Rudras and Krishna among the Adityas.

In the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna the Avatar describes Himself by these names of Devas. Together with Brahamanaspati, the first created being and Devendra, the ruler of the Devas, there were 33 Gods in all. In due course Vishnu and Sankara (Siva) emerged as the two supreme Gods.

Further elaboration on the idea of God can be seen in the Puranas of which Vishnupurana and Srimad Bhagavatam are considered as the most authoritative.

The two Itihasas viz., Ramayana of Valmiki and Mahabharata of Veda Vyasa illustrate the doctrine of Gods' descent to the human world as Sri Rama, Sri Krishna and other Avatars. Narasimha and Trivikrama avatars illustrate God's transcendence and unsurpassable power as well as grace and compassion towards those devoted to Him.



The Vishnu Sahasranama stotram, taught by Bhisma to Yudhishtira describes God in a thousand names and is perhaps the most comprehensive definition of God. It is not easy to describe the Infinite in finite terms and therefore the stotram describes God as Nirguna as well as Gunabhrit.

Bhagavad Gita which is the most influential among the holy scriptures of Hindus and has gained global appreciation as the best guide book for human action, provides the most comprehensive idea of God as described by the Avatar of Sri Krishna Himself.

In the early centuries A.D., Vaishnava Alwars propagated the worship of God in Archa, or temple images. In due course, 108 shrines sung by the Alwars have come to be known as Divya Kshetras.

Among them the charismatic images of God in Srirangam, Tirumala (Tirupati) and Kanchi have become the most famous.

The medieval period belonged to the Acharyas,



## *The Vishnu Sahasranamastotram, taught by Bhishma to Yudhishtira describes God in a thousand names and is perhaps the most comprehensive definition of God*

Sankara, Ramanuja and Madhva and a few others who established various schools of Vedanta to provide philosophic explanation for the relationship between man, world and God highlighting the various paths towards union with the divine such as Jnana, Bhakti and Karma yoga.

The Tirupati shrine of Lord Venkateswara is visited by over 10,000 pilgrims everyday and the number swells to more than a lakh on festive days. In fact, the deity has come to be known as the Lord of Kali Yuga.

In recent times, great spiritual personalities like Shirdi Sai Baba, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Ramana Maharshi have each in his own unique way taught the idea of meditating on God or Brahman, the Reality.

In Western philosophy, the entire speculations on God can be seen in ancient Greece in the works of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle.

The Greeks venerated the planets as Gods. Jupiter, the brightest was regarded as Zeus, the highest among gods. Other planets such as Uranus, Neptune, Saturn, Mars and Venus were similarly regarded and propitiated as high divinities.

The philosophers abstracted the idea of God distinctly from the objectification by attributing certain qualities such as goodness in every respect, eternally constant and unchanging and not subject to any modification with the passage of time.

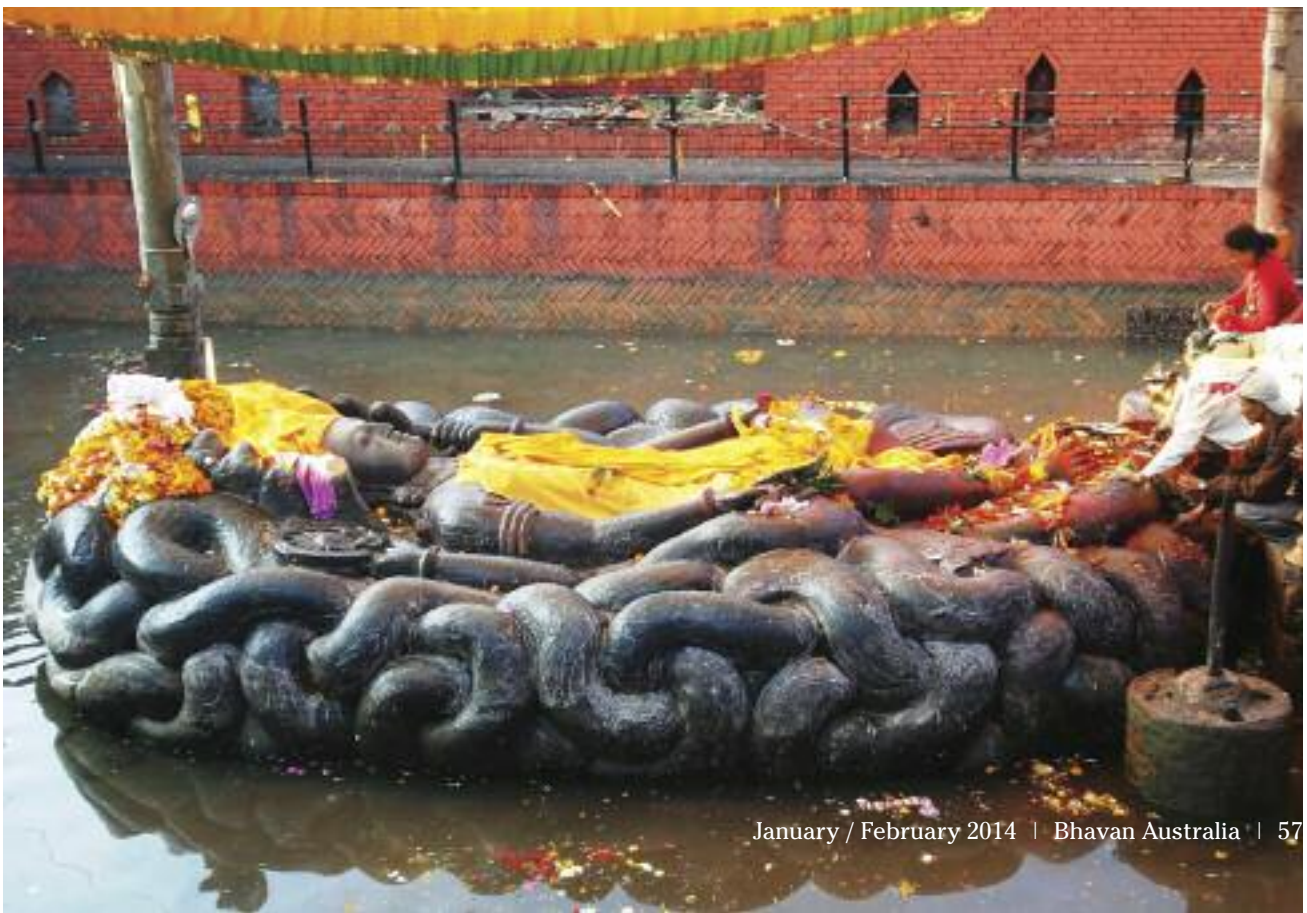
In the medieval period, the catholic church headed by the Pope was accepted as the arbiter on all doctrinal matters of Christianity and there was little room for speculation about God. God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost constituted the Trinity and was accepted. The situation changed after Martin Luther's reformist revolution which brought about the schism between Catholics and Protestants.

From the 17th century, the era of science had begun and gradually philosophic speculations receded to the background. Today scientists are aiming at discovering God in the laboratory and have provisionally named God as Higgs Boson.

The world has come a full circle beginning with a big bang and culminating in a whimper.

***S.T.V. Raghavan***

***Source: Bhavan's Journal, December 31, 2013***



# Asia's Historical Furies

*Tokyo:* A country's foreign policy is supposed to be aimed, first and foremost, at advancing its national interest. But, in large parts of Asia, the national interest—whether building commercial ties or bolstering security—is often subordinated to history and its hold on the popular imagination. As US Vice President Joe Biden just discovered on his tour of Japan, China, and South Korea, the American novelist William Faulkner's observation—"The past is never dead. It's not even past."—could not be more apt.

One commonly cited example of this is the relationship between India and Pakistan. Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif recognize the vast economic potential of enhanced bilateral trade ties, and the progress that they have sought in this area is clearly in both countries' national interest. But their diplomatic overtures have been quickly stymied by those who cannot accept such reasoning, going so far at times as to commit acts of terror and launch military incursions.

But Asia's history problem is not confined to its democracies, where public opinion directly influences the government's actions. China and Vietnam, too, remain in thrall of their long and bitter shared history. The late General Vo Nguyen Giap, who led Vietnam through wars with France and the United States to independence, spent his final years protesting against Chinese investment in his country.

Perhaps Asia's most dangerous case of historical

obsession is to be found in the relationship between China and Japan. The current dispute in the East China Sea over the Japanese-controlled Senkaku Islands (the Diaoyu Islands in China) would likely be less tense if the atrocities of the Sino-Japanese War were not rehashed so often in contemporary Chinese life.

In fact, Japan has attempted to atone for its past actions, including by offering enthusiastic support to Deng Xiaoping's efforts to open up the Chinese economy. The trillions of yen that Japanese businesses have invested in China since the 1990's—not to mention the transfer of critical technologies—could not have been about profit alone (and, in any case, Japanese investment has benefited both economies).

But, while these efforts have helped to deepen Japan's economic ties with China, they have not had the transformative impact on bilateral relations that one might have expected. Indeed, their relationship is now characterized by what the Japanese call *seirei keinetsu* (cold politics, hot economics).

Bad history also stalks the relationship between Japan and South Korea—a particularly revealing case, given how closely their strategic interests align. Here are two democracies, both among America's closest allies, unable to overcome the burden of the past. For South Koreans, it is a heavy burden, rooted in Japanese colonization and the myriad horrors of World War II. But the simple fact is that both countries would benefit substantially, in

security terms in particular, from effective cooperation.

In fact, *serei keinetsu* defines the Asian status quo: countries that cannot seem to overcome their historical animosities when it comes to foreign policy readily acknowledge that better relations means better economies. East Asia, in particular, has experienced an unprecedented surge in intra-regional trade, investment, and even tourism over the last two decades.

Yet there is reason for hope—and it is coming from an unexpected source. With China's efforts to assert itself as a regional hegemon stoking fears across Asia, its neighbors seem to be increasingly willing to vacate old grudges in favor of stronger alliances. For example, Japan's relations with Vietnam and Myanmar, both of which border China, have been warming rapidly in recent years—a trend that Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has sought to cultivate.

Likewise, the Philippines—locked in a stand-off with China over the disputed Scarborough shoal—has set aside its resentment over Japan's wartime occupation and accepted increased aid and naval assistance, including ten patrol vessels, worth \$11 million each, to help with maritime surveillance. Filipino Foreign Minister Albert del Rosario has even declared publicly that the country would welcome a more muscular Japanese defense policy to offset China's military buildup.

One reason for this turnaround is that many in the Philippines have felt somewhat abandoned by the US in their confrontation with China. With China increasingly asserting claims to territories in the South and East China Seas, other Asian countries may also find the burden of history to be too great an impediment to their future prospects.

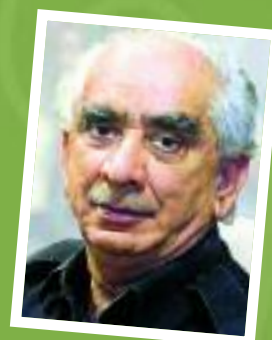
Japan could go a long way toward helping its neighbors overcome the poisoned past that it shares with so many of them as a result of its old imperial ambitions. Just as US President Richard Nixon's unyielding anti-communism uniquely suited him to establish diplomatic relations with China, Abe, an affirmed nationalist, may be the Japanese

politician best able to blend contrition for the past with forthrightness about the present.

The good news is that Abe has shown signs of this kind of courage. At a 2006 summit with Chinese leaders during his first stint as Japan's prime minister, he agreed to establish a joint commission, involving historians from Japan, China, and elsewhere, to study twentieth-century history. The idea was that the commission could make unbiased recommendations about contentious issues like the contents of history textbooks and even the Yasukuni shrine, a nationalist pilgrimage site where the remains of Japanese war criminals, among others, are interred.

If Abe revived this initiative today, he could help to dampen the regional antagonism he faces in trying to make Japan a "normal" country, with a military capable of participating in collective regional defense. Such an initiative may not work with China, where the government still uses the war with Japan to rouse nationalist sentiment. But countries like South Korea that are feeling the pressure of China's rise—as demonstrated by the current furor over China's unilateral expansion of its air defense zone—may well reciprocate such an effort. That alone should be reason enough for Abe to act.

***Jaswant Singh, a former Foreign Minister, Finance Minister, and Defense Minister of India, is a member of the opposition in India's Parliament. He is the Author of Jinnah: India—Partition—Independence.***



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# Swami Vivekananda

*One atom in this universe cannot move without dragging the whole world along with it. There cannot be any progress without the whole world following in the wake, and it is becoming clearer every day that the solution of any problem can never be attained on racial, national, or narrow grounds.*

*Learn to feel yourself in other bodies, to know that we are all one.*

## - Swami Vivekananda on Oneness

Swami Vivekananda is one of the most inspiring personalities of India, who did a lot to make India a better place to live in. Within a short span of time, he achieved a lot and went a long way in serving humans. He was the principal disciple of Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa. It is Swami Vivekananda who can be attributed the credit for laying the foundation for the establishment of Ramakrishna mission and math that are actively involved in carrying out philanthropic works. The national day that is celebrated on the 12th of January every year is dedicated to Swami Vivekananda, as it is on this day that this impressive personality was born. His influence led to the introduction of Vedanta philosophy in America and England.

His efforts were acknowledged even by the noted Indian leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi and Subhash Chandra Bose. Subhash Chandra Bose called him “the maker of modern India”. According to Mahatma Gandhi, it was the influence of Swami Vivekananda that his love for his country increased thousand fold. He deserves a major credit for giving the nation a modern vision.

## Sanatana Dharma

*The more we come out and do good to others, the more our hearts will be purified, and God will be in them.*

Saints of Sanatana Dharma never sought blind followers. Their sole aim was to initiate a discussion on a particular topic. They wanted each individual to arrive at a conclusion through a healthy debate and contemplation. They wanted each individual to realize his/her potential. Swami Vivekananda was one such modern saint who kindled the passion of search for knowledge in the mind of people.

## The Saint

*We are what our thoughts have made us; so*

*take care about what you think. Words are secondary. Thoughts live; they travel far.*

This illustrious patriot-saint of modern India was born on 12 January 1863 in Calcutta (now Kolkata) and named as Narendra. His father, Viswanath Datta, was a brilliant lawyer. He was highly respected for his intelligence and culture. His mother, Devi Bhuvaneshwari, was a devout woman with a great ability for training her children. As a boy, Narendra was very naughty and self-willed, and often had to be placed under a water tap to curb his mischief. Nevertheless, he was very generous, loving and devoted, with a strange attraction for wandering Sadhus. He enjoyed doing worship of Lord Rama and Lord Krishna along with his mother.

## Early Life

After his matriculation, Narendra went to college. He was rarely absent from social parties. He was the “soul of social circles” and no gathering was deemed complete without his presence. One day, his neighbour received a surprise visit from the saint of Dakshineswar, Sri Ramakrishna. Narendra was also invited to sing devotional songs. As he sang, he sent thrill after thrill through Sri Ramakrishna until the saint fell into a state of ecstasy. When he became normal again, he made Narendra sit beside him and enquired lovingly of the boy. With time their friendship grew.

## Ramakrishna Mission

The death of his father forced Narendra to find work and support the family. During these years of great struggle, his sheet anchor was his Guru, Sri Ramakrishna. Narendra yearned intensely for God and began to plague the Master for realisation. Narendra, now known as Swami Vivekananda, founded an Ashram near Calcutta, in order to organise better the Master’s mission. This was the beginning of the Ramakrishna Mission and on 1st of May in the year 1897, the Ramakrishna Mission took foundation. The Vivekananda Ramakrishna mission is actively involved in the missionary as well as altruistic works such as disaster relief. The disciples that are serving the mission consist of both monastic and householder. From 1888 to 1890 Swami Vivekananda travelled widely. He went on a pilgrimage all over the country, studying the conditions of the people.

## World Parliament of Religions

In 1893, Swami Vivekananda went to America to



attend the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago. His powerful speech at the opening session of the Parliament brought him instant fame and acclaimed him as a great orator and the most ideal interpreter of India's wisdom. He instantly became very popular in America.

Swami Vivekananda's powerful personality and his passionate call of service of the poor, is still influencing people all over India and the world. Swami Vivekananda arrived in America penniless and depending only on God's Grace. After the Parliament he began to receive the homage and hospitality of all America. He lectured at all the important centres. As a true Sannyasi he refused to sell religion for the sake of amassing money. He preached the gospel of unity of faiths and scattered the seeds of purity, knowledge and faith. After his stay of two years in America he toured England and Europe for three months.

The tremendous ovation he received on his return to India in no way took his mind away from his mission of bringing religion to the doors of the poorest. His aim was to awaken the masses by reviving Vedic religion, and to clean it of the dross and impurity that had clung to it for so many centuries.

### **Philosophy**

Swami Vivekananda was a great social reformer

and a very inspiring personality. He was the pride of India. He made an immense contribution to purify the souls of people. He always said that God dwells inside every heart. He was of the opinion that, a person who cannot see God in poor and unhealthy people, but claims to see God in the idol, is not a true worshipper.

### **Vivekananda Works**

He compiled a number of books on the four Yogas, namely Raja Yoga, Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Jnana Yoga. His best literary works include the letters written by him, which have a lot of spiritual value. He maintained a very simple style of writing, so that the laymen, for whom the message is meant, are able to understand his each and every word. He was not just actively involved in writing, but also was a great singer and composed several songs.

### **Mahasamadhi**

*As different streams having different sources all mingle their waters in the sea, so different tendencies, various though they appear, crooked or straight, all lead to God.*

In 1902 Swami Vivekananda entered Mahasamadhi. Six years of discipleship under Sri Ramakrishna had taken him to the realms of God-vision. Seven years of travelling in India had broadened his outlook on life. Nine years of a national and international career were all that were left for him; yet, how filled with glorious work those nine years were!

Swami Vivekananda's gospel was one of hope, faith and strength. He never succumbed to despair, for he knew that India was capable of expansion and growth. His clarion call to the nation was: "Awake, arise, and stop not till the goal is reached." On July 4, 1902, at a young age of 39, this great man headed his way for heaven.

The ideal way to remember or honour a saint is by understanding his/her teachings. Swami Vivekananda has given his valuable thoughts to the people. They must pick up these pearls of wisdom and contemplate applying it in their daily life. This can be done not just on his birthday but on all days of the year.

**Source:** [www.belurmath.org](http://www.belurmath.org),  
[www.sivanandadlshq.org](http://www.sivanandadlshq.org), [www.in.ygoy.com](http://www.in.ygoy.com),  
[www.thecolorsofindia.com](http://www.thecolorsofindia.com)

# *The Paranoid Style in Economics*

*New Delhi:* Why do high-profile economic tussles turn so quickly to ad hominem attacks? Perhaps the most well-known recent example has been the Nobel laureate Paul Krugman's campaign against the economists Carmen Reinhart and Kenneth Rogoff, in which he moved quickly from criticism of an error in one of their papers to charges about their commitment to academic transparency.

For those who know these two superb international macroeconomists, as I do, it is evident that these allegations should promptly be dismissed. But there is the larger question of why the paranoid style has become so prominent.

Part of the answer is that economics is an inexact science, with exceptions to almost every pattern of behavior that economists take for granted. For example, economists predict that higher prices for a good will reduce demand for it. But students of economics will no doubt remember an early encounter with "Giffen goods," which violate the usual pattern. When tortillas become more expensive, a poor Mexican worker may eat more of them, because she now has to cut back on more expensive food like meat.

Such "violations" occur elsewhere as well. Customers often value a good more when its price goes up. One reason may be its signaling value. An expensive handcrafted mechanical watch may tell time no more accurately than a cheap quartz model; but, because few people can afford one, buying it signals that the owner is rich. Similarly, investors flock to stocks that have appreciated, because they have "momentum."

The point is that economic behavior is complex and can vary among individuals, over time, between goods, and across cultures. Physicists do not need to know the behavior of every molecule to predict how a gas will behave under pressure. Economists cannot be so sanguine. Under some conditions, individual behavioral aberrations cancel one

another out, making crowds more predictable than individuals. But, under other conditions, individuals influence one another in such a way that the crowd becomes a herd, led by a few.

The difficulties for economic policymakers do not stop there. Economic institutions can have different effects, depending on their quality. In the run-up to the 2008 financial crisis, macroeconomists tended to assume away the financial sector in their models of advanced economies. With no significant financial crisis since the Great Depression, it was convenient to take for granted that the financial plumbing worked in the background.

Models, thus simplified, suggested policies that seemed to work—that is, until the plumbing backed up. And the plumbing malfunctioned because herd behavior—shaped by policies in ways that we are only now coming to understand—overwhelmed it.

So, why not let evidence, rather than theory, guide policy? Unfortunately, it is hard to get clear-cut evidence of causality. If high national debt is associated with slow economic growth, is it because excessive debt impedes growth, or because slow growth causes countries to accumulate more debt?

Many an econometrician's career has been built on finding a clever way to establish the direction of causality. Unfortunately, many of these methods cannot be applied to the most important questions facing economic policymakers. So the evidence does not really tell us whether a heavily indebted country should pay down its debt or borrow and invest more.

Moreover, what seem like obvious, commonsense policy solutions all too often have unintended consequences, because a policy's targets are not passive objects, as in physics, but active agents who react in unpredictable ways. For example,

price controls, rather than lowering prices, often cause scarcity and the emergence of a black market in which controlled commodities cost significantly more.

All of this implies that economic policymakers require an enormous dose of humility, openness to various alternatives (including the possibility that they might be wrong), and a willingness to experiment. This does not mean that our economic knowledge cannot guide us, only that what works in theory—or worked in the past or elsewhere—should be prescribed with an appropriate degree of self-doubt.

But, for economists who actively engage the public, it is hard to influence hearts and minds by qualifying one's analysis and hedging one's prescriptions. Better to assert one's knowledge unequivocally, especially if past academic honors certify one's claims of expertise. This is not an entirely bad approach if it results in sharper public debate.

The dark side of such certitude, however, is the way it influences how these economists engage contrary opinions. How do you convince your passionate followers if other, equally credentialed, economists take the opposite view? All too often, the path to easy influence is to impugn the other side's motives and methods, rather than recognizing and challenging an opposing argument's points. Instead of fostering public dialogue and educating the public, the public is often left in the dark. And it discourages younger, less credentialed economists from entering the public discourse.

In their monumental research on centuries of public and sovereign debt, the normally very careful Reinhart and Rogoff made an error in one of their working papers. The error is in neither their prize-winning 2009 book nor in a subsequent widely read paper responding to the academic debate about their work.

Reinhart and Rogoff's research broadly shows that GDP growth is slower at high levels of public debt. While there is a legitimate debate about whether this implies that high debt causes slow growth, Krugman turned to questioning their motives. He accused Reinhart and Rogoff of deliberately keeping their data out of the public domain. Reinhart and Rogoff, shocked by this charge—tantamount to an accusation of academic dishonesty—released a careful rebuttal, including online evidence that they had not been reticent about sharing their data.

In fairness, given Krugman's strong and public positions, he has been subject to immense personal criticism by many on the right. Perhaps the paranoid style in public debate, focusing on motives rather than substance, is a useful defensive tactic against rabid critics. Unfortunately, it spills over into countering more reasoned differences of opinion as well. Perhaps respectful debate in economics is possible only in academia. The public discourse is poorer for this.

**Raghuram Rajan,**  
*Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), a Professor of Finance at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business and the chief economic adviser in India's finance ministry, served as the International Monetary Fund's youngest-ever chief economist and was Chairman of India's Committee on Financial Sector Reforms. He is the author of *Fault Lines: How Hidden Fractures Still Threaten the World Economy*, the *Financial Times Business Book of the Year*.*



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# Lala Lajpat Rai

*The Government which attacks its own innocent subjects has no claim to be called a civilised government. Bear in mind, such a government does not survive long. I declare that the blows struck at me will be the last nails in the coffin of the British rule in India.*

- Lala Lajpat Rai

Lala Lajpat Rai was one of the foremost leaders who fought against British rule in India. He was popularly known as Punjab Kesari (Lion of the Punjab). He was born on 28 January 1865 into an Aggarwal trader family. His father, Munshi Radha Krishna Azad was a pious and learned man while mother, Shrimati Gulab Devi, a strict religious lady, inculcated in her children strong morals values.

## Early Life

If I had the power to influence Indian journals, I would have the following headlines printed in bold letters on the first page: Milk for the infants, Food for the adults and Education for all.

Lajpat Rai received his education until his Entrance Examination in places where his father was posted as teacher. Lajpat Rai joined the Government College at Lahore in 1880 to study Law. While in college he came in contact with patriots and future freedom fighters like Lala Hans Raj and Pandit Guru Dutt. The three became fast friends and joined the Arya Samaj founded by Swami Dayananda. Lajpat Rai passed his Mukhtiarship (junior pleader) examination and started his legal practice in Jagraon. He passed his Vakilship Examination in Second Division from Government College in 1885. He started his practice in Rohtak but moved it to Hissar where some of his friends were also practicing the Law.

## Arya Samaj

*“Since the cruel killing of cows and other animal have commenced, I have anxiety for the future generation”*

Lajpat Rai's early legal practice at Hissar was very successful. Besides practicing, Lajpat Rai collected funds for the Daya Nand College, attended Arya Samaj functions and participated in Congress activities. He was elected to the Hissar municipality as a member and later as secretary. Lajpat Rai provided immense service toward the famine relief efforts during the famines of 1897 and 1899. He mobilized D.A.V. college students and went to Bikaner and other areas of Rajasthan to rescue destitute children and brought them to Lahore. In 1898, Lajpat Rai curtailed his legal practice and vowed to devote all his energy for the nation.

## The Freedom Struggle

Lala Lajpat Rai was one of the three most prominent Hindu Nationalist members of the Indian National Congress. He was part of the Lal-Bal-Pal trio. The other two members of the trio were Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Bipin Chandra Pal. They formed the extremist faction of the Indian National Congress, as opposed to the moderate one led first by Gopal Krishna Gokhale. Lajpat Rai actively participated in the struggle against partition of Bengal. Along with Surendra Nath Banerjee, Bipin Chandra Pal and Aurobindo Ghosh, he galvanized Bengal and the nation in a vigorous campaign of Swadeshi. Lajpat Rai was arrested on May 3, 1907 for creating “turmoil” in Rawalpindi.

## Mandalay

Lajpat Rai was deported to Mandalay on May 9, 1907, under the Bengal Regulation act of 1818 without a hearing and a trial before a lawfully constituted tribunal of justice. Just a few hours before his arrest Lajpat Rai penned briefly the real causes of the Punjab disturbances in a letter he wrote to ‘The Punjabee’. The news of Lajpat Rai's deportation spread like wild fire and provoked nationwide protests and adverse comments in the Press in India and abroad.





Lala Lajpat Rai

'Lala Lajpat deported and Minto still alive' was Lokmanya Tilak's impromptu reaction when he came to know of it at the Poona Railway Station. P.M. Bapat gave an ultimatum that if Lajpat Rai was not released within three months he would shoot Morley. 'Bande Matram gave the clarion call—*'for one Lajpat Rai taken away, hundreds Lajpats will born in his place'*.

In the British Parliament, questions were asked on May 13, 1907 even before Lajpat Rai had reached Mandalay. Morley had a tough time in defending the government action of arrest and deportation without trial. He was frequently rattled for this anti-British Act by such prominent leaders as V.H. Rutherford, O'Grady, Henry Cotton, Fredric Mackarness and many other prominent British leaders. Gokhale wrote to Wedderburn that Lajpat Rai's arrest has 'literally convulsed the country from one end to the other.' Lala Lajpat was kept in Mandalay jail for six months and was released on November 11, 1907.

### Chauri-Chaura

Lajpat Rai believed that it was important for the national cause to organize propaganda in foreign countries to explain India's position because the freedom struggle had taken a militant turn. He left for Britain in April 1914 for this purpose. At this time First World War broke out and he was unable to return to India. He went to USA to galvanize support for India. He founded the Indian Home League Society of America and wrote a book called "Young India". The book severely indicted British rule in India and was banned in Britain and India even before it was published. He was able to return to India in 1920 after the end of World War.

After his return, Lala Lajpat Rai led the Punjab protests against the Jalianwala Bagh Massacre and the Non-Cooperation Movement. He was arrested several times. He disagreed with Mahatma Gandhi's suspension of Non-Cooperation movement due to the Chauri-Chaura incident, and formed the Congress Independence Party, which had a pro-Hindu slant.

### Simon Commission and the Death

*Simon Commission Go back.*

In 1928, British Government decided to send Simon Commission to India to discuss constitutional reforms. The Commission had no Indian member. This greatly angered Indians. In 1929, when the Commission came to India there were protests all over India. Lala Lajpat Rai himself led one such procession against Simon Commission. While the procession was peaceful, British Government brutally lathicharged the procession. Lala Lajpat Rai received severe head injuries and died on 17 November 1928.

**Source: [www.liveindia.com](http://www.liveindia.com),  
[www.iloveindia.com](http://www.iloveindia.com)**

# Yoga for Healthy Life

Life is become superfast in this modern world. Lots of external & internal factors are become unavoidable and the sole reason for our daily stressful life. All this leads to development of diseases, medical complication, and financial burden to individual and family life. How to avoid these health problems? Simple answer is yoga. Yoga is a traditional Indian gift which is giving the clear instruction about the way of “**Positive health & Wellbeing**”.

## About Yoga

Yoga is an ancient physical and spiritual discipline and branch of philosophy that origin from India. The word yoga itself means "**union**" of the individual consciousness or soul with the Universal Consciousness or Spirit. Though many people think of yoga only as physical exercises, yoga is a profound science of unfolding the infinite potentials of the human mind and soul.

## The art of yoga practices

Yoga is a mind and body practice with historical origins in ancient Indian philosophy. Like other

traditional health care practices, Yoga is the only unique activity which is combine physical postures, breathing techniques, meditation and relaxation.

## A. Before Yoga Practice

### Time of practice

Early morning, one or two hour before sunrise is best time for yoga or you may practice any time of the day.

### Empty stomach

Only precaution is that your stomach must to be empty at the time of doing yoga. Always bowel should be empty before practicing yoga. You may take bath before yoga practice.

### Shower

You may take bath before 45 minutes or after 45 minutes of yoga practice

### Clothes

Always wear comfortable cotton clothes which is helpful for your comfortable practice



## B. During the yoga

### Breathing

Always follow normal, rhythmic breathing and listen carefully all the instruction from your teacher.

### Slow and Steady

Approach your task with patience and preference. If your body is not flexible don't worry it will become easier with repetition.

In the beginning you may start with rhythmic breathing & Pranayama

Remember always follow the instruction from your teacher

### Rest / Relaxation

Always remember to rest between two asanas. Make sure you are not tired to the extent that you are unable to concentrate on asanas.

## C. After yoga practices

### After yoga

You are not allowed to drink or eat until 30 minutes after yoga practice

Recommended to take cold/ warm shower after 30 minutes

Vegetarian foods are good choice after yoga

## Amazing Health Benefits of Yoga Practices

- Aids in better sleep and mental relaxation
- Aids in natural detox process
- Boosts immune system
- Enhances natural detoxification process
- Enhances natural healing
- Helps to maintain ideal body weight
- Improves concentration and memory
- Improves digestion
- Improves strength / stamina
- Improves the flexibility of joints
- Increasing lubrication of joints
- Maintains ideal body weight
- Massaging of all body organs & Glands
- Normalizes blood sugar level
- Promotes mental relaxation
- Reduces stress
- Regulates blood pressure

### Conclusion

Yoga should not be looked at as a religion or exercise, it is more of a system of well integrated techniques and mind frames designed to prevent all kind of health problems. Yoga is a simple way to begin our Healthy Life Style. Let us start to begin our healthy life style through yoga practices and wishing you all very "Happy and Healthy New year 2014"

**"The Greatest Wealth is Health"**

***Dr. Karthick Raja, a Naturopathy and Yoga Doctor is working as a Wellness Consultant in Malaysia.***



# Sarojini Naidu

*One needs a Seer's Vision and an Angel's voice to be of any avail. I do not know of any Indian man or woman today who has those gifts in their most complete measure.*

**-Sarojini Naidu**

Sarojini Naidu was a distinguished poet, renowned freedom fighter and one of the great orators of her time. She was famously known as Bharatiya Kokila (The Nightingale of India). Sarojini Naidu was the first Indian woman to become the President of the Indian National Congress.

## Early Life

Sarojini Naidu was born on 13 February 1879. Her father Aghoranath Chattopadhyaya was a scientist and philosopher. He was the founder of the Nizam College, Hyderabad. Sarojini Naidu's mother Barada Sundari Devi was a poetess and used to write poetry in Bengali. Sarojini Naidu was the eldest among the eight siblings. Her father was the first member of the India National Congress in Hyderabad. He was removed from his position as a penalty for his active participation in Indian Independence movement. Virendranath Chattopadhyaya, Sarojini's brother, was a political activist who played a key role in establishing the Berlin Committee and was influenced by Communism. He was allegedly killed by the Russian troops in 1937. Sarojini's second brother Harindranath Chattopadhyaya was a noted poet and playwright.

## The Poetess

Sarojini Naidu was a brilliant student, proficient in Urdu, Telugu, English, Bengali, and Persian. At the age of twelve, Sarojini Naidu attained national fame when she topped the matriculation examination at Madras University. Her father wanted her to become a mathematician or scientist but Sarojini Naidu was interested in poetry and she started writing poems in English. Impressed by her poetry, Nizam of Hyderabad gave her scholarship to study abroad. At the age of 16, she travelled to England to study first at King's College London and later at Girton College, Cambridge. There she met famous laureates of her time such as Arthur Simon and Edmond Gausse.

It was Gausse who convinced Sarojini to stick to Indian themes, India's great mountains, rivers, temples, social milieu to express her poetry. She



Sarojini Naidu

depicted contemporary Indian life and events. Her collections "The golden threshold (1905)", "The bird of time (1912)", and "The broken wing (1912)" attracted huge Indian and English readership. In 1961, she published a collection of poems entitled "The Feather of the Dawn", authored and published a biography of Muhammad Ali Jinnah entitled as The Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity. Other acclaimed poems that came following are The Wizard Mask and A Treasury of Poems. Other selected works written by her include The Magic Tree and The Gift of India. She was given the name Bharat Kokila on account of the beautiful and rhythmic words of her poems that could be sung as well.

## Marriage

*When there is oppression, the only self-respecting thing is to rise and say this shall cease today, because my right is justice. If you are stronger, you have to help the weaker boy or girl both in play and in the work.*

At the age of 15, she met Dr. Govindarajulu Naidu and fell in love with him, a non-brahmin, and a doctor by profession. After finishing her studies at



*Sarojini Naidu was a brilliant student, proficient in Urdu, Telugu, English, Bengali, and Persian. At the age of twelve, Sarojini Naidu attained national fame when she topped the matriculation examination at Madras University*

the age of 19, she married him during the time when inter-caste marriages were not allowed. It was a revolutionary step but Sarojini's father fully supported her in her endeavour. Sarojini Naidu had a happy married life and had four children: Jayasurya, Padmaj, Randheer, and Leilamani. Her daughter Padmaja followed in to her footprints and became the Governor of West Bengal.

### **The Indian National Movement**

*We want deeper sincerity of motive, a greater courage in speech and earnestness in action.*

Sarojini Naidu joined the Indian National Movement in the wake of partition of Bengal in 1905. She came into contact with Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Rabindranath Tagore, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Annie Besant, C.P. Rama Swami Iyer, Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. She awakened the women of India. She brought them out of the kitchen. She travelled from state to state, city after city and asked for the rights of the women. She re-established self-esteem within the women of India.

### **The Social Worker**

During 1915-1918, she travelled across the India lecturing on social welfare, women empowerment, emancipation and nationalism. Inspired by Jawaharlal Nehru, she embarked on providing help and support for the indigo workers in Champaran who were being subjected to violence and oppression.

### **Mahatma Gandhi**

With the introduction of the Rowlett Act in 1919,

Sarojini joined the Non-Cooperation Movement organized and led by Mahatma Gandhi. In the same year, she was appointed the Home Rule League's Ambassador to England. In 1924, she became a delegate to the East African Indian Congress. In 1925, Naidu was appointed the President of the National Congress thus making her the first Indian women to hold the post.

In 1925, Sarojini Naidu presided over the annual session of Indian National Congress at Kanpur. Sarojini Naidu played a leading role during the Civil Disobedience Movement and was jailed along with Mahatma Gandhi and other leaders. In 1942, Sarojini Naidu was arrested during the "Quit India" movement and was jailed for 21 months with Mahatma Gandhi . She shared a very warm relationship with Mahatma Gandhi . An active participant of the Indian Independence movement, Naidu joined the national movement taking Gandhi's call and joined him in the popular Salt March to Dandi.

### **Final Days**

In her last years, Sarojini actively participated in the freedom movement and was a part of the Round Table summit held in 1931. With the independence of India in 1947, Sarojini Naidu was made the Governor of the Uttar Pradesh in the wake of her contribution to the movement. She was the first woman to become the Governor of a state. She died of a heart attack while working in her office on 2 March 1949.

**Source: [www.thefamouspeople.com](http://www.thefamouspeople.com), [www.iloveindia.com](http://www.iloveindia.com), [www.mapsofindia.com](http://www.mapsofindia.com)**



# Maharishi Swami Dayanand Saraswati

*The main aim of education is to create humans awareness so that they can understand the difference between the truth and untruth. Even by understanding if anyone does not practice it he is like a thief.*

**-Swami Dayananda**

Swami Dayanand was the founder of the Hindu reform organization Arya Samaj, which he established on 7 April 1875, in Bombay, India. Arya Samaj or the 'Society of Nobles' is a Hindu reform movement which condemns animal sacrifices, caste system, child marriages, discrimination against women, untouchability. Throughout his life, Swami Dayanand preached against many Hindu traditions which he felt were dogmatic and oppressive. These included traditions such as caste by birth, and the exclusion of females from the study of the Vedas. One of his main messages for Hindus was to go back to the roots of their religion, which are the Vedas. By doing this, he felt that Hindus would be able to improve the depressive religious, social, political, and economic conditions prevailing in India in his times.

## Early Life

*Mother, father and teacher are best guides of a person, that person is real lucky whose parents are virtuous as they will always guide him to the right way and always thinks good for him.*

Swami Dayanand was born on 12 February 1824 in a town called Tankara in the state of Gujarat, India. Swami Dayanand Saraswati was born as 'Moolashankar' in Gujarat, in the year 1824. Even when he was a child, Swami Dayanand Saraswati had a keen and inquisitive mind. Once Mool Shankar was keeping a fast on the Shivratri festival day along with his entire family. They had to be awake throughout the night. At night, he saw a mouse dancing on the Shivalinga. Surprised at this incident, he asked his elders why this "God Almighty" could not defend himself against the menace of a petty mouse, for which he was rebuked! The sudden death of a favourite uncle, and his beloved sister caused much turmoil in Mool Shankar. He became quite detached from the world, and one day left home in search of a guru.

## Virajananda Saraswati

The search was long and arduous. Finally, at the age of thirty-six he found his mentor in Virajananda

Saraswati, who was blind, but was a master of the ancient lore. The training was rigorous, and the guru was ruthless. But here was a disciple of a lifetime. As his Gurudakshina he wanted his disciple to devote his life for the revival of Hinduism. The guru called him Dayananda.

## The Vedas

*To keep yourself pure remain alone, never see bad, never hear bad, never stare girls, never learn bad, be punctual and obey rules. By practicing these you can achieve self-control and purity.*

One of Swami Dayanand's major arguments for going back to the Vedas was that, in his own words "the four Vedas, the repositories of knowledge and religious truth, are the Words of God. They are absolutely free of error and are the Supreme & independent authority". The four Vedas are; Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda and Atharva Veda. To spread awareness of his movement and to revitalize Vedic knowledge, Swami Dayanand published many religious books. These include; Satyarth Prakash (The Light of Truth), the Rig-Vedaadi, Bhasya-Bhoomika, and Sanskar Vidhi.

Swami Dayanand preached many messages to Hindus during his lifetime. He preached that Hindus should worship just one, formless, God. He fought against polytheism by telling people the true meaning of the names of God and established how all of them pointed at one and the same God—Paramathama, the Supreme Self. Swamiji was "a voice against superstition, against unrighteousness, which reigned supreme in the garb of true religion".

## Final Days

Swami Dayanand challenged many of the Hindu orthodoxy if they could justify their belief in these practices. This induced the anger and wrath of many orthodox Hindus, which subsequently led to 14 attempts at poisoning Dayanand. Miraculously, he was able to use his Yogic abilities to cure himself from the first 13 attempts. However, the 14th time proved fatal. Swami Dayanand died in 1883 and left the world with his legacy, Arya Samaj.



Maharishi Swami  
Dayananda Saraswati

### Teachings of Swami Dayananda Saraswati

Following are some of teachings which Swami Dayananda Saraswati had given in his life to whole mankind. Each teaching is a true source of knowledge all of us should bring in practice.

- I believe in that which was true in past, which is true at present and which will be true in future also. I am not starting any new religion or any new thought but whatever it was being taught in old times in Aryavart from Rishi Brahma to Rishi Jamini. I am propagating that only.
- I am a sage so even due to your bad behavior I will never think bad of you. Go, God will give you right power to think.
- My sayings are like a bitter medicine which although brings some discomfort but they are good for everyone. Whatever the present day people says about me, but the coming generations will definitely learn and consider my teachings.
- When one Arya is alone he should do self-reading, when two they should discuss and ask question answers within themselves, when more than two then they should do Satsang and read any chapter of Vedas.
- We have to make people soft who are hard, to attract those who are far; if they do bad for us then even considering our aim we should always love them.
- Till you live you should always do right karma.
- The main aim of education is to create humans

awareness so that they can understand the difference between the truth and untruth. Even by understanding if anyone does not practice it he is like a thief.

- Mother, father and teacher are best guides of a person, that person is real lucky whose parents are virtuous as they will always guide him to the right way and always thinks good for him.
- A man becomes good by helping others while other man never thinks bad of anyone, they both are true. So, we should not even think of doing bad for anyone, doing bad is far away.

### Principles of the Arya Samaj

- God is the efficient cause of all true knowledge and all that is known through knowledge.
- God is existent, intelligent and blissful. He is formless, omniscient, just, merciful, unborn, endless, unchangeable, beginning-less, unequalled, the support of all, the master of all, omnipresent, immanent, un-aging, immortal, fearless, eternal and holy, and the maker of all. He alone is worthy of being worshiped.
- The Vedas are the scriptures of all true knowledge. It is the paramount duty of all Aryas to read them, teach them, recite them and to hear them being read.
- One should always be ready to accept truth and to renounce untruth.
- All acts should be performed in accordance with Dharma that is, after deliberating what is right and wrong.
- The prime object of the Arya Samaj is to do good to the world, that is, to promote physical, spiritual and social good of everyone.
- Our conduct towards all should be guided by love, righteousness and justice.
- We should dispel Avidya (ignorance) and promote Vidya (knowledge).
- No one should be content with promoting his/her good only; on the contrary, one should look for his/her good in promoting the good of all.
- One should regard oneself under restriction to follow the rules of society calculated to promote the well-being of all, while in following the rules of individual welfare all should be free.

**Source:** [www.vedicculturalcentre.com](http://www.vedicculturalcentre.com),  
[www.answers.com](http://www.answers.com), [www.iloveindia.com](http://www.iloveindia.com),  
[www.oocities.org](http://www.oocities.org)

## Ramayana in a Nutshell

In Janasthana, a part of Dandakaranya, lived Surpanakha, a hideous ogress. She was the sister of Ravana, the mighty rakshasa king of Lanka. She had magical powers and could assume any form at will. When she approached Sri Rama, burning with an unlawful lust, she was disfigured. Her nose and ears were lopped off by Lakshmana. Enraged at this, Khara, Dushana and Trisiras, the great rakshasa brothers of Surpanakha, came with a large army of 14000 warriors and gave battle to Sri Rama. Single handed Sri Rama despatched them all to the abode of Yama.

When Ravana came to know of this great disaster, he sought the help of Mareecha, a rakshasa of supreme magical powers, to destroy Rama. Mareecha gave Ravana wise counsel, not to entertain hostile designs against Rama, the greatest hero of the land. As Ravana persisted in his evil course, Mareecha followed him to the hermitage of Rama and helped the rakshasa king. Assuming the form of a golden deer with his powers of magic, he lured the two brothers far away deep into the forest. When Sita was thus left alone and helpless, Ravana carried her to Lanka, killing on the way Jatayu, the king of vultures, who tried to obstruct him in his evil design.

The loss of Sita and the death of Jatayu plunged Rama in great sorrow and he loudly wailed. After performing the obsequies of Jatayu, Rama met a fierce headless monster called Kabanda. When he was killed and put in flames, Kabanda appeared as a celestial being in the sky and directed Rama to go and see Sabari, the unique woman-sage of strict austerities and then befriend Sugriva, the exiled king of the Vanaras. When Rama and Lakshmana left the hermitage of Sabari, they were met by Hanuman. It was Hanuman who took them to Sugriva, the king of the Vanaras. Rama and Sugriva swore before fire eternal friendship between them.

Rama narrated in detail about himself and the loss of Sita, and Sugriva spoke in detail about himself and his enmity with his elder brother Vali, the king of Kishkinda. Rama then promised Sugriva that he would kill Vali without fail. Sugriva was sceptical about his friend's strength and prowess as against his brother Vali. So to convince him, Rama kicked with his toe the huge skeleton of the

rakshasa Dundubhi to a distance of full eighty miles. Again to inspire confidence in Sugriva, Rama split by a single arrow seven big sala trees. Emboldened and feeling confident, Sugriva accompanied by Sri Rama and Lakshmana went to Kishkinda and challenged his brother Vali for a duel. The king of Kishkinda, against the advice of his wife Tara, engaged himself in a mortal combat with his brother. Just then Sri Rama killed Vali by a deadly shaft. He then placed Sugriva on the throne of Kishkinda.

Bringing together his monkey warriors, Sugriva despatched them in all directions to trace out Sita. Hanuman, who went to the south, at the suggestion of Sampathi, the king of the vultures, crossed the vast ocean of 100 yojanas and reached Lanka. There in the Asoka grove he found confined and guarded by the rakshasa women, Sita pure and unsullied, ever contemplating on the feet of Sri Rama. He consoled her and gave her the signet-ring of Sri Rama. He destroyed the outer ramparts of the Asoka grove, killed Ravana's five generals and seven ministers' sons and finally Aksha, the son of Ravana. He then allowed himself to be bound by Indrajit who presented him to his father Ravana. Hanuman got himself released and burnt the stately city of Lanka leaving only the Asoka grove, where Sita was sitting in penance, free from fire. He then returned to Sri Rama and informed Him that Sita, the pure, was traced and narrated in detail his visit to Lanka.

Rama with a large army of thevanaras reached the southern shore of the mighty ocean and struck terror in the heart of the king of the seas. On the advice of Samudra Raja, the Ocean King, who appeared in person to Sri Rama, and with the help of the vanara architect, Nala, a strong bridge was thrown across the sea to reach Lanka. Rama reached Lanka with his vanara hordes, fought and killed Ravana and rescued Sita.

Rama experienced a sense of shame in getting back Sita who had been imprisoned by the Rakshasa king. He spoke to her harsh words in the assembly of the vanaras and others. Sita, chaste and pure, was shocked by the heart-rending words of her lord and threw herself into the fire. The all-consuming fire did not burn her and Agni, the God of Fire, brought her back fresh as a flower and declared that Sita was pure, sinless, chaste and unsullied in thought, word





and deed, and restored her to Rama, and He accepted her.

All the Gods and divine sages and saints who were pleased with His remarkable victory over Ravana blessed Rama, and granted Him several boons. He then installed Vibhishana, Ravana's brother, on the throne of Lanka and felt a sense of accomplishment. After that He set off to Ayodhya along with Sugriva and other Vanaras and Vibhishana in the PushpakaVimanam, the aerial chariot. After a few hours' stay at the hermitage of Bharadwaja, he sent in advance Sri Hanuman to Bharata at Nandigramam to report about His arrival.

At Nandigramam Rama removed His hermit robes and disentangled His matted locks of hair and put on the royal robes. He came to Ayodhya in a stately procession and got Himself installed along with Sita as the Emperor of the world.

Rama is now reigning at Ayodhya. Under His parental care, all people are happy. There is no fear of famine. People are well-fed, contented, cheerful, pious, free from mental agony and bodily ailments. Parents never lose their children and all are long-lived. Women are pure and chaste and are never bereft of their husbands. There is no death by famine, fire, floods, or by fever. There is no fear of thieves and dacoits as none of them exists in Rama's land which is bursting with plenty of food, wealth and prosperity. Rama's age is really the Golden Age for the world.

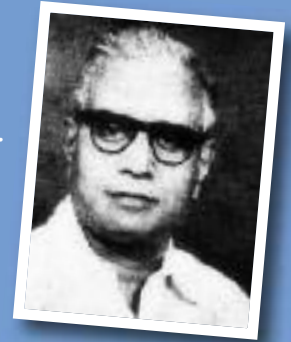
All people are glad and happy and Sri Rama is often engaged in performing holy sacrifices to please the Gods. He will place on a firm footing kingly rule for the good of the people and establish hundred royal dynasties. He will direct men of the four grades to pursue their dharma. After a glorious rule of eleven

thousand years Sri Rama will reach the divine abode of Brahma.

Whosoever reads this noble epic equal to the Vedas in its divinity will be freed from all sins and will live long happily with sons and grandsons and finally reach the heavens. "Reading it, a Brahmin bids fair to gain eminence in eloquence; if he is a kshatriya he is sure to attain lordship over the earth; if he belongs to the mercantile community he is sure to amass wealth, and if he belongs to the sudra class, he is sure to attain wealth and happiness in this life and hereafter."

*(To be continued....)*

*-Prof. N.S. Mani learnt Sanskrit, at the feet of his revered father, a great scholar, well versed in our ancient lore. Of all the ancient texts, Valmiki Ramayana fascinated him and he translated Ramayana and Sundara*



*Kanda into English. Bala Kanda, the first book of Srimad Ramayana, describes in detail the birth of Sri Rama, his boyhood, his superlative prowess, his benevolence to all, his training under the great sage Viswamitra, his magnificent feat of breaking the mighty bow of Lord Siva at Janaka's Court, his marriage with Sita and Parasurama's challenge and Sri Rama's victory. The book also describes vividly sage Viswamitra's incredible adventure and dedicated endeavour to rise to the spiritual status of Vasishtha thus demonstrating by his example to what celestial heights human soul can rise.*

*Source: Sri Valmiki Ramayana Bala Kanda (Childhood Episode) by Prof. N.S. Mani, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay (Mumbai), India*



## Untold Stories of King Bhoja

### Madanarekha Vindicated

Kings of those days were kings not only in name but kings in fact. They had a sense of dharma which knew of no differentiation. Their claim to fame rested mainly on the observance of dharma in which they were deeply ingrained. Although Prince Tantri was faced with an unprecedented situation, he did not fumble. His sense of dharma, which ran through every fibre of his being, made him look at the problem objectively and in its proper perspective. First of all, he dissociated himself from the personal equation, and the solution of the problem at once appeared to him simple. He was quite clear in his mind that his wife was very learned in the Shastras. Coming as she did from a family well-known for its observance of dharma he could not associate any evil design with her pleadings so powerfully put forward. Nor was she an ordinary type of girl inasmuch as her birth was divine.

This trend of thought made him clearly see the point in her arguments and, as a king, he had to adjudicate the issue on its merits.

Rubbing his eyes as though waking up from a short nap, he said to her: "My dear, I am now convinced that what you say is perfectly correct. What I mean to say is that your first obligation stands foremost. Apart from that, I am pretty certain that you know

how to take care of yourself. In the circumstances, I am very happy to permit you, since you have asked for my permission, to go to your friend right now and fulfil your promise."

With a twinkle in her eyes, Madanarekha bowed before her husband and immediately departed from the nuptial chamber, tearing through the darkness of the night.

While Prince Tantri felt relieved at having done his duty, Madanarekha was feeling grateful to her husband for his broad and clear vision and large-heartedness. But Fate had its own designs on their lives. For, when Madanarekha was half-way through a forest, a hideous-looking Brahmarakshas, laughing uproariously at her appearance, accosted her. But single-minded as she was, Madanarekha did not even as much as look in the direction from which the noise came and walked vigorously on towards her objective. That, however, did not discourage the Brahmarakshas who stretched out his hands and seized her apron.

Stopping at this, she turned back and looking at him nonchalantly, replied: "Great man, I am the devoted wife of another man. Do you think it proper to touch me? Shouldn't you regard me as your sister? Please leave me."

*-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.

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# M. K. Gandhi

With these bitter experiences Gandhi realised that the condition of England was pitiable as he wrote in a pamphlet called *Hind Swaraj*. It was a bitter indictment, a denunciation of modern life with its emphasis on railways, machinery and even the Parliament of England.

In South Africa, to which he returned, many of his ideas of resistance had crumbled. Gandhi renewed his work with funds from well-wishers in India, and his German friend Kallenbach a great admirer of his tireless work. Kallenbach's farm, some miles from Johannesburg, was offered to him and named Tolstoy Farm after the great Russian writer who was a distant friend and whose principles were close to Gandhi's own.

Here at Tolstoy Farm, Gandhi, his friend Kallenbach and other workers who had defied the Black Act, worked with the relatives of prisoners. Gandhi was in his element, digging and planting, helping to plaster the buildings, and becoming a teacher to the children. At the Phoenix settlement, his wife and children continued to live. But he kept a vigilant eye on all the dwellers of both the farms and once, when two young people misbehaved, he went on a fast for one week. This was perhaps the first of his many fasts throughout his life.

Meanwhile in India, Gokhale had taken up the cause of the Indians of South Africa and gave voice to his concerns, which caused national anger and resentment everywhere.

When in 1912, Gokhale visited South Africa it was Gandhi, who acted as his secretary and close companion, even folding the *angavastram* that Gokhale wore over his shoulder.

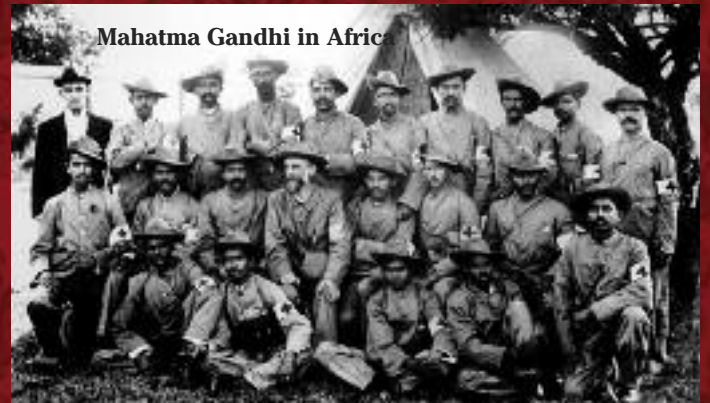
While General Botha and General Smuts greeted Gokhale and assured him that all would be settled and the Black Act dispensed with, they soon went back on their word and began interfering with things like Indian marriages.

So again in 1913, Gandhi organized an Indian protest. Men and women joined willingly and the Indian miners went on a strike, for which they were brutally thrown out of their settlements. Gandhi created an army of people who went into the Transvaal and courted arrest, many of them women with babies in their arms.

Gandhi, who was supported by his Western colleagues including his secretary Miss Sahlesin, was sentenced to jail for nine months. Miners were beaten and made to go back to the mines in the most terrible circumstances. Cruelty was the order



With Gokhale in South Africa



Mahatma Gandhi in Africa

of the day, but the brave people endured the brutal and inhuman acts.

A deep wave of horror swept India, when the news came out. Even the British Viceroy in India was horrified and condemned South African barbarism.

-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***

# *Swami Vivekananda's Poems*

## *Kali the Mother*

The stars are blotted out,  
The clouds are covering clouds,  
It is darkness vibrant, sonant.  
In the roaring, whirling wind  
Are the souls of a million lunatics  
Just loosed from the prison-house,  
Wrenching trees by the roots,  
Sweeping all from the path.

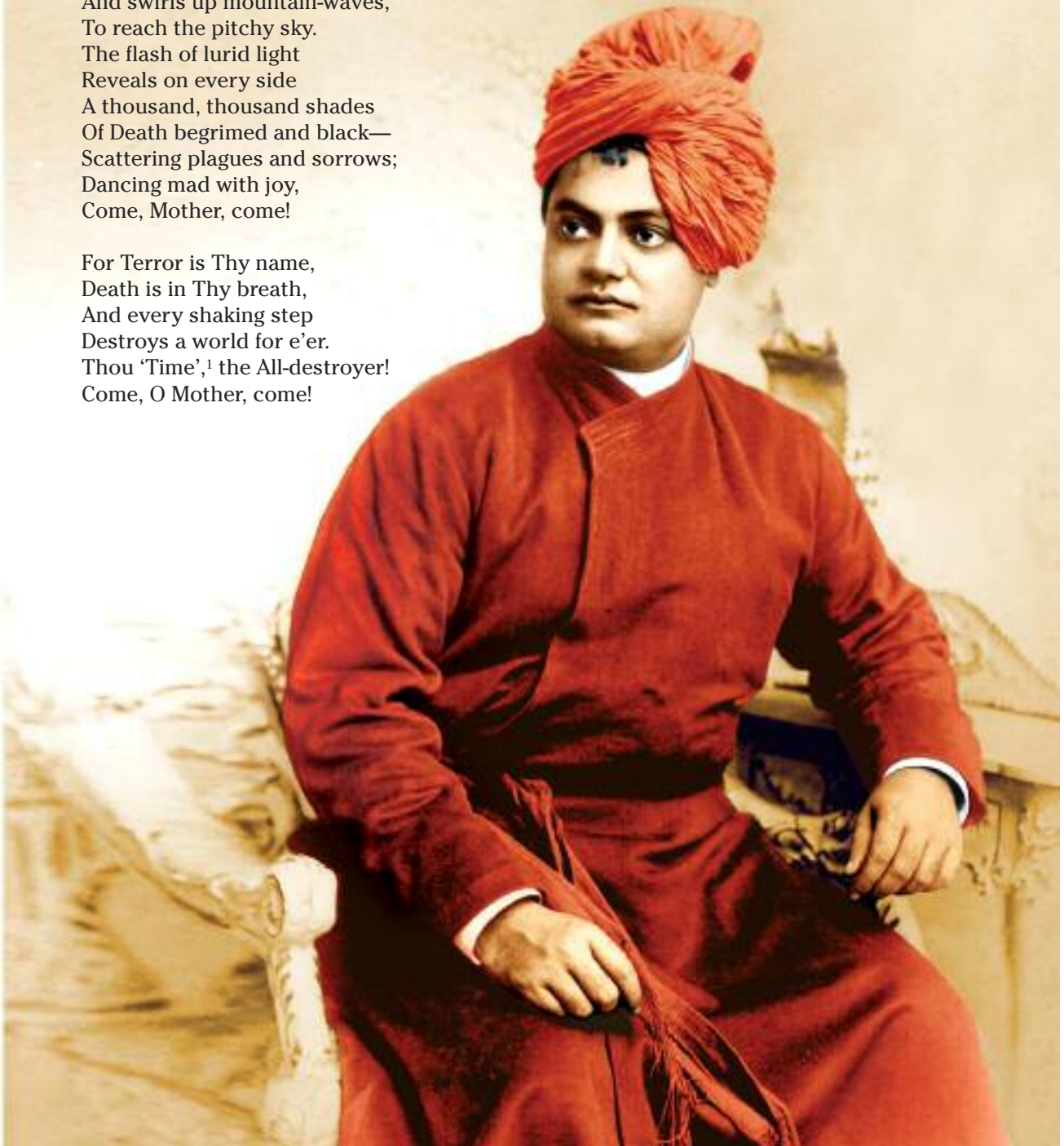
The sea has joined the fray,  
And swirls up mountain-waves,  
To reach the pitchy sky.  
The flash of lurid light  
Reveals on every side  
A thousand, thousand shades  
Of Death begrimed and black—  
Scattering plagues and sorrows;  
Dancing mad with joy,  
Come, Mother, come!

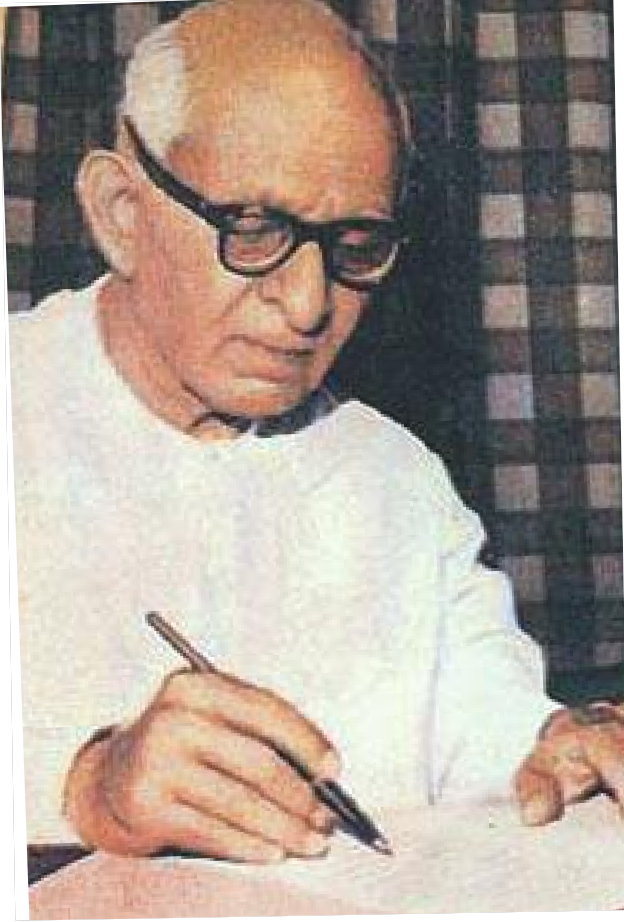
For Terror is Thy name,  
Death is in Thy breath,  
And every shaking step  
Destroys a world for e'er.  
Thou 'Time',<sup>1</sup> the All-destroyer!  
Come, O Mother, come!

Who dares misery love,  
And hug the form of Death,  
Dance in Destruction's dance,  
To him the Mother comes.

### *1. Kali*

**Source: *In search of God and Other Poems*  
by Swami Vivekananda, Advaita Ashrama,  
Publication Department, Kolkata**





## *Kulapativani*

### *Destiny of Man*

The divine element in man is the Fundamental Aspiration which yearns for Light, Love, Beauty, Bliss, Joy, Freedom and Calm. Because of this, he is not an atom moved by physio-chemical laws; not merely a unit of life, like an amoeba; not a bundle of instinctive reactions, like an animal; not even a thinking machine as he believes himself to be. Because of it, he is a spark of divinity whose destiny lies towards God.

The destiny of man cannot be allowed to be frustrated by an exclusive emphasis on scientific knowledge and skill and a neglect of the permanent values of culture.

**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 October 13, 1963  
Reprinted in Bhavan's Journal October 15, 2013*



## *Mahatma Gandhi*

### *Unflinching Devotee of Truth*

The empire of Truth has no limits and knows no relaxations. Modern life, however, has made numerous and extensive inroads upon it. In the dealings of nations, whether in war or peace or ordinary diplomatic intercourse; in the flattery that pervades palaces; in the large sphere allotted to propaganda and advertisement; in the region of sex; in commerce and business; in testimonials; in post-prandial utterances; in obituary orations and epitaphs; in dealings with invalids and children; in the promises made by lovers and by candidates at election time; in the writings of the partisan Press; in the one-sided pleadings before judges; in the chronicles of courts and kings and queens; in the defence of superstition and error as a necessary basis for ethical conduct; in these and several other departments we recognise and allow for large measure of concealment and distortion of the truth.

Shall we knowingly and deliberately add the enormous domain of politics to this formidable list? Happily we are not left without some shining examples for our guidance. One that will be universally admitted is Mahatma Gandhi.

It is not for nothing that he observes silence on one day of each week, for all speech involves a certain impairment of the truth.

He employs the fewest words and the simplest to express his thoughts, for does not the poet say that those must be frugal in their words who wish to be truthful?

I know of none who is so preternaturally careful to avoid situations that might compromise or weaken his adherence to the truth. With a will that no bribe can buy and no threat can bend, he upholds the supremacy of his conscience. Dedicated in body and soul to the service of mankind, he will seek no good, however great or glittering, except by methods wholly consonant with his own conception of right or truth.

—Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri

### *At the Feet of Mahatma*

How many thousand times have I called on the name Mahatma Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi! I met him in Madras on a beautiful day in springtime—the 23rd April 1915. Since then it has become so natural for me and as sweet and simple to call on him, as I call on the names of Rama and Krishna—the two sacred words of God's incarnations. At every step I meet Gandhi in my mind. His immortal spirit is pervading India and over vast portions of the world. One can see the spirit of Gandhi in the light of dawn, in the sound of aum, in the fair faces of children, in the hearts of women and in the famished looks of millions of poor people. His beautiful spirit could also be seen in the gentle eyes at the cow and in all living things on earth.

In a moment of rhapsody I hailed this avatara purusha as the "Living God" in a speech in Bombay in 1933 soon after I visited him in Yeravda prison under the mango tree. That speech was fully reported in the Bombay chronicle with glaring headlines. I do not regret to have proclaimed Gandhi in that way although the orthodox people demurred and disagreed with me. I breathed an atmosphere of holiness and sanctity in his ethereal company. He was evolving to go Godhood, as he was undergoing sentence in prisons—What a smile on his face! What serenity and what majesty!

Forty-eight years ago, sitting under the open sky on the terrace in "Lal Darwaza" in Ahmedabad, Gandhi uttered the following words, which are still ringing in my ears: "India's liberation rests in one man's liberation." He became silent and we began our prayers. I believed in what he said and realised the truth of it when India regained her independence.

—V.A. Sundaram

◀ ◀ ◀ *Flashback*



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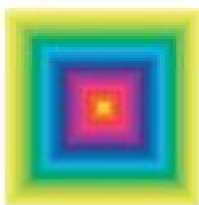
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