25 YEAR JOURNEY OF HINDU HERITAGE SOCIETY INC

SILVER JUBILEE CELEBRATION

IN COLLABORATION WITH DIASPORA FOUNDATION



HINDU



Honour and reverence, ancient traditions unfold

Infinite stories of gods and epics untold

Nurturing the soul with wisdom and grace

Divine hymns echo in sacred space

Unyielding faith embraced throughout the land

This is the story of Hindu Heritage Society Inc.

Indian Diaspora in Australia

Migration has been a way of life for many Indian families. Some have settled in far-off lands, while others have returned home to India after years of living abroad. The Indian diaspora has made its mark all over the world, and the story of the Hindu community that settled in Fiji and then migrated to Sydney, Australia, is a remarkable one.

When the Hindu community arrived in Sydney, they were part of a growing Indian diaspora that had settled in the city. Despite being far from their homeland, they were determined to maintain their Indian identity and cultural heritage.

One organisation that played a vital role in helping the Hindu community in Sydney maintain their cultural identity was the Hindu Heritage Society.

The organisation was founded in 1998 under the guidance of Pandit Narayan Bhatt and Pundit Jagdish Maharaj, two renowned Hindu scholars and practitioners.

The Hindu Heritage Society provided a range of services to the Hindu community of Sydney, including priest services and the conducting of sacred Hindu ceremonies. This was particularly important for the community, which wanted to maintain their connection to their Indian roots and celebrate their cultural heritage.

Through the Hindu Heritage Society, the community was able to find priests who could perform traditional Hindu ceremonies for their family events like weddings, housewarming ceremonies, and other important occasions. They were able to celebrate their cultural traditions with their extended family and friends, even though they were far from home.

For the Hindu community, the Hindu Heritage Society was a lifeline. It helped them maintain their cultural identity and provided them with a sense of community in a new and unfamiliar place. Through their involvement with the organisation, they were able to connect with other Indian families in Sydney and forge deep and meaningful relationships.

The Hindu Heritage Society also organized cultural events, festivals, and celebrations that brought together the Indian community in Sydney in a spirit of unity and camaraderie. These events were an opportunity for the community to come together, share their experiences, and celebrate their shared heritage.

As the Indian diaspora in Sydney continued to grow and thrive, the Hindu Heritage Society played an important role in helping the community maintain their cultural identity and celebrate their heritage. Through their efforts, the organisation became a cornerstone of the Indian community in Sydney, forging a deep and lasting connection between the Indian diaspora and their adopted home.

CONGRATULATORY MESSAGES OF MPS AND MINISTERS IN AUSTRALIA

HINDU HERITAGE SOCIETY 25TH ANNIVERSARY & GURU PURNIMA CELEBRATIONS

THE HON PETER DUTTON MP LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION AUSTRALIA

On behalf of the Coalition, I congratulate the Hindu Heritage Society on your 25th anniversary. This significant milestone is testimony to the dedication and hard work of so many, for a quarter century.

My best wishes to your society too as it celebrates *Guru Purnima* in July. The festival – observed on the full moon day in the month of Aashaadha in the Hindu Calendar – is an occasion when Hindus, Jains and Buddhists pay respect to their academic and spiritual Gurus.

Swami Vivekananda, the great Hindu philosopher and spiritual leader, said "The Guru is the means of Realisation. 'There is no knowledge without a teacher'". May your teachers and mentors be warmed as you thank them for their guidance and wisdom on the occasion of Guru Purnima.

I also take this opportunity to commend the Hindu Heritage Society for your tireless efforts to promote Hindu heritage, arts and culture; and to thank the more than 684,000 Australians of Hindu faith for your contributions to our nation in many fields of Endeavor.

May the blessings of the divine be with you all as you continue your important work.

Hon Peter Dutton MP

Leader of the Opposition April 2023



Parliament House CANBERRA ACT 2600

THE HON ANDREW GILES MP
MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION, CITIZENSHIP AND MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS

MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION, CITIZENSHIP AND MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS

HINDU HERITAGE SOCIETY 25 YEAR SILVER JUBILEE CELEBRATION AND GURU PURNIMA

I extend my congratulations to the Hindu Heritage Society on your organisation's 25th Silver Jubilee celebration, and wish you a joyous Guru Purnima.

Over the past quarter-century, the society has enriched our community by sharing Hindu cultural values through a variety of community activities, festivals, and events that promote Hindu art and culture.

According to the 2021 Census, 684,000 people living in Australia identify as Hindu, hailing from all around the world. The rich history, culture, and traditions of Hinduism have become integral to our shared Australian narrative and enrich the diverse history of Australia.

Diversity is our nation's greatest strength. Australia's success as a multicultural nation is built upon efforts like yours to celebrate the richness of our cultural diversity, and to ensure that bonds of community are forged across various cultures.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a very happy Guru Purnima, a day dedicated to celebrating and expressing gratitude to gurus, teachers, and mentors for the spiritual wisdom, guidance, and teachings they provide in shaping people's lives.

Thank you for your contributions to the Australian community. I wish your organisation continued success for the decades to come.



The Hon Andrew Giles MP
Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs

May 2023

Hugh McDermott MP

STATE MEMBER FOR PROSPECT

Hindu Heritage Society

25th Anniversary Celebration & Guru Purnima Festival

It gives me great pleasure to congratulate the Hindu Heritage Society on their 25th Year Silver Jubilee Anniversary as well as acknowledging the celebration of Guru Purnima.

I commend The Hindu Heritage Society for their continuous dedication to bringing our Western Sydney community together so they may experience the wonderful Hindu culture, traditions, and profound beliefs.

I would also like to acknowledge the Spiritual leaders and teachers, who are celebrated and honoured during the festival of Guru Purnima.

As a Member of the Parliament of New South Wales, I am privileged to represent the State Electorate of Prospect, where many Hindu families have chosen to live, work, raise a family and create a community.

I am proud to support The Hindu Heritage Society, and to have the opportunity to collaborate with the Hindu community on cultural, social, and political matters.

Congratulations and have a wonderful Guru Purnima!

Yours sincerely,

Hugh McDermott MP
Parliamentary Secretary to the Attorney General
State Member for Prospect



CITY OF PARRAMATTA



Ref: LORDMAYOR/2023/00496

Cr Donna Davis
Lord Mayor

To the President and Members of the Hindu Heritage Society:

I congratulate the Hindu Heritage Society on the significant achievement of its 25th Silver Jubilee anniversary.

The City of Parramatta is proud of our ongoing connections with the Hindu Heritage Society and the broader Hindu community. Thank you for your tireless efforts in providing religious services as well as language, dance and music classes to the people of the City of Parramatta.

I acknowledge this is also the time of Guru Purnima, a spiritual festival held to honour teachers who have shared their wisdom.

May you continue to provide truth and inspiration in our community through religious and cultural activities in the years to come.

Yours sincerely,

Cr Donna Davis
Lord Mayor
City of Parramatta Council

Commented [1]: Put all the Aust. MPs together

CONGRATULATORY MESSAGES OF MINISTERS AND MPs FROM INDIA

I am immensely delighted to receive the cordial invitation from the Diaspora Foundation, Delhi to join the felicitation of Shri Yugesh Chand Ji, of the Hindu Heritage Society, Sydney, Australia. I am happy to know that the felicitation will be followed by a Roundtable discussion on 'Perspective on Indo - Australian Diaspora'. It is even more heartening that eminent collaborative partners from INDIROOTS, INDO-CANADA CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE OF DELHI, GDRC, SINGAPORE AND BBCI, THE NETHERLANDS, will grace the occasion.



Much though I wished, due to a prior engagement with the Supreme Court Bar Association, I will miss the felicitation function and be deprived of the stimulating discussions on such a contextually relevant theme given the rising camaraderie between our Prime Ministers and the friendly people-to-people ties. I was introduced to Shri Yugesh Chand Ji, and in fact to the vast world of the Indian diaspora by my long-standing friend, philosopher and guide - Dr Mrinal Pandey. Since then, I have had many virtual contacts with Shri Yugesh Chand Ji. I was so fascinated by his regular greetings and messages. At times, I was so astonished when Shri Chand Ji sent me greetings from Sydney on the eve of Indian festivals and festivities, which, at times, reminded me of the ensuing Indian festivals. As a senior Australian citizen, and a storehouse of the civilizational heritage of India, I congratulate Shri Yugesh Chand Ji for the exemplary services being rendered by him as an Indian diaspora to build and nurture the friendly relations between our two great republics. India- Australia friendship assumes a far greater significance in the context of the constant threat posed to the peace and tranquility of the South- East Asia region, and the world, by totalitarian forces who are inimical to democracy.

I once again congratulate Shri Yugesh Chand Ji for the commendable work being done by him. I extend my heartiest greetings to the participants and the organizers and wish the event every success.

Namaskar. Dhanyavad.

Devender Singh Aswal
Ex Addl Secretary, Lok Sabha
& Advocate

The Diaspora Foundation is a non-profit organization based in New Delhi, India, that aims to connect and empower the Indian diaspora worldwide. The organization was founded in 2014 by a group of Indian professionals living abroad, who recognized the need for a platform to facilitate engagement and collaboration between the diaspora and India.

The Diaspora Foundation focuses on several key areas, including education, entrepreneurship, culture, and social impact. The organization hosts events and workshops to promote knowledge exchange and networking among diaspora members, as well as to showcase the rich diversity of Indian culture and heritage.

One of the Foundation's flagship initiatives is the Diaspora Demo Day, which brings together Indian startups from around the world to pitch their business ideas to a panel of judges and potential investors. The event provides a platform for diaspora entrepreneurs to showcase their innovations and connect with the Indian startup ecosystem.

In addition to its events and initiatives, the Diaspora Foundation also conducts research and advocacy work to support the Indian diaspora community. The organization has published several reports on topics such as diaspora philanthropy and the impact of COVID-19 on the Indian diaspora.

Overall, the Diaspora Foundation plays an important role in promoting engagement and collaboration between the Indian diaspora and India, and in supporting the growth and success of the diaspora community.

Dr Mrinal Kumar Pandey and Mr Mukesh Sahini are two remarkable individuals who have dedicated their lives to serving the Indian diaspora. As President and General Secretary of the Diaspora Foundation in New Delhi, they have been at the forefront of efforts to support and empower members of the Indian diaspora across the globe.

Under their leadership, the Diaspora Foundation has become a beacon of hope for millions of Indians living abroad. The Foundation works tirelessly to provide support and assistance to Indian diaspora communities, helping them to navigate the challenges of living in a foreign land while maintaining their cultural identity and heritage.

Dr Pandey and Mr Sahini's tireless efforts have helped to create a more connected and inclusive world, one in which members of the Indian diaspora can feel a sense of belonging and pride in their heritage. Through their work, they have built bridges between communities and brought people together in a spirit of unity and understanding.

Their contributions have been nothing short of remarkable. They have helped to promote Indian culture and traditions around the world, working to preserve the rich legacy of India's past while embracing the challenges and opportunities of the present.

Join us on this journey of discovery as we explore the lives and work of two remarkable individuals who have dedicated themselves to serving the Indian diaspora, and to creating a more connected, inclusive, and vibrant world.

INSPIRING JOURNEY OF 25 YEARS AND MESSAGES OF PROMINENT OFFICE BEARERS OF HINDU HERITAGE

The purpose and establishment of HHS, by Pt Narayan Bhatt (Shastri ji)

The Hindu population in Australia was gradually increasing in the 1990s. Temples were coming up and Hinduism was getting momentum among Australians.

The Hindu population was coming from many different countries, however primarily from India, Nepal and Fiji.

Pt Narayan Bhatt (Shastri ji) along with Pt Jagdish Maharaj and others established the Hindu Heritage Society (HHS) to address the cultural needs of the growing Hindu population in Australia during the 1990s. Despite the emergence of temples and the increasing popularity of Hinduism among Australians, the community lacked capable Priests and religious leaders, resulting in few activities.

The HHS began as the Indo-Australia Arts Education Centre (Kalaa Mandir Inc.) to promote activity-based practice and uplift cultural awareness. In 1998, the HHS showcased Hindu cultural values through various events, including the highly acclaimed "Sarva Dharma Sammelan" seminar, integrated with the Kumbh Mela in Haridwar, India, where sacred Ganga river water was arranged for blessings.

The management committee and community representatives realized that the name "Kalaa Mandir" limited the organization's potential for wider community involvement. In 2002, the HHS was re-named the Hindu Heritage Society Inc. with broader aims and objectives.

We shifted our focus to accommodate more activities.

To reflect our aims, we started 3 major events every year. Saraswati Pooja for youth in January/February. Guru Purnima is our “Sanskriti Diwas” in July and Devi Jagran in September / October every year.

Later we have included 2 more annual functions: Holi festival.

These are the major festivals Hindu Heritage Society has been celebrating for the previous 25 years in Australia.

We have conducted Shri Ram Leela, Shri Krishna Leela as well as Music and Dance classes.

The society are not limited to Sydney, as we have also travelled to other locations, such as Victoria, Queensland, Canberra, Adelaide and even Northern Territory to help the organisations.

The Hindu Heritage Society has taken part in our share of community service through public events, by participating in major activities with other organisations, such as Hindu Council of Australia and other organisations to grow our culture and religion.

The Hindu Heritage Society has a dedicated team of Purohits and they are busy providing their religious services for the community regularly.

The Hindu Heritage Society has published numerous books, audio CDs, Videos, Magazine and conducted Radio programs to promote our rich heritage. The Society is growing and has been well received by the community.





FOUNDERS:

PANDIT NARAYAN BHATT

Pt Narayan Bhatt, (Shastri)
Registered Marriage Celebrant, (Civil & Religious)
Trustee: Hindu Heritage Society Inc.
Vice President: Australian Council of Hindu Clergy Inc.
Member: Brahman Purohit MahaSabha Inc.
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Shri Pt. Narayan Bhatt is the son of the famous Pujari, Pt. Jaidev Bhatt was born in Haripur, Uttarakhand, India. He brings with him a rich heritage from Kurmanchal Manaskhand and western Nepal. He obtained his Primary and Higher education from Haridwar Uttarakhand India. He has always followed in the footsteps of his father.

Pt Narayan Bhatt obtained his Shastri degrees from the Sampurnanand University of Varanasi in 1986. He has also obtained a Master's degree (MA) in Sanskrit from the Gurukul University of Haridwar Uttarakhand.

He has studied Vedas, Upanishads, Ramayan, Gita, Chanda Shasras, Kavya Shasrtas and other related Sanskrit literature. He narrates beautiful katha of Ramayan, Bhagwatam and Devi Bhagwatam. Shri Narayan ji has always had a passion for music and in 1989 he was awarded a Diploma in vocal music and Tabla from Prayag Sangeet Samiti Prayag Raj Uttar Pradesh India.

Shri Bhatt ji has also completed practical Training of Karmakanda of various sanskars and Anusthans conducted by the ministry of Human Resources in India. He is a Marriage Celebrant and conducts all kinds of Satwik Anusthans. (Purva Prayag)

He has been trained in a priest-hood since his teens. Pdt Narayan Bhatt has served the Hindu community of Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra since his arrival in Australia. He speaks fluent Hindi, English, Nepali, Gujarati and Sanskrit languages.

Pundit Narayan Bhatt is a well-respected figure in the Hindu community of Sydney, Australia, and his contributions to promoting Hinduism and its values have been commendable. In addition to founding and serving as the President of the Hindu Heritage

Society Inc. (HHS), Pundit Bhatt has many associations with other well-known Hindu institutions of Sydney, such as the Hindu Council of Australia (HCA).

Pundit Bhatt has also served as a priest and religious leader for various Hindu temples and organizations across Sydney. His expertise in Vedic scriptures and rituals has made him a sought-after figure for conducting sacred Hindu ceremonies, such as weddings, yagnas, and pujas. He has also been involved in the establishment of new temples and religious centres, providing guidance and support to their founders and members.

Pundit Bhatt's commitment to promoting the values of Hinduism in Australia has earned him numerous accolades and recognitions. He has received awards from various organisations, including the Hindu Council of Australia and the Federation of Indian Associations of NSW. These awards are a testament to his dedication, hard work, and selfless service to the Hindu community.

His humility and gentle nature have endeared him to people from all walks of life. He is a source of inspiration to many Hindus who look up to him as a role model and mentor.



SHRIMATI RADHIKA BHATT

Radhika Joshi was born in Basod, a small village in the district of Pithoragadh in the state of Uttarakhand, India. She was raised in a close-knit family with a strong army background, where she learned the values of discipline, hard work, and empathy from an early age. These values have stayed with her throughout her life and are evident in her relationships with her family, friends, and the wider community.

Radhika's dedication to education has always been a key part of her life, and she continued her studies after settling in Sydney with her husband, Pandit Narayan Bhatt, in 1997. Her commitment to learning has helped her become an active member of the community, and together with her husband, Radhika became involved in various community projects, including the Hindu Heritage Society's annual functions and publications, which promote education, arts, and Hindu religious heritage.

Radhika's army background has also inspired her to serve her community as a social worker. She is known for her kindness and dedication, and is often seen at cultural events organized by various organizations. She has supported her involvement with organizations such as the Hindu Heritage Society, Vishwa Hindu Parishad, and Hindu Council of Australia, volunteering her time to teach Hindu scripture to primary school children and promoting events to the general public. She is a regular volunteer at

Sydney Sanskrit School and attends social functions organized by the Uttarakhand Association.

In addition to her community involvement, Radhika is a loving mother and empathetic friend who is well-liked by many. She has always been supportive of her family, and her children are a testament to her love and guidance. In her free time, Radhika enjoys attending social and religious functions such as Bhagwat katha, Ramayan Katha, Sundarkand path, and spending time with her friends. Her warm and caring personality makes her a joy to be around.

Radhika Bhatt is a remarkable woman whose journey in life has been nothing short of inspiring. She is married to Pandit Narayan Bhatt, and she has been an integral part of her husband's work in the Hindu community. Her work has inspired many other women to act and make a positive impact in their own communities. Radhika's life is a reminder that with hard work, dedication, and the values, we can overcome any obstacle and achieve great things.



PANDIT JAGDISH MAHARAJ





Pt. Jagdish P. Maharaj
Justice of the Peace
Authorised NSW Marriage Celebrant,
Trustee, Hindu Heritage Society,
V.P.- Sanatan Dharma Brahman
Purohit Maha Sabha, Sydney,
Australia.
Mobile: 0412 931 965. Phone: 02 9896 5156.

Pandit Jagdish Maharaj is the son of the late Shri Parmeshwar Dutt Maharaj and the late Srimati Jasoda Maharaj. He is the grandson of Pundit Gajadhar Maharaj, who came to Fiji under the Indenture system in 1914 from Ayodhya in India.

Prior to finally arriving in Fiji, Gajadharji had also travelled to Rangoon, Burma and Natal and South Africa. Pandit Jagdish was born in Nasinu, a suburb of the capital city Suva in Fiji. Punditji moved to and has resided in Sydney, Australia from 1992.

Punditji is a well-respected public speaker; he is also the co-founder of the Hindu Heritage Society Inc. Punditji is the co-author of numerous pooja texts and is the editor of Divya Darshan, a quarterly magazine published by The Hindu Heritage Society.

Currently he is a Trustee of the Hindu Heritage Society Inc.,of which he is a founding member. He is also the Vice Patron of the Sanatan Dharma Brahman Purohit Maha Sabha of Australia. On various occasions Panditji has represented HHS in Hindu council meetings and other organisations.

Punditji has served the Hindu community of Sydney with distinction, dedication and devotion since his arrival here with his family and continues to offer his services to the community with pride. He has a good command and deep understanding of Shastras.

He is committed to preaching and promoting the Sanatan Dharam and conducts all forms of pooja and yagna.

He performed his very first Satyanarayan Katha and Hanuman Roth Poojan at the age of 14 years. He is a keen scholar of Hindi and Sanskrit and is well versed in the Ramayana, Shrimad Bhagwat Gita and other Hindu Religious texts

Pandit Jagdish Maharaj, a highly esteemed figure, has been acknowledged for his remarkable contributions to the Hindu community. Through his dedicated efforts, he has played a significant role in promoting and uplifting the Hindu faith, both within Australia and beyond.

Punditji has received awards from the hindu council of Australia and BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha and other various organisations.

Punditji has represented Hindu Heritage Society on numerous occasions.

Pandit Jagdish Maharaj Ji's ancestors are from Ayodhya, Gaon - Halkara ke Purva, Jila - Faizabad.

The Diaspora Foundation of New Delhi has released a book about the Migration Journey of Pandit Jagdish Ji and this is available to all.



सूर्य 6:14 (अस्त) 6:20 (उदय-कल)
तापमान 32.0 (अधि.) 15.0 (न्यून.)
आर्द्रता 90.0 (अधि.) 40.0 (न्यून.)

अयोध्या (फैजाबाद) जा

फिजी दंपती बोले, भारतीय होने पर नाज

◆ बचाए रखा भाषा और धर्म

मुकेश कुमार, फैजाबाद

25 वर्ष बाद मातृभूमि अयोध्या पहुंचे फिजी दंपति जगदीश महराज एवं प्रमिला महराज को भारतीय होने पर नाज है। वे कहते हैं कि 150 वर्ष पहले उनके पितामह बतौर गिरमिटिया मजदूर फिजी ले जाए गए थे। वे वहां बसे तो सबसे पहली चुनौती अपनी भाषा, बोली और धर्म यानी पूजन पद्धति बचाए रखने की थी।

फिजी में बसे भारतीय मूल के लोग इस चुनौती को सफलतापूर्वक अंजाम देने में कामयाब हैं। वे बताते हैं कि फिजी में हिंदी का रेडियो चौबीस घंटे व दो दैनिक समाचार पत्र सफलतापूर्वक निकल रहे हैं। इससे हिंदी दिन-ब-दिन युवा हो रही है। भारत आने का मकसद पूछने पर वे बताते हैं कि 25 साल बाद अपनी मातृभूमि व यहां तीर्थस्थलों के दर्शन को आए हैं। बालाजी, वैष्णोदेवी, हरिद्वार, काशी, अयोध्या में दर्शन पूजन के बाद वे 15 मार्च को फिजी लौट जाएंगे। फिजी में भारतीय मूल के लोगों की दशा के बाबत सवाल हुआ तो उनके मुंह से पीड़ा भी मुखर हुई। कहा, डेढ़ सौ साल पहले फिजी गए पूर्वजों ने वहां कड़ी मेहनत की, कुछ वापस लौटे पर ज्यादातर वहीं बस गए, जो बसे उन्होंने व्यापार और विज्ञान के

समाजवादी ब्राह्मणसभा ने किया स्वागत

फैजाबाद : फिजी दंपति का यहां पहुंचने पर सर्किट हाउस में समाजवादी ब्राह्मण सभा ने राष्ट्रीय महासचिव आशीष पांडेय 'दीपू' के अगुवाई में रामनामी ओढ़ाकर स्वागत किया गया। स्वागत करने वालों में भूपेंद्र पांडेय, गौरवमणि तिवारी, पवन तिवारी, रत्नेश पांडेय, सुनील उपाध्याय, अश्वनीश पांडेय आदि शामिल रहे। इसके साथ ही कनक भवन सरकार का चित्र व वाल्मीकि रामायण स्मृति कर भेंट किया गया। उन्होंने अयोध्या जाकर नागेश्वरनाथ, कनक भवन, हनुमानगढ़ी, जैन मंदिर आदि का दर्शन पूजन किया। इसके बाद हलकारा पुरवा स्थित अपने पैतृक गांव भी गए।

फिजी निवासी जगदीश प्रसाद को स्मृति चिह्न देते सपा ब्राह्मण सभा के राष्ट्रीय महासचिव आशीष पांडेय

क्षेत्र में तरक्की के झंडे गाड़े। वे बताते हैं कि वहां 25 साल पहले भारतीयों की आबादी 52 फीसदी हो गई थी और हमने अपनी सरकार भी बना ली थी, लेकिन सैन्य विद्रोह के बाद काफी लोग अमेरिका, कनाडा, आस्ट्रेलिया, न्यूजीलैड जैसे देशों में विस्थापित हुए हैं नतीजतन आबादी घटकर अब 38 फीसद रह गई है। परंपराओं की बाबत बताया कि शादी-ब्याह की परंपरा तिलक चढ़ाने से लेकर जयमाल व विदाई तक की पूर्ववत ही चल रही है। मृतक संस्कार भी 13 दिन में पिंडदान के साथ समाप्त होता है। हां! इतना जरूर है कि नई पीढ़ी पहनावे के स्तर पर बदल रही है। नहीं तो महिलाएं परंपरागत ढंग से साड़ी व सलवार भी पहनती हैं। वे बताते हैं ब्राह्मणों व पुरोहितों के क्लब हैं। मंदिर भी बहुतायत हैं। सियासत पर भी टिप्पणी करने से वे खुद को नहीं रोक पाते। कहते हैं कि पं. नेहरू व इंदिरा गांधी जैसे नेता भारत में नहीं रहे। केंद्र में गठबंधन की सरकारों ने अंतर्राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर भारत की शक्ति को कमजोर किया है।

On a recent tour of India, he and his wife were welcomed by representatives of the government of India in the RashtraPati Bhavan in Faizabad.

SHRIMATI PREM LATA MAHARAJ



Ek Jhalak Prem Maharaj Ki



Prem is a Sanskrit word for "love." More specifically, it refers to pure, unconditional love that leads to total devotion and surrender. Of the various paths of yoga, Bhakti yoga is most associated with prem, as the highest form of devotion (*bhakti*) is prem.

Hinduism has several words that translate as love, but each describes a different type of love. Kama, for example, is pleasurable love, but prem (also called prema) is an elevated form of love in which the devotee loves without selfishness and with no expectations of something in return for that prem love.

Mrs Prem Maharaj is a very active member of the Hindu Heritage Society and has been there since its inception. She has seen the society and its members (and their children) grow in the last 25 years. She has been instrumental in its inception and its growth including the Society's many milestones in Australia. Mrs Maharaj is very involved in the current 25th anniversary celebrations of the Hindu Heritage Society.

Hindu Heritage Society ka Hardik Pranam hai Mrs Maharaj ki samarpan (dedication) aur Sewa (service) ko.

Mrs Prem Maharaj was born in Fiji. The granddaughter of 2 prominent businessmen, she grew up with a very business savvy mind. Mrs Maharaj migrated to Australia with her husband and family in 1992.

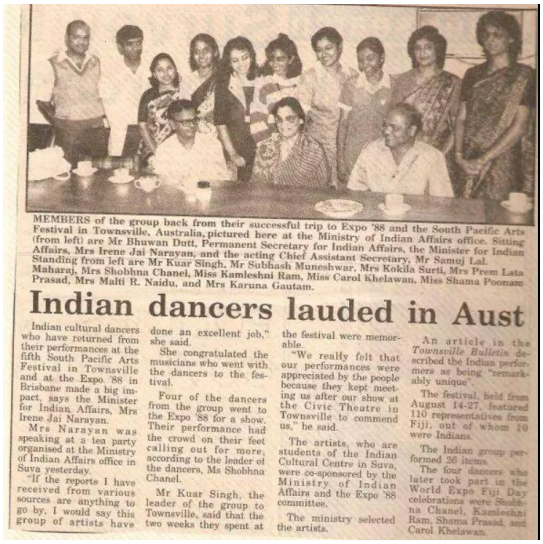
As her great grandparents had initially arrived from India, this makes Mrs Maharaj a 4th Generation Fiji born Indian. She has held on to her Indian and Hindu heritage staunchly. Her command of the Hindi language, her knowledge of Hindu Religion and Scriptures are immaculate.

Both Panditji and Mrs Maharaj are devout Hindus and well known in the Indian and Hindu circles of Sydney. As a child, Mrs Maharaj had an active interest in Indian heritage and culture. As a High School Student, she was one of the Indian Cultural Dancers at the Fiji Independence Day celebrations in 1970 in the presence of HRH Prince Charles, (now King Charles III).

Later she was also selected to represent Fiji at the "World Expo 88" held in Townsville, Queensland Australia. This was indeed an honour to represent the Fiji Indian Community on the World stage.



Mrs Prem Maharaj on tour playing Sitar with her Indian cultural troupe.



MEMBERS of the group back from their successful trip to Expo '88 and the South Pacific Arts Festival in Townsville, Australia, pictured here at the Ministry of Indian Affairs office. Sitting (from left) are Mr Bhuwan Dutt, Permanent Secretary for Indian Affairs, the Minister for Indian Affairs, Mrs Irene Jai Narayan, and the acting Chief Assistant Secretary, Mr Samuj Lal. Standing from left are Mr Kuar Singh, Mr Subhash Maneshwar, Mrs Kokila Surti, Mrs Prem Lata Maharaj, Mrs Shobhna Chanel, Miss Kamleshni Ram, Miss Carol Khelawan, Miss Shama Poonam Prasad, Mrs Malti R. Naidu, and Mrs Karuna Gautam.

Indian dancers lauded in Aust

Indian cultural dancers who have returned from their performances at the fifth South Pacific Arts Festival in Townsville and at the Expo '88 in Brisbane made a big impact, says the Minister for Indian Affairs, Mrs Irene Jai Narayan.

Mrs Narayan was speaking at a tea party organised at the Ministry of Indian Affairs office in Suva yesterday.

"If the reports I have received from various sources are anything to go by, I would say this group of artists have done an excellent job," she said.

She congratulated the musicians who went with the dancers to the festival.

Four of the dancers from the group went to the Expo '88 for a show. Their performance had the crowd on their feet calling out for more, according to the leader of the dancers, Ms Shobhna Chanel.

Mr Kuar Singh, the leader of the group to Townsville, said that the two weeks they spent at the festival were memorable.

"We really felt that our performances were appreciated by the people because they kept meeting us after our show at the Civic Theatre in Townsville to commend us," he said.

The artists, who are students of the Indian Cultural Centre in Suva, were co-sponsored by the Ministry of Indian Affairs and the Expo '88 committee.

The ministry selected the artists.

An article in the *Townsville Bulletin* described the Indian performers as being "remarkably unique".

The festival, held from August 14-27, featured 110 representatives from Fiji, out of whom 10 were Indians.

The Indian group performed 26 items.

The four dancers who later took part in the World Expo Fiji Day celebrations were Shobhna Chanel, Kamleshni Ram, Shama Prasad, and Carol Khelawan.

During her time in Fiji, Mrs Maharaj had sent both her daughters to learn the "kalaa" of Bharatanatyam Dancing from the wife of the then Indian High Commissioner to Fiji, Mrs Lekha Shrinivasan. Both Sangeeta and Swaran had followed their mother's footsteps and performed many times on stage in Fiji and were also featured as Indian classical dances in the annual calendar issued by Fintel Fiji Ltd in 1992.

Mrs Maharaj, was also a keen volunteer for the Poor Relief Society in Fiji for many years. The Society helped provide food and other items to poor families in Fiji. Mrs Maharaj was an active fund raiser for the Charity and helped organise many functions for fund raising activities on behalf of the Charity. This is a trait she has utilised in successfully organising many functions for the HHS in Sydney during their 25 years of existence.

Mrs Maharaj has brought up her children and grandchildren with strict Hindu values. Recently organised the Janeo Sanskaar for their grandchildren Saurav and Siddharth Maharaj.

Most recently the Maharaj Family had a week-long Shrimad Bhagwat Saptah Parayan at their premises in August 2022. To date in Australia, she is supporting her husband, Pandit Jagdish Maharaj in his journey as a Hindu Priest in Sydney.

Her children Sangeeta, Swaran, Aanant and Anmol are volunteers with the Hindu Heritage Society and Aanant is the Secretary of the Hindu Heritage Society at the current moment, taking over from his Father.



Mrs Prem Maharaj with her entire family, 4 children their respective spouses and 9 grandchildren



HG Harisharan Maharaj

Born in 1977, at a remote part of Uttarakhand and border of western Nepal, Harish Bhatt had a deep interest in Sanatan Dharma lifestyle. By nature, he used to get immense pleasure in helping others in need, was obedient but at the same time had curiosity about nature and the creation. People knew this child would be a famous yogi in the future as he also had a deep interest in Meditation and Yoga.

After completing his primary education, he studied Sanskrit language and scriptures including Srimad Bhagwatam and Geeta under guidance of his elder brother Pandit Narayan Bhatt (Shastri) and gained a deep understanding of Vedik Bangmay, the Scriptures and Sanatan Dharma in general.

He spent some time in Vrindavan to gain some more spiritual upliftment.

He has an educational background as below.

- Bachelor in Arts (B.A.) from Jodhpur National University, Jodhpur.
- Intermediate Grade in Drawing from Chitrachaman College of Art, Dehradun
- Diploma in Computer Software from Mumbai

Primary education in Haridwar.

He was invited to Sydney Australia by Indo-Australia Art Educational Centre (Kalaa Mandir) in 1999. After spending about a year teaching art at Indo-Australia Educational Centre, Mr Bhatt along with the management committee decided to change the name of this Centre as “Hindu Heritage Society Inc”

He worked tirelessly to introduce Sanatan Sanskriti in Australia and was affiliated with many organisations such as Brahman Purohit Maha Sabha, Australian Hindi Indian Association (AHIA)

He was principal organiser of many events and taught Yoga and Drawing and Painting to many people. He has organised many seminars and exhibitions to promote Hindu Heritage in Australia.

After returning from Australia, HG Harisharan Maharaj entered into family life, but continued to contribute for the benefit and unity of his motherland Nepal.

Pt Harish Bhatt received “Vaishana Diksha " from HDG Mohansharan Devacharya Maharaj of Nepal and his name was changed to HG Harisharan Maharaj.

On instructions from his Guru, HG Harisharan Maharaj established a charity organization “Lok Kalyankari Sewa Trust” in Nepal with the aim of transforming the local and global society into a harmonious and peaceful society by eradicating the unsocial elements such as addiction and crime and by offering our care not only for the humans, also for the animals (specifically vulnerable cows, who are regarded as sacred in Sanatan Dharma).

He worked hard to provide shelter to the cows who were left abandoned on the streets and is still working with the general publish, various organisations and the governmental bodies to establish a holistic “Cow Shelter”. The honesty and discipline are still engraved in his heart and due to this very nature, he has gained widespread support among general public as well as from Pandits, Saints and Scholars to promote the Sanatan Dharma globally and hence the Hindu Mahasangh has nominated him for the post of “Vishwa Hindu Prabhari”.

Hindu Heritage Society Australia extends its well wishes for his mission and brighter future



Kamadhenu – It is believed that all Gods, including the Holy Trinity, has their abode in Kamadhenu

The cow represents Mother Earth, as it is a source of goodness and its milk nourishes all creatures. Krishna, a central Hindu deity, is often portrayed in stories recounting his life as a cowherd and referring to him as the child who protects cows.

As the cow is a sacred animal for Hindus, all products derived from it are highly valued. There are a number of ways to use milk. It is, for example, transformed into yoghurt, which, savoury or flavoured, is incorporated into meals. Yoghurt is also the base for the sauce for chopped vegetables and spices and is also consumed as a drink, mixed with water or iced milk. Ghee, a type of clarified butter, is highly popular. Also buttermilk, a by-product of butter, forms a major part of the rural diet.

The cow's goodness is not, however, restricted to its milk. Cow urine is sometimes included in a purifying mixture used in some religious rituals. Cow dung is used as a fertilizer and fuel. Collected, shaped and dried, it is used for cooking food.

Cows standing for virtues do fall in the care of Brahmanas as the former represent Vedas-Rig Ved being the back of Cows, Yajur Ved being their middle portion, and Sama Ved their 'Kukshi'(stomach); 'Ishta'or Yagnas and Yagas and 'Apurti' or Wells, Tatakas, Gardens etc are their horns; Veda Suktas are the body hairs; Shanti Karma and Pushti Karma are their dung and urine; 'Aksharas' are their feet; Cows live for their Pada-Krama-Jata-and Ghana Paatha viz. the various Mantras; Swahakar, Swadhakar, Vashatkar and Hanthakar are the four nipples of their breasts, each of the nipples representing Devatas; Pitras; Bhutas, Rishis, Munis and Sureswaraganas; and Human beings respectively. The last nipple yeilds maximum milk to human beings.Thus the responsibility of looking after cows is squarely on human beings



SHRIMATI VIMLA RAO



Trainer and Practitioner of:
Spiritual Hypnotherapy
Clinical Hypnotherapy
Bowen Therapy

Senior Associate Member of ASCH
Senior Executive Member of IICT

Mobile: 0415483459
Email: therapist@ambienthealth.com.au

Shishya of Swami SatyaNand Saraswati – Shree Ram Sharnam

Vimla Rao is a very friendly and enthusiastic spiritual therapist and instructor, practicing various modalities in order to give a vibrant life-style to all those who seek help.

Vimla was born and brought up in Fiji but, in 1985, chose to make Australia her home. She had been employed at various universities as a physics technical officer until 2003 when her thirst for working in the healthcare industry led her to the role of Home Care worker during which time she built an amazing rapport with her elderly, sick and disabled clients. Her passion led her to the Bowen Therapy world when, in 2005, she completed her Diploma of Bowen Therapy and started on her new journey of helping clients through their various physical and emotional ailments. She pursued this career further and, by 2010, became an international instructor of Bowen Therapy, teaching in Australia, Fiji, India and Pakistan.

While on the path of healing, Vimla realized that there was a subtle aspect beyond the physical and the emotional. Her search led her to Dr Yogesh Choudhary, the founder and Director of the Indian Institute of Hypnotherapy, where she mastered Clinical as well as Spiritual Hypnotherapy. Under Dr Yogesh Choudhary's Guidance, Vimla learned about talking to the organs and systems of the Body as well as treating clients with issues due to the presence of spirit in their vicinity.

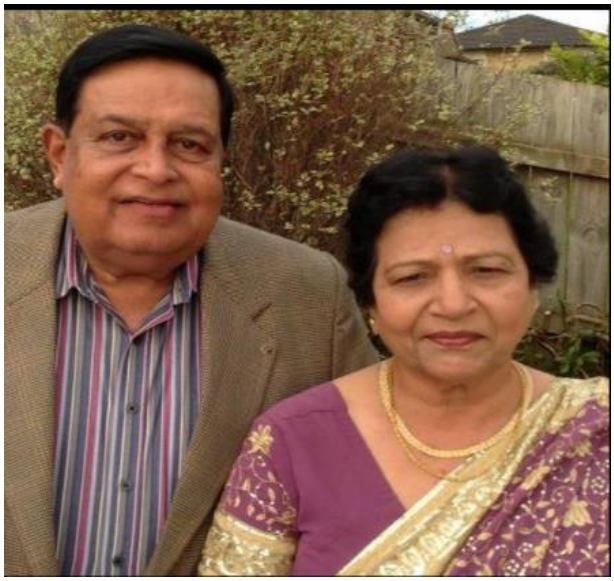
Along with her spiritual knowledge that she has been blessed by a Guru and gained through her study of scriptures, she now runs a very successful clinic and is able to bring all her knowledge gained over the years into her work as an instructor for AusHealth College of Vibrant Therapies.

Vimla's message to mankind is:

"Help yourself live a vibrant life to keep yourself and all those who seek help, happy with total fulfillment, contentment and inner peace".

SHRIMAN PADAM LALA AND FAMILY

MAJOR SPONSOR



Padam Raj Lala

Chairman

Padam Raj Lala is the Managing Director and founder of Lotus Garments Ltd. Mr. Lala has served as the Chairman of R. B. Patel Group of Companies (Fiji), Merchant Finance, Hume Industries, Standard Concrete Industries and Land Transport Authority. He was also the Deputy Mayor of Suva City Council and Deputy Chairman of the Fiji Development Bank. Mr. Lala served as a Board member of the Fiji Trade & Investment Board and as the Chairman of the Textile Clothing and Footwear Council of Fiji and also the President of Fiji Manufacturers Association. He was Chairman of Fiji TV and the President of the Rotary Club of Suva.

Mr. Lala has vast experience in clothing manufacturing, retail and wholesale trade. He is a very successful real estate investor and developer. His multifarious activities with the business community in Fiji is well recognised, together with his political, cultural, educational and community involvements.

Mr and Mrs Lala are esteemed practicing Hindus and are regular sponsors of the Hindu Heritage Society, since its inception. Mr and Mrs Padam Lala together with their family. had sponsored the 108 Kund Havan Yagna hosted by the Hindu Heritage Society in 2008. Mr and Mrs Lala have also donated 50 sets of Hawan Kund to the Hindu Heritage Society, which was utilised regularly in all our Prayer functions and Havan Yagnas. Their son, Rajeshwar Lala is also a devout Hindu and a Keen financial donor of the Hindu Heritage Society over the past 25 years.

Mr Padam Lala hails from the extremely well-known Lala family in Fiji. He was born in Nausori Fiji in 1942 and is married to Mrs Gaitri Devi Lala. They are the proud parents of 3 sons who are all married and well settled in their lives.

Padam Lala joined the family business in 1960's and developed Lala's Store into a major and well-known men's boutique shop. In the late 1970's, he established a garment manufacturing plant – Lotus Garments Limited, which is still in operation today and employing approximately 300 people and is regarded as the quality manufacturers of men and ladies clothing and corporate uniforms. In the late 1990's, Mr. Padam Lala established SUN Insurance Company Limited which is successfully operating and rendering General Insurance to the public of Fiji.

Mr. Lala also has been a prominent real estate developer in Suva and has developed a number of residential and commercial properties.

The Lala Family has been instrumental in educational, cultural and religious activities in Fiji and has been instrumental in the establishment of Krishna Vedic School in Kuku Nausori, Arya Boys School and DAV College for Boys and Girls.

Mr. Lala has served as Chairman of various Statutory Bodies in Fiji and as a Deputy Mayor of City of Suva, and President of Charitable Organizations like Apex Club and Rotary Club of Suva.

Solah Sanskars. SansSolah Sanskars. Sanskaars (Sacraments).
by Pdt. Jagdish Maharaj. Sydney, Australia.

Garbhadhaan Punsavanam, Seemanto Jaatkarm cha,
Naamkriyaa Nishkramane,Annashaanam Wapana kriyaa,

Karnavedho Brataadesho, Vedaarambha Kriyaavidhih,
Keshaantam snaanmuddaho, Vivaah agni-parigrahah,
Tretaagni Sangraha-cheti, Sanskaaraa Shodasha Smritaah.

The Hindu Heritage Society (HHS) may incorporate and promote various aspects of Hindu culture, including the observance and practice of the Solah Sanskars. These sixteen traditional Hindu rituals or ceremonies are considered significant milestones in a person's life, and they are meant to guide individuals through different stages, from birth to death.

As part of their cultural preservation and awareness efforts, the HHS may organize and facilitate the performance of these Sanskars within the Hindu community. By following and promoting the Solah Sanskars, the HHS aims to uphold and pass down the rich traditions and values associated with these important life events. These ceremonies play a vital role in spiritual and social development and contribute to the overall well-being of individuals within the Hindu community.

The sixteen Sanskars are as follows:

Garbhadhan Sanskar: The conception ceremony performed before pregnancy.

Punsavan Sanskar: The ritual performed during the third month of pregnancy for the well-being of the fetus.

Simantonnayana Sanskar: The baby shower ceremony performed during the seventh month of pregnancy.

Jatakarma Sanskar: The birth ceremony performed immediately after the child's birth.

Namkaran Sanskar: The naming ceremony performed within a few weeks of the child's birth.

Nishkraman Sanskar: The first outing of the child from home.

Annaprashan Sanskar: The introduction of solid food to the child for the first time.

Chudakarma Sanskar: The first haircut ceremony.

Karnavedha Sanskar: The ear-piercing ceremony.

Vidyarambha Sanskar: The initiation of formal education.

Upanayana Sanskar: The sacred thread ceremony, symbolizing the beginning of the student stage.

Keshanta Sanskar: The shaving of the beard and cutting of hair after the completion of formal education.

Samavartana Sanskar: The completion of formal education and the return home.

Vivaha Sanskar: The marriage ceremony.

Vanaprastha Sanskar: The stage of retirement from worldly responsibilities.

Antyeshti Sanskar: The funeral and cremation ceremony after death.

These Sanskars vary in rituals, customs, and regional practices, but they all hold significant cultural and religious importance in Hinduism. They help individuals navigate different phases of life with spiritual guidance and reinforce the values and traditions of the Hindu community.



HERITAGE



Holding the tales of our ancestors past

Enriching our souls, a legacy that will last

Respecting the roots that define our worth

Immersed in the cultures from which we birth

Treasuring traditions, a tapestry of age

Appreciating our heritage, our history's stage

Grateful for the lessons, the values it imparts

Eternal connection to our roots and our heart

FOUR MAJOR ANNUAL EVENTS - FLAGSHIP PROGRAMMES

Hindu Heritage Society conducts several significant events throughout the year

Saraswati Pooja

1. Saraswati Pooja is dedicated to the Goddess Saraswati, the embodiment of knowledge, wisdom, and the arts. The Hindu Heritage Society organises this pooja to invoke the blessings of Goddess Saraswati for learning, education, and creative pursuits. Students, artists, and scholars gather to worship the Goddess and seek her divine guidance. This pooja is especially significant for students, who seek the blessings of the Goddess to excel in their studies.

Holi

2. Holi, also known as the Festival of Colors, is a vibrant and joyous celebration that marks the arrival of spring. The Hindu Heritage Society organises Holi festivities, where people come together to play with coloured powders, sing and dance, and exchange greetings.

Guru Purnima

3. Guru Purnima is a sacred day dedicated to expressing gratitude and reverence towards spiritual teachers and gurus. The Hindu Heritage Society conducts a Guru Purnima pooja to honour the lineage of enlightened masters who have imparted spiritual wisdom. This pooja is a reminder of the importance of spiritual guidance and the role of gurus in illuminating the path of enlightenment. It is a time for introspection, reflection, and deepening one's spiritual connection with the divine.

Durga Pooja

4. Durga Pooja is a major Hindu festival that celebrates the triumph of Goddess Durga over the forces of evil. The Hindu Heritage Society organises elaborate Durga Pooja rituals during Navratri, a nine-night celebration dedicated to the divine feminine energy. Devotees worship Goddess Durga, who represents strength, courage, and protection. This pooja invokes the blessings of Goddess Durga and seeks her divine grace for the removal of obstacles and the attainment of spiritual and worldly prosperity.

It is interesting to learn about the spiritual significance attached to the worship of Goddess Saraswati and how men of principle prioritize spiritual enlightenment over the pursuit of wealth and power. The symbolism behind the vehicle assigned to each of the three goddesses is also noteworthy, with the white swan of Saraswati representing purity and discrimination.

The celebration of Vasant Panchami, which heralds the arrival of springtime and new life, is an occasion of great religious, seasonal, and social significance for Hindus all over the world. It is heartening to know that HHS has been initiating Maha Saraswati Pooja on this occasion since its inception, and that it has been held in different public places to encourage youth participation.

It is also commendable that HHS has been teaching the first letter to new kids before they start school, emphasizing the importance of education and the role of Goddess Saraswati in acquiring knowledge and wisdom.

Initiatives like these are crucial in preserving our cultural heritage and ensuring that future generations continue to appreciate and value our diverse traditions. It is heartening to see HHS taking the lead in promoting the worship of Goddess Saraswati and imparting knowledge and wisdom to the younger generation.

Vasant Panchami is a festival full of religious, seasonal and social significance and is celebrated by Hindus all over the world with verve and a new sense of optimism. Magh Sukla Panchami (5th day of the bright fortnight of the lunar month of Magh) is the day of Vasant Panchami. Hindus all over the world celebrate this festival with great enthusiasm. This Panchami is also known as special Saraswati worship Day. It is believed that this day is Goddess Saraswati's incarnation day. Hindu Heritage Society is the first organisation who has publicly introduced this prayer in Australian soil.

Yellow colour is given special importance on this day. On Vasant Panchami, Saraswati is dressed in yellow garments and worshipped (with Puja, Havan etc.).

Men of principle (men who can discriminate) worship goddess Saraswati for spiritual enlightenment. In their opinion, there can be no comparison between the king and the learned (spiritually advanced). The king is honoured within his kingdom, whereas the learned is respected (or worshipped) everywhere. Saintly people and people inclined towards spiritual progress attach great importance to the worship of goddess Saraswati.

The vehicle assigned to each of the three goddesses also symbolically represent their special powers. The white swan of Saraswati symbolises Sattva Guna (purity and discrimination). The owl of Lakshmi and the lion or tiger of Durga symbolise the other two gunas (Rajas and Tamas).

The first faint signals of the forthcoming festival of Holi manifest at Vasant Panchami. Seasons undergo change. The coming of springtime is heralded. Trees are displaying new shoots. New life is evident in the woods and fields. Nature decorates Mango trees with new blossoms. Wheat and other crops enliven with evidence of new life.

Vasant Panchami is a festival full of religious, seasonal and social significance and is celebrated by Hindus all over the world with verve and a new sense of optimism.

HHS has held the Maha Saraswati Pooja, since its inception. Every year, on the occasion of Vasanth Panchami, which comes between January and February, the event is held in different public places, where youth are encouraged to take part, by worshipping Mata Saraswati.

Goddess Saraswati

The Goddess Saraswathi is worshipped as the Goddess of Learning and the fountain of fine arts and science, and also the symbol of supreme vedantic knowledge. It is also believed that goddess Saraswati endows human beings with the powers of speech and wisdom.

Sanskrit Mantra

या कुन्देन्दु तुषारहारधवला, या शुभ्रवस्त्रावृता, या वीणावरदण्डमण्डितकरा, या श्वेतपद्मासना
या ब्रह्माच्युतशंकरप्रभृतिभि, र्देवैः सदा पूजिता, सामां पातु सरस्वती भगवती निःशेषजाड्यापहा

***Yaa Kundendu tushaara haaradhavalaa, Yaa shubhravastraavritha*|**

***Yaa veenavara dandamanditakara, Yaa shwetha padmaasana*||**

***Yaa brahmaachyutha shankara prabhritibhir Devaisadaa Vanditha*|**

***Saa Maam Paatu Saraswatee Bhagavatee Nihshesha jaadyaapahaa*||**

Translation

"May Goddess Saraswati, who is fair like the jasmine-colored moon, and whose pure white garland is like frosty dew drops; who is adorned in radiant white attire, on whose beautiful arm rests the *veena*, and whose throne is a white lotus; who is surrounded and respected by the Gods, protect me. May you fully remove my lethargy, sluggishness, and ignorance."

The Sanskrit word sara means "essence" and swa means "self." Thus, Saraswati means "the essence of the self." Saraswati is represented in Hindu mythology as the divine consort of Lord Brahma, the Creator of the universe. Since knowledge is necessary for creation, Saraswati symbolizes the creative power of Brahma.

Goddess Saraswati is worshipped by all persons interested in knowledge, especially students, teachers, scholars, and scientists.

In Her popular images and pictures, Goddess Saraswati is generally depicted with four arms (some pictures may show only two arms), wearing a white sari and seated on a white lotus. She holds a book and a rosary in Her rear two hands, while the front two hands are engaged in the playing of a lute (veena). Her right leg is shown slightly pushing against Her left leg. She uses a swan as Her vehicle. There is a peacock by Her side gazing at Her. This symbolism illustrates the following spiritual ideas:

* **The lotus** is a symbol of the Supreme Reality, and a white lotus also denotes supreme knowledge. By sitting on a lotus, Saraswati signifies that She is Herself rooted in the Supreme Reality, and symbolizes supreme knowledge. The white colour symbolizes purity and knowledge. The white sari that the Goddess is wearing denotes that She is the embodiment of pure knowledge.

* **The four arms** denote Her omnipresence and omnipotence. The two front arms indicate Her activity in the physical world and the two back arms signify Her presence in the spiritual world. The four hands represent the four elements of the inner personality. The mind (manas) is represented by the front right hand, the intellect (buddhi) by the front left hand, the conditioned consciousness (chitta) by the rear left hand, and the ego (ahankara) by the rear right hand.

* **The left side of the body** symbolizes the qualities of the heart and the right side symbolizes activities of the mind and intellect.

*** A book in the rear left hand** signifies that knowledge acquired must be used with love and kindness to promote prosperity of mankind.

*** The rosary** signifies concentration, meditation, and contemplation, leading to samadhi, or union with God.

*** A rosary in the rear right hand** representing ego conveys that true knowledge acquired with love and devotion melts the ego and results in liberation (moksha) of the seeker from the bondage to the physical world.

* The Goddess is shown **playing a musical instrument** that is held in her front hands, which denote mind and intellect. This symbol conveys that the seeker must tune his mind and intellect in order to live in perfect harmony with the world. Such harmonious living enables the individual to utilize acquired knowledge for the welfare of all mankind.

* **Two swans** are depicted on the left side of the Goddess. A swan is said to have a sensitive beak that enables it to distinguish pure milk from a mixture of milk and water. A swan, therefore, symbolizes the power of discrimination, or the ability to discriminate between right and wrong or good and bad. Saraswati uses the swan as Her carrier. This indicates that one must acquire and apply knowledge with discrimination for the good of mankind. Knowledge that is dominated by ego can destroy the world.

* **A peacock** is sitting next to Saraswati and is anxiously waiting to serve as Her vehicle. A peacock depicts unpredictable behaviour as its moods can be influenced by the changes in the weather. Saraswati is using a swan as a vehicle and not the peacock. This signifies that one should overcome fear, indecision, and fickleness in order to acquire true knowledge.

सरस्वती नमस्तुभ्यं, वरदे कामरूपिणी । विद्यारम्भं करिष्यामि सिद्धिर्भवतु मे सदा ||

Saraswati Namastubhyam Varde Kamroopani
Vidya Aarambham Karishyami Siddhi Bhavatu May Sada

Translation: Oh! Goddess Saraswati, my humble prostrations unto Thee, who is the fulfiller of all wishes. I start my studies with Thy worship and always pray for success.

Hindu Heritage Society Promoting Hindi Oratory as part of Saraswati Pooja

In Australia, where English is the official language, the Hindu Heritage Society (HHS) recognizes the importance of preserving the Hindi language and cultural heritage.

To address the concern of losing the mother tongue, HHS has taken initiatives to encourage children to learn Hindi. Several Hindi language schools have been established in Sydney under the HHS's guidance.

While HHS acknowledges the presence of Hindi schools, it also identifies a gap in the education system. Learning is confined to the classroom, lacking a platform for students to practice and express themselves effectively in Hindi. To address this, HHS has introduced the concept of Hindi Oratory in schools. This program brings together participants from various schools, providing students with an opportunity to develop their Hindi speaking skills and express their thoughts confidently.

HHS has developed guidelines for the Hindi Oratory program and has fostered strong relationships with schools. By communicating the importance of enhancing spoken Hindi, HHS collaborates with school principals to prepare students for the annual event.

Effective time management and communication skills are crucial in ensuring the smooth conduct of the oratory competition and maintaining proper documentation.

The Hindi Oratory program caters to three age groups: years one to five, six to eight, and nine to twelve. Each school selects three students per age group to participate. HHS recognizes the efforts of these students by presenting them with certificates and trophies.

The oratory event coincides with the Mata Saraswati puja, allowing students to seek blessings from Goddess Saraswati while showcasing their language skills and the first letter is taught to new kids, before starting their school year. (Akshar Arabmh, Vidya Rambh)

HHS extends its gratitude to parents, teachers, and school committees for their continuous support in promoting Hindi Oratory. Their dedication and coaching play a vital role in preparing students for this annual event.

Other institutions in the Sydney region are also actively contributing to the preservation of Hindu heritage. The Green Valley Languages and Arts School has been serving the local Fiji-Indian community for over 25 years, offering Hindi language, music, and dance classes. In addition to language education, this school instills ethical values, positive morals, and life skills to nurture productive and valued members of society.

The Saturday School of Community Languages, a program by the NSW Department of Education, is the largest provider of face-to-face language education in NSW. Operating across 15 high school sites, this school offers 26 language courses on Saturdays, including Hindi, for students from Year 7 to Year 12.

The Indo-Aust Bal Bharathi Vidyalaya Hindi School, established in June 1987, is the first Hindi-language institution dedicated to teaching Hindi in Sydney. With support from the NSW DTEC Community Languages program, this non-profit school is run entirely by volunteers. Teachers receive an honorarium for their services.

The Australian Hindu Multicultural Association & School of Language Studies operates the Western Sydney Hindi School, which has been serving the community for 29 years. Alongside Hindi language classes, the school offers Bharatanatyam, Bollywood dance, Harmonium, and Tabla instruction. The curriculum incorporates content on Hindu religion and spirituality, and the school introduced meditation classes for parents and grandparents in 2022.

The Australian Institute of Hindi Language Studies, which began in 2003, initially focused on teaching Hindi but later expanded to include Bharat Natyam, Harmonium, and Tabla classes. The school gained popularity, attracting up to 120 pupils. It also published a well-known magazine called "Hamari Pehchaan," which featured student work and messages of support from community members and the State Minister of Education.

Hindi Oratory has become a prominent program in the HHS calendar of events, drawing significant participation from students, parents, siblings, teachers, and friends. This community initiative is dedicated to preserving the language, culture, and art for the future.

Oratory by HHS by Pt Sukhendra Shandil

The efforts made by the Hindu Heritage Society (HHS) in promoting the Hindi language among students in Sydney are commendable. The initiative of organizing the Hindi Oratory, which allows students to practice and express themselves in Hindi outside the classroom, is a significant step in preserving the mother tongue. The collaboration with

school principals and the preparation of students for the annual event demonstrate the dedication of HHS. The inclusion of three age groups ensures that students of all ages have the opportunity to participate and be recognized. The distribution of certificates and trophies acknowledges the hard work of students, parents, and teachers. Additionally, holding the Oratory in conjunction with the Mata Saraswati puja adds a cultural and spiritual aspect, allowing students to seek blessings from Goddess Saraswati. The community expresses gratitude to HHS for promoting the Hindi language and recognizing the support of parents, teachers, and the school committee. Such initiatives are vital in preserving cultural heritage and ensuring the appreciation of diverse linguistic and cultural traditions for future generations.

Some images of Annual Saraswati puja Ceremonies hosted by HHS



Children participating in Vedic Mantra recitals



Children participating in writing Hindi script activities as orated by Punditji



Participants with their awards and school principals with their appreciation certificates



Awards prior to presentation to students for Oratory



Hall prepared for Saraswati Pooja



Sarawati Puja Pracharak



Young and Old alike

Annual Saraswati Puja - Parents with their young Children



Pundit Narayan Bhatt and his team of Musicians at the Annual Saraswati Puja

Holi

Holi The Festival of Colours. By Mrs Malti Maharaj

Holi is a very traditional Hindu Festival celebrated in India and many parts of the world including Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, United Kingdom, United States, Nepal, Canada, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, Suriname, South Africa, and other countries where Hindus reside.

The story of Prahlad and Holika is a significant legend associated with the origins of Holi. Prahlad, a devotee of Lord Vishnu, was targeted by his demon king father Hiranyakashipu. Together with her brother, Holika, who possessed a magical cloak, they planned to kill Prahlad by trapping him in a pyre while Holika remained protected. However, divine intervention caused Holika's cloak to lose its power, and Prahlad emerged unscathed due to his unwavering faith. This tale symbolizes the victory of good over evil and the triumph of righteousness, which is celebrated during Holi through bonfires and the joyful splashing of colors.

As the arrival of spring brings with it a riot of colors and a spirit of joy, members of the Hindu Heritage Society (HHS) came together in a joyous celebration of Holi, the Festival of Colors. The HHS, known for its dedication to preserving and promoting Hindu culture, organized a lively event that encapsulated the essence of this ancient festival.

One of the highlights of the celebration was the enchanting sounds of live traditional instruments that filled the air. Talented musicians played melodic tunes on tablas and other classical instruments, creating a vibrant atmosphere and setting the stage for the festivities to come. The rhythmic beats and soul-stirring melodies transported participants to a different realm, evoking a sense of unity and harmony.

The joyous gathering was further enhanced by the soulful singing of chautaals, a traditional folk singing style that has been passed down through generations.

The melodious voices of the performers resonated with the essence of Holi, expressing the joy, love, and unity that the festival symbolises. The powerful lyrics and lively rhythms of the chautaal captivated the audience, inspiring them to join in and celebrate the spirit of togetherness.

Of course, no Holi celebration is complete without the playful splashing of vibrant colors. HHS members embraced this age-old tradition with enthusiasm and joy. Laughter filled the air as people joyfully smeared each other's faces and drenched one another in a rainbow of hues. The vibrant colors reflect the exuberance of the occasion and symbolize the breaking down of barriers, prejudices, and differences.

In addition to the music, singing, and colorful revelry, the event also features a variety of traditional delicacies, adding a gastronomic delight to the festivities.

The aroma of ‘gujiya’, ‘laddoos’, ‘jalebis, pakoras’ and a wide variety of food add to the feasting and celebrations fills the air, tantalizing the taste buds of all those present Sharing these delectable treats further strengthened the sense of community and camaraderie among the HHS members.

Through the celebration of Holi, the Hindu Heritage Society demonstrated its commitment to preserving and cherishing the rich cultural heritage of Hinduism. This vibrant festival served as a reminder of the importance of unity, love, and the triumph of good over evil. It brought together people of different backgrounds, transcending boundaries and fostering a sense of inclusivity.

The Holi celebration organised by the Hindu Heritage Society truly encapsulates the essence of this ancient festival. The harmonious melodies of traditional instruments, the

captivating chautaal singing, the joyous playing with colors, and the sumptuous traditional cuisine all combined to create a memorable and immersive experience.

The event not only showcases the cultural richness of Hindu traditions but also fostered a deep sense of community spirit and togetherness.

Holi is celebrated in the Hindu calendar in the month of Phalgun, which usually coincides with the Gregorian calendar month of March, or sometimes even late February.

It is a two-day festival commencing on a full moon night, (Purnima) with Holika Dahaan. Main Holi festival is celebrated on the next day of Holika Dahaan.

Holi is celebrated by the Hindu Heritage Society, in Sydney annually, although Holi Festival is primarily celebrated by Hindus, the Holi Festival is very inclusive.



Traditional Chautala (folk song) singing in session with live instruments



A wet Holi with Chautala's



Holi Khele Raghubeera - Sydney Australia mein Holi Khele Raghubeera



Maximum colour and noise with Dhol



HHS Resident “Dholakia” Mr Satya Prakash with his wife Manita (left)
They are very devout Hindus and are always available to provide Instrumental music and sing Bhajans at HHS functions



Children enjoying Holi



Holi HAI!!!!

Guru Purnima Ceremonies hosted by the HHS

by Pt. Jagdish Maharaj and Abhi Bohra

Guru Purnima is an annual festival celebrated in India and Nepal to honour and express gratitude towards one's spiritual teacher or Guru. It falls on the full moon day or Purnima of the Hindu month of Ashadha, which usually falls in July or August.

On Guru Purnima, devotees pay homage to their Gurus by performing various rituals and expressing their gratitude. The day begins with a traditional puja or worship of the Guru's feet, followed by chanting of mantras and devotional songs. Some devotees also offer gifts or donations to their Gurus as a token of respect and gratitude.

Guru Purnima is celebrated not only by Hindus but also by followers of other spiritual traditions such as Buddhism and Jainism. It is believed that Gautama Buddha gave his first sermon on this day at Sarnath, and so it is also known as Buddha Purnima

The term "guru" typically refers to a spiritual teacher or guide in Hinduism, Buddhism, or Sikhism. In these contexts, a guru is someone who has attained a level of spiritual enlightenment and imparts their knowledge and wisdom to their disciples or followers.

The word "guru" comes from Sanskrit, an ancient Indian language of India. In Sanskrit, "guru" means "teacher" or "guide." The word has been used for centuries in India and other parts of South Asia to refer to spiritual teachers and mystics who have achieved a level of wisdom and enlightenment.

Guru Purnima is a spiritual festival celebrated by Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, and Sikhs. It is typically celebrated on the full moon day (Purnima) in the Hindu month of Ashadh (June-July), and is also sometimes known as Vyasa Purnima.The festival is particularly associated with the sage Vyasa, who is credited with editing and compiling the ancient Vedic texts of India, including the Mahabharata. On Guru Purnima, it is believed that Vyasa was born, and some Hindus also perform pujas in his honor on this day.

The festival is dedicated to the guru, an important figure in our region where gurus are considered to be a spiritual guide, teacher, and mentor. It is a time to honor and express gratitude towards one's guru for their guidance, knowledge, and support on the spiritual path.

Here is a small list of the Guru's as there are many great spiritual teachers, saints and masters in each religion who have guided and inspired millions of people over the centuries.

- Hinduism: a. Swami Vivekananda b. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa c. Swami Sivananda d. Paramahansa Yogananda e. Mata Amritanandamayi

- Buddhism: a. Gautama Buddha b. Dalai Lama c. Thich Nhat Hanh d. Ajahn Chah e. Pema Chödrön

- Jainism: a. Mahavira b. Acharya Kundakunda c. Acharya Shantisagar d. Acharya Hemachandra e. Acharya Bhikshu

- Sikhism: a. Guru Nanak b. Guru Arjan Dev c. Guru Gobind Singh d. Bhai Gurdas e. Bhai Nand Lal.

In Hindu traditions, the mother is considered to be the first guru of a child, as she is the one who teaches the child their first words, instills moral and ethical values, and provides a foundation for their spiritual development.

The importance of a guru or spiritual teacher in our life can be significant in many ways, regardless of one's religious or philosophical beliefs

1. The guru can provide guidance and support on the spiritual path, helping us to navigate through the challenges and obstacles that arise along the way. The guru can offer teachings and practices that can help us to deepen our awareness and understanding, and to cultivate virtues such as compassion, wisdom, and gratitude.

2. A guru can serve as a mentor or role model, offering insights and perspectives based on their own life experience and spiritual realization. This can be especially valuable when we are facing difficult decisions or transitions, as the guru can provide a broader perspective and help us to stay rooted in our spiritual values and priorities.

3. The guru can offer a sense of community and support, connecting us to a wider network of spiritual seekers who share our values and goals. This can be especially important for those who may feel isolated or disconnected in their spiritual journey, or who may not have access to other sources of spiritual community or support.

4. Finally, the guru can offer a sense of inspiration and motivation, reminding us of our own potential for growth and transformation, and helping us to stay committed to our spiritual path over the long term.

Guru Purnima is an important festival that should be celebrated wordwide.It offers an opportunity as devotees to honor our gurus for their spiritual guidance, teachings, and support. The festival is an occasion for reflection, meditation, and celebration among devotees seeking to deepen their spiritual connection and understanding.

On this day, disciples perform pujas, seek the blessings of their gurus, and listen to their discourses Overall, Guru Purnima is a time to reflect on the importance of teachers and mentors in our lives, and to commit ourselves to the pursuit of our growth and enlightenment with their guidance and support.

Overall, Guru Purnima is a day to celebrate the profound relationship between a Guru and his or her disciples, and to acknowledge the role of the Guru in guiding one towards spiritual growth and enlightenment.



Collection of prominent Gurus' Photo Proudly on display with a brief outline of their story for people to read and be inspired

Collection of prominent Gurus' Photo Proudly on display with a brief outline of their story for people to read and be inspired



Why Guru Purnima is our Sanskriti Diwas

Hindu religion is the world's oldest religion. When, how or where its origin is, is not only difficult but near impossible to ascertain. It is widely believed that the Lord himself is the preceptor of this religion.

The great "Seers" believe the universe was created by the Lord and all in it is His creation also. The Vedas believe that each element of His creation is not only sacred but next to being "DEVAS" or Goddesses.

This "shloka" in the Vedas is proof of it:

"Agnir devta, Vaato devta, Suryo devta, Chandrama devta,

Vasvo devta, Rudra devta, Aaditya devta, Maruto devta,

Vishvadeva devta, Brihaspatirdev–tendro devta, Varuno devta". (14 – 20).

Lord Brahma created the universe in His own form and handed over the responsibility of preservation and destruction to Vishnu and Rudr respectively.. Lord Vishnu took numerous incarnations to rid the universe of sins and preserved religion and heritage on earth. The effect of this is today present in all corners of the world. However, the aim of all folks is the same – salvation.

Thousands of years ago Hindu religion was prominent in most parts of the world. However, advent of other religions, effects of war and natural migratory practices saw a diminishing effect in Hindu religious beliefs and cultural changes. About 5 thousand years ago Lord Vishnu incarnated as "Vedavyas' ' who reinvigorated the Hindu religion, with the blessing of Lord Ganesha and Mata Saraswati, through the Vedas and other Puranas and Upanishads.

Guru Purnima is celebrated to recognize the birthday of Vedavyas and the historical significance that he has to our culture and heritage. All the Sects associated with Hinduism, celebrate and honor their own "GURUS" on this auspicious occasion. They pray to them and remember their sacrifices to have preserved the religion and heritage for the forthcoming generations.

The Hindu Heritage Society has recognized this event as their main celebration each year. It is our firm belief that this will help propagate a sense of "belonging" to our future

generations. In recognition of the Rishis, Munis and various Gurus each year we pay absolutions to them. So far we have held events such as:

- Sarva Dharma Sammelan,
- Shri Krishna Leela,
- 108 Shiva Linga Abhishek,
- Shri Vishnu Sahastra Naam Yagya,
- 108 Kundi Maha Yagya
- 1,111 Hanuman Chalisa Parayan,
- Akhand Ramayan Path,
- Shri Hari Gita Gyan Yoga etc.

From time to time HHS has also displayed articles and pictures of these revered Gurus at our events. To us and our devotees, they are an important link to our great religious heritage.

Although the festival of “Raksha Bandhan” is typically known as the Sanskriti Diwas, in our view the “Guru Purnima” fulfills this definition appropriately.

Vedavyas Ji was born to provide this path to our heritage and the Lord’s incarnation was for the purpose of Sanskriti Diwas celebrations.

As the national defence force protects the boundary of the country –likewise religion and heritage protects one's inner belief and personal space. This is an opportune day to celebrate the vast sacrifices of our Gurus and HHS provides you with this opportunity to partake in this event and offer thanks and obeisance to your Gurus.

“SRUNUSVA DHARM SARWASWAM SRUTVA CHA AVADHARYATAM

ATMANAH PRATIKULANI PARESAN NA SAMACHARET”

After the Mahabharat war ended, Lord Krishna said to Arjun "O Partha, now that you have been victorious in the war, I am going to tell you the summary of Dharma (or religion) which you should listen to attentively and accept only after understanding it.

Your behavior should never be such that you don't expect others to behave like you do." Some sages have gone to the extent of saying that there is no distinction between man and animal if a man lacks religion.

Guru Mahima

Sab Dharti Kagaz Karu, Lekhan Ban Raye
Sath Samundra Ki Mas Karu, Guru Gun Likha Na Jaye.

~
Kabir Das

This beautiful doha (couplet) is by the great saint Kabir.

The meaning of this doha is; “Even if the whole earth is transformed into paper with all the big trees made into pens and if the entire water in the seven oceans are transformed into writing ink, even then the glories of the Guru cannot be written. So much is the greatness of the Guru.”

Guru means a teacher, master, mentor etc. “Gu” means the dark and “Ru” means preventing. Thus, the literary meaning of “Guru” is preventing the dark. It means showing the path which leads to the light.

Therefore, Kabir again, expresses his feelings for Guru as follows:

Guru Govind donou khade, kake lagav paay
Balihari guru apne, jin Govind diyo dikhay

And the meaning of this doha is “Guru and Govind (God) stand together, to whose feet should I bow. I will bow to my Guru as he guides the way to reach the Govind (God)”.

Today is the Guru Purnima celebration. The full moon day in the Hindu month of Ashad (July-August) is observed as the auspicious day of Guru Purnima. This particular day has been chosen to give ritualistic expression to this feeling because it is the birth anniversary of Sage Veda Vyasa, who is regarded as the greatest Guru of all and edited the four

Vedas, wrote the 18 Puranas, the Mahabharata and the Srimad Bhagavata. Vyasa even taught Dattatreya, who is regarded as the Guru of Gurus.

Guru refers to spiritual preceptor. Most Hindus would have Gurus. On Guru Purnima the devotees pay obeisance to their Gurus as thanksgiving for guiding them through the travails of life and towards spiritual liberation. Therefore, we have a shloka in which it says that Guru's place is higher than the Divine Trinity.

Guru Brahma Gurur Vishnu, Guru Devo Maheshwaraha
Guru Saakshat Paar Brahma, Tasmai Shree Gurave Namaha

Guru is verily the representative of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. He creates, sustains knowledge and destroys the weeds of ignorance. I salute such a Guru.

In the Bhagavata Purana, Dattatreya enumerates a list of his twenty-four gurus- earth, air, sky or ether, water, fire, sun, moon, python, pigeons, sea, moth, bee, bull elephant, bear, deer, fish, osprey, a child, a maiden, a courtesan, a blacksmith, serpent, spider, and wasp.

It proves that we can learn and get wisdom from anyone and everything. Everyone and everything can be our Guru from whom/which we can learn something and enrich our knowledge and wisdom. Therefore, we must be thankful to our parents, gurus, teachers, our elders, youngsters, siblings, friends, acquaintances etc. from whom we learnt something new in our life.

Although we respect elders as our shiksha gurus, there is a difference between Shiksha Guru and Diksha Guru, thus: Lord Sri Krishna made an earthly appearance in roughly 3220 B.C., and He left this planet in 3102 B.C. However, because He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the cause of all causes, He is eternally existing. Therefore, these dates are simply a recording of His incarnation in Dvapara-yuga (the age prior to the present Age of Kali).

He spoke the Bhagavad-Gita to Arjuna in Dvapara-yuga, but this does not limit His position as the Adi-purusha (the original Supreme Person) and the Adi-guru (the original teacher). In the Vedic literature Lord Krishna is described as the ultimate source of all knowledge; hence, He is the most reliable source of knowledge. The whole Guru-parampara—the disciple succession—begins with Him because He is the original preceptor.

Matter is temporary, and spirit is eternal. Therefore, eternal souls are more important than our bodies. To understand this point is real knowledge. Man has a two-fold duty here on earth - to preserve his life, and to realize his Self. To preserve his life, he has to learn to work for his daily bread. To realize his Self, he has to serve, love, and meditate.

The Guru who teaches him the knowledge of worldly arts is the Siksha Guru. The Guru who shows him the path of Realization is the Diksha Guru. Siksha Gurus can be many - as many as the things he wishes to learn. The Diksha Guru can be only one - the one who leads him to Moksha).

Krishnam Vande Jagad Gurum

by Swami Krishnananda - Divine Life Society

This day happens to be the most blessed and pious day of the advent of Bhagwan Shri Krishna, which goes by the name of Shri Krishna Janmashtami. Shri Krishna is Jagatguru; He is the teacher of all teachers, the Guru of all Gurus – Krishnam vande jagadguru. There is no Guru equal to him. Bhagwan Shri Krishna is an incarnation of the Supreme Being. There are 24 incarnations of Shri Vishnu, of which 10 are most revered: Mastya, Kurma, Varaha, Narasimha, Vamana, Parashuram, Shri Ramchandra, Bhagwan Shri Krishna and Kalki.

One of the traits of the human being is to observe and evaluate everything from the viewpoint of the human being only. We judge even God from our point of view. "Where is the goodness of God," we ask, "when He has created a world of evil – tempests, tornados, earthquakes, sufferings, drought and flood? What kind of God has created this world? God could have created milk and honey through the waters of the Ganga, instead of giving plain water. He could have created a round earth, without ups and downs, so that we may not fall down and break our legs. Why did God not do that, in all His capacity?" This is how we think.

So, the object that we think remains what it is, and it refuses to get into the yardstick of comprehension of the human being. People find fault with Rama and Krishna, also. "What kind of Rama is he? He killed Vali, and banished Sita, and so many things." We do not understand that these Avatars are the indications and symbols of the development of divine consciousness.

There is a gradational ascent through the evolutionary process of consciousness, into greater and greater perfections. Rama was not supposed to have behaved in any other way than he did behave. It was one stage in the evolution of the incarnation. He was Maryada-purushottama, an ideal human being, with all the qualities that we can find in a human being; and we cannot, and should not, expect qualities which are not in a human being, because he is Maryada-purushottama, a perfected human being – God manifested as a gentleman.

Here we have Shri Krishna Avatara, which is supposed to be a symbolic representation of the manner in which God Himself works. Nobody can know how God works, and whatever ideas we may have of the manner in which God works, it is not appreciable to us because He devastates our ideas of propriety, ethicality, necessity, human-ness, and social values. Everything is put upside down.

We have systems of observation psychologically, humanly and socially. These are turned upside down by God. Actually, God is nothing but the total topsy-turvy operation of the human way of thinking. It is a Shirshasana of the consciousness of man that is required to understand what God is. We should not stand on the footstool of our consciousness, but on the brain of our consciousness.

The universal comprehensiveness and adjustability in a perfected order is something incomprehensible to a human being. We cannot think the whole universe in our minds; and God is supposed to think only in that manner. God's thought is universal thought, whereas our thought is social thought, family thought, community thought, national thought, political thought, army thought, police thought, court case thought, and any other thoughts we have in our minds.

There is always something that we grab and something that we exclude in our perception, which is the opposite of God's way of inclusiveness. There is nothing that God can exclude from His thought, whereas in a human being, it is impossible not to exclude something. We seem to be the opposite of God in our way of thinking. We cannot grab the whole world into our comprehension at any time. Our way of thinking is only of our family, our office, our salary, our community, our relations, our property, and whatever belongs to us. When we say we are concerned with whatever belongs to us, we are not concerned with that which does not belong to us; so, to whom does the other thing belong? It is not our concern.

Here is the difference between God thinking and a human being thinking. Inclusiveness is the nature of God's operation; exclusiveness is the nature of the human way of thinking. Whenever we think about something, we have to exclude something from the purview of our thought. That is to say, total thought is something unknown to a human being, and God is nothing but total thought.

I am referring particularly to the great incarnation of Bhagwan Shri Krishna today on the occasion of this spiritual advent. Whatever He said and whatever He did was totally beyond the comprehension of the human psyche. Whatever He did from childhood until the end of His life is beyond our comprehension.

Read the Bhagawat Gita, which He spoke. Everything is difficult. One Sloka seems to be contradicting another. One thing is said, then another thing is said. Everything is said in the seven hundred verses of the Bhagavadgita, but what is said, finally? We cannot make

it out, due to the multifarious and multifaceted instruction that has been given to us through the multi-faced Universal Being, Vishvarupa. The one brain, and two eyes, and one thought of the human being cannot comprehend it. We must have as many heads as the Vishvarupa has in order to understand what the Gita said – as many eyes, as many mouths, as many processes of thinking, and as wide a consciousness.

The necessity to portray the advent and actions of these incarnations is precisely to present before us a picture of the divine way of operation taking place in the world. We do not like floods overflowing, destroying villages and killing people. We do not like cyclones breaking everything, throwing off rooftops and cutting off trees. We do not like tornadoes, or drought. What is it that we like? Sri Krishna's comprehensiveness is itself an instruction. We do not require any commentary for the Bhagavadgita. The life of Krishna is a commentary on what he has said. As intricate as the multifaceted activity of Sri Krishna is, so intricate is also the multifaceted teaching of the Bhagavadgita. If we can understand who Krishna was, we can understand also what the Gita is.

Suffice it to say that Shri Krishna is considered as the ray of the Absolute, something like total comprehensiveness and infinite capacity, omnipotent in behaviour, with nothing impossible. He can set right anything in one minute, and if the necessity arises, he can dismantle the whole parliament of the cosmos and take up the reins in his own hands, which he did sometimes in his own career. Rules and regulations did he follow, but he could break any rule if the necessity arose, just as we can do anything to our own body for the sake of its sustenance. We can have surgery performed on the limbs of our body. We can lose half the body by surgery. It is a very unfortunate thing, yet we may go to a doctor, pay lakhs of rupees as fee, and remove half of the body so that we may be happy. Where is the happiness when we have lost half of the body? This losing of half the body is necessary in order that we may exist as a complete human being. A complete human being is not the whole body. Even a half body can be a whole human being. We can ask any person who has lost everything below his thighs, with only the other half remaining, "Are you a half man?" "No, no! I am a full man," he will say. That means the person is not the body. In a like manner, impossible it is to understand this divinity operating; and it is futile on the part of anyone to understand either Krishna or Jesus.

Another example before us is Jesus Christ. He never behaved like a human being. He behaved like God Himself. All that he said is beyond the comprehension of the world. The way in which he behaved is not the behaviour of an ordinary human being. He toppled the existing laws, and broke the norms; the stereotyped procrustean bed of ethics was broken to pieces and he brought a divine law, which we have beautifully quoted in what is known as his Sermon on the Mount. The Sermon on the Mount in the New Testament is something like a counterpart of the Bhagavadgita teachings.

Great men think alike, and they perform actions in a similar way. They belong to a different fraternity altogether. God-men are God-men everywhere, and there is no such thing as an Eastern God-man or a Western God-man. And we should not use the word 'men', also. They are not men; they are not women – they are persons. We have no language to use. A woman can be a God-man, but because of the linguistic limitations we do not want to use words like 'woman' and 'man' and all that. So, we have to coin some new word. These days we say it is a 'person', a God-intoxicated person. It can be what is called a man or a woman; at that time, they cease to be human beings, and are neither men nor women.

Shri Krishna and Jesus Christ were neither men nor women. They were androgynous perfections, standing for the word of the Almighty, who Himself is not a man or a woman. We may say "God, the Father in heaven" – it is a human, paternal way of addressing God. It is a psychological necessity; but God is impersonality - not human in nature.

That was portrayed dramatically, as if in a theatrical performance, in the picturesque drama of the life of Bhagavan Sri Krishna. This wonderful day we are observing it, and it is up to us to invoke the great blessings of this master so that he may enter into us. Mighty we may become. A mighty person was Jesus Christ; mighty was Bhagavan Sri Krishna. May you all be mighty people!

The Guru

In paramapara, not only is the immediate guru revered, the three preceding gurus are also worshipped or revered. These are known variously as the kala-guru or as the "four gurus" and are designated as follows:

- Guru - the immediate guru
- Parama-guru - the Guru's guru
- Parapara-guru - the Parama-guru's guru
- Parameshti-guru - the Parapara-guru's guru

In the Vedic culture therefore we find four primary disciplic lines which have come down through countless ages, sometimes appearing manifest, sometimes not, yet still the pure and unadulterated messages of Veda span our concepts of the temporal (material realm), and were, and are handed down from 'guru' to disciple. Guru parampara (Sanskrit: from guru teacher + parampara a row or uninterrupted series or succession) or "from one teacher to another") means a line of spiritual gurus in authentic succession of initiation; the chain of mystical power and authorized continuity, passed from guru to guru.

Some Q & As about Guru

Q. When is Guru Purnima and would you please explain for the benefit of many, the significance and why Gurus are so important in our lives and Hinduism at large?

A. Firstly, let us understand who a Guru is and its true meaning.

Guru Purnima is the day Vyas Ji was born. It is religiously known as VYAAS JAYANTI, the author of THE VEDAS and PURANAS.

In Hinduism we revere and adore our GURUS. On behalf of every True Hindu and God Lovers, we will endeavour to stipulate the essence of a Guru and their innervations.

In Sanskrit GU- means darkness or ignorance in its true context. RU-Means remover of the same and illuminates the spiritual path.

Hindu scriptures assert that more valuable than gold and diamond, also far rarer, is a GURU, a knower of spiritual truths, also may reach to be a Sat Guru (Most top Guru Status through his spirituality).

A Guru is the devotee's best friend, a father, a mother, a trusted confidant, the demanding mentor and guide on the path to God. The Guru embodies all that the spiritual seeker aspires to be. In the Guru, one sees his own infinite potential. Hindus honour these rare leaders and the Guru Purnima, or the FULL MOON Day in June/July, the Hindu Month of Ashada. (आसाढ.)

Q. What is Guru Purnima and how to celebrate it?

A. Firstly, we would like to say that the Guru Purnima is not a festival but a propitious and meritorious and highly adorable day for a true Hindu, therefore is religiously observed and not celebrated. This is the annual observation which honours spiritual teachers, preceptors and mentors who dispel the darkness of ignorance by bringing forth wisdom and illumination. Purina (Purnima) is the Sanskrit word for full moon. I have already explained other relevancies above.

Q. What are the customs of Guru Purnima?

A. On this special day all of one's thoughts are focused on the holy preceptor, turning into his mind, meditating on his teachings and expressing gratitude for his blessings and guidance. In ashrams, monasteries, halls, homes, shrines and Tiraths, etc. Hindus gather to venerate the Guru of their lineage. This is as valuable, as far as possible the one' should use the Guru from the Guru's Lineage.We understand this is not practical in view of many circumstances, as the lineages are not worthy of being a Guru for various obvious reasons.

The day's primary activity is a formal ritual, called Puja, in which his holy feet or a pair of his sandals are honoured.

At the Guru's major centres, the Puja is a grand event, preceded by Satvik Meals (veggie and sweets) is served or offered to The Guru if visited at his home. It is especially

auspicious to pilgrimage to the Guru's ashram or home on this day. In today's calamitous times a Guru and Shishya (disciple concept) has become, rather incorrigible and faux. When Guru and Disciple are in aspect, the slander communication is rather a faux veneration. Shree Ram Ji has said in Ramayana: -

गंगा बडी न गोदावरी , ना तीरथ बडे प्रयाग ,
सकल तीरथ का पुन्य: वही' जहा' ह्रिदय राम का वास :

Means wherever and however, you perform PENANCE, it will not be benefiting or meritorious. You must have Ram Ji, reside in your heart. I will rather be precise and specific; the heart or inner self must be pure and cleansed to welcome The Lord residing within you. You do not expect any one to live in a polluted home so how will the lord.

Q. Why is the Full Moon of Ashada the day of the Guru and the first day of learning dedicated to honouring the preceptor (spiritual teacher).

A. It is believed this custom became established as Vyas Purnima, the Guru of Vedic knowledge. Here Full Moon refers to illumination (knowledge) and Guru Purnima, the Birthday (Jayanti) of Vyas Ji, the source of all spiritual knowledge.

The full moon is also known as a propitious (auspicious) time for attaining fulfillment, completeness, spiritual advancement and the beginning to all new endeavours.

Q. Why are the Guru's feet the focus of veneration?

According to tradition, God's presence can be most clearly and completely felt in the illumined Guru.

To sit at his feet is to be close to God and our own deepest Self because he is the giver of Dharmic Knowledge and all nerves' currents terminate in the feet. Vital energy points relating to every organ of his physical and inner bodies—astral (Godly), mental (thoughts of mind) and soul (pertaining to religious values)—are there. Touch the feet and we touch the spiritual master. Venerating the feet of the guru is also an acknowledgement of our deepest respect and spiritually advancing our knowledge by following his footsteps, therefore, we will attain spiritual perfection. We bow down, in salutation.

Q. Are Gurus worshiped as God?

A few Hindu denominations worship their Gurus as the embodiment of God, and may even revere him as an avatar, but most Hindus see their Guru as a great illumined soul in whom God's presence is most powerfully apparent. I will not suggest you compare a Guru with God. Even the Guru's picture must not be kept on the same alter or platform as the God's, keep it a step below. The Mantra below is generally misinterpreted. It is usually the thoughts of iffy minds. The Lord is the ultimate truth.

Q. Would you please explain a Guru's role?

A. It is the Guru's task to lead aspirants to God? He sets souls on the spiritual path, corrects those who stray, softens karmas, inspires lifelong practice and, through initiations, awakens the seeker's super, conscious knowing. He helps us become aware of our shortcomings and strengths and gives us tools to overcome weaknesses and refine ourselves.

The Guru, knowledgeable in Hindu scriptures, its sacred, practical and philosophical treatises, has the ability to help us unlock their esoteric meaning and gain insight as we study. Generally, this is not the case nowadays, it is all faux shamefully.

He guides us in our meditations, helping us navigate the mind and ultimately transcend it. In today's time it is rather impossible to find a true Disciple and Guru; it is rather calamitous, maligned.

Q. What is Darshan and its values?

A. Darshan, literally means "sight," and is the mystical meeting of Guru and the Devotee. Hindus travel great distances to experience Darshan and receive the blessings of the illumined soul established in his enlightenment. Hindus believe that the spiritual power, called Shakti, coming from a great soul accelerates their spiritual evolution, changes patterns in their life by purifying their subconscious mind, renewing their spirit and commitment to religious life.

Q. Are all Gurus supposed to be unmarried?

A. Hindu spiritual teachers or Gurus may be either unmarried or householders. Many Hindu institutions are led by luminaries who follow the householder path. Some Gurus however, are celibate Monks—Swamis, Sadhus or Acharyas—who have renounced worldly life and received initiation into a monastic order.



Q. Are Gurus centrally organized?

A. Hinduism is actually a multitude of faiths and lineages bound together by common beliefs and practices. There is no central organization. Each Guru within his or her own sphere of devotees is the authority on religious matters, his or her wisdom sought and words obeyed. Some are heads of institutions with large followings, while others are reclusive Sadhus who rarely appear in public, but yes, they must be religiously Astral.

Q. What are the Traditional Offerings for a Guru?

A. When visiting a guru, just as when going to a temple, devotees bring an offering, such as flowers, sweets, fruits (a lime is traditional) and, for renunciation of The Gurus, a piece of unstitched cloth is offered as well.

These items are presented in a Basket or on a metal tray. A monetary gift, called Dakshina, wrapped in a betel leaf (Paan), is often included. In ancient days, Gurus were given gold by the king and cows by the wealthy to sustain their schools and allow them to freely share wisdom.

Q. Fact & Fiction in this regard.

A. FACT: Hindus consider the mother to be a child's first Guru. She and the father are responsible for their offspring's upbringing, welfare and education. Upon coming of age, youth may turn to a Guru to begin their spiritual training.

FICTION: Some incorrectly criticize Hinduism as a world-negating faith that overemphasizes asceticism and austerity. In fact, while its large contingent of celibate monks pursues the path of renunciation, yoga and deep meditation, the vast majority of Hindus are householders dynamically engaged in family life, career and community service. Tradition affirms the pursuit of four goals: righteousness, wealth, pleasure (including sensuality) and liberation. काम, अर्थ धर्म और मोक्ष !

Your heart should melt and flow toward God. Only then can you attain His grace. People may talk as they please; do not be carried away by them. Unmindful of hardships and difficulties, hold on to the principle of divinity and reach the goal of life. Today, people lack the will and determination to reach the goal of life.

How can those who do not understand the goal of life attain it? True love cannot be fragmented. One cannot have love for God as well as for ephemeral (short lived) objects and relationships. The love which is fragmented is artificial only. I may sound inimical but your thoughts must be circumspect as you have only one heart.

For example, you cannot break it into pieces and distribute it to various people. It is not like a Ladoo or sugar cane, which can be broken into pieces and distributed. It is the eternal truth. It is nectarous and full of bliss. Ignoring the immortal bliss within, people tread the worldly path thinking that bliss lies therein. It is only a figment of their imagination. He who makes efforts to attain God with full faith and determination without caring for trials and tribulations is a true devotee

Q. What is it that you are supposed to know on this day of Guru Purnima?

A. You must understand that God is in you, with you, around you, above you, below you. In fact, you are God. Let me reiterate on the Panch Tatva, that the living bodies are made of, including Bhagwan. His Almighty as well ascends to our Earth in any body form like other species. We are analysing the word BHAGWAN.

BH- Bhoomi. A- Agni. G- Ganga or Gal. W- is Wayu. A- Aakash (Ether) and N- refers to Nirgun (formless) . Recognize this truth in the first instance. Do not entertain excessive desires and become beggars. Do your duty sincerely. That is the true Sadhana.

Conclusion: My prudent advice to all, please pay circumspect values to:

For example, when you are in office, do office work only; do not think of your family matters. Likewise, when you are at home, take care of the needs of your wife and children. Do not make your home an office.

But today, because of too much work in the office, people take office-papers to their homes to complete their work. They are thus facing difficulties because they mix up their office work, household work, business and spiritual matters.

Right from this day, try to reduce your attachment to the world to the extent possible. Be happy and make others happy. Do not hurt anybody. Consider difficulties as passing clouds. You have developed family relationships and there are bound to be some worries. But do not be perturbed by them. When you look at the vast sky, you find many clouds. Likewise, in the sky of your heart there are clouds of attachment. They just come and go. Do not worry about them. What is the shape of worry? It is a mentally created fear. It is the result of your imagination. Every man is bound to encounter difficulties and losses. We should face them with courage.

From this day of Guru Purnima, make your hearts sacred. Just as you wave away the mosquitoes that bite you, brush aside any difficulties that assail you. Do not be depressed by sorrow nor be elated by happiness. Develop From this day of Guru Purnima, make your hearts sacred. Just as you wave away the mosquitoes that bite you, brush aside any difficulties that assail you. Do not be depressed by sorrow nor be elated by happiness. Develop equanimity and strive to attain Divinity.

गुरु बिन ज्ञान नहीं
ज्ञान बिन आत्मा नहीं
ध्यान ज्ञान धैर्य और कर्म
सब गुरु की ही देन हैं

शुभ गुरु पूर्णिमा

आपसे से सीखा और जाना
आप को ही गुरु माना
सीखा सब आपसे हमने
कलम का मतलब भी आपसे जाना
गुरु पूर्णिमा की हार्दिक शुभकामनाएं

Guru Bin Gyan Nahi,
Gyan Bina Aatma Nahi,
Dhyan, Gyan, Dhariya Aur Karma
Sab Guru Ki he Dein Hai
Subh Guru Purnima!!

Aapse Se Sikha Hai Aur Jaana,
Aap Ko He Guru Mana,
Sikha Sab Aapse Hamne,
Kalam Ka Matlab Bhi Aapse Jana
Guru Purnima Ki Hardik Shubhkamnaye

Guru Brahma, Guru Vishnu, Guru Devo Maheswara. Guru SakShat. Param Brahma. Tasmai Shri Guravey, Namaha.


Shiva
Brahma
Vishnu

Durga Pooja

Navaratri Celebrations and The Hindu Heritage Society Devi puja
compiled by Mrs Prem Lata Maharaj & Kaveeta Maharaj



The Hindu Heritage Society (HHS) holds a special place in their hearts for the grand celebration of Durga Puja, a major Hindu festival commemorating the victory of Goddess Durga over the formidable demon Mahishasura. This vibrant festival, filled with enthusiasm and devotion, holds a significant position, particularly in West Bengal, Assam, and Odisha, where it is celebrated with great fervor.

The ten-day long festival, usually occurring in the Hindu month of Ashwin, sets the stage for an awe-inspiring celebration. The tale of Goddess Durga's triumph over Mahishasura serves as a reminder of the power of good prevailing over evil. In Hindu mythology, the gods, unable to vanquish the demon, combined their strengths to create the mighty Goddess Durga. Her valor and prowess led to the defeat of Mahishasura, restoring harmony to the universe.

During Durga Puja, the Hindu Heritage Society brings together friends and family to rejoice in the triumph of good. Elaborate rituals form an integral part of the festivities, including the worship of Goddess Durga and her nine forms, known as Navadurga. Skilled artisans meticulously craft and adorn idols of the Goddess and her avatars with vibrant flowers, radiant lights, and ornate embellishments. The devotees hold these idols in high reverence and offer prayers with utmost devotion.

The celebration of Durga Puja extends beyond religious rituals and delves into a realm of cultural events. The air is filled with melodious music, graceful dance performances, and captivating drama enactments. It is a time for artistic expression and creativity to flourish. Additionally, the aroma of delectable food and sweets wafts through the air as families and communities prepare and share sumptuous meals together.

Embracing the spirit of the festival, people don new clothes and visit beautifully crafted pandals, temporary structures erected to house the magnificent idols of Goddess Durga. These pandals serve as sacred sanctuaries where devotees gather to offer their prayers and seek the blessings of the Goddess. The atmosphere brims with devotion, joy, and a sense of unity as people from all walks of life come together to pay homage to the divine.

Durga Puja holds profound significance, not only as a time of celebration but also as an occasion to reflect on the triumph of good over evil. It is a period of spiritual renewal and an opportunity to express gratitude for the protection and blessings bestowed by the mighty Goddess Durga. As one of the most prominent festivals in the Hindu calendar, Durga Puja brings people together, fostering a sense of togetherness and reinforcing the values cherished by the Hindu Heritage Society.

The Hindu Heritage Society wholeheartedly embraces the essence of Durga Puja, promoting the celebration as an integral part of their cultural preservation and awareness

efforts. Through their participation and support, they ensure that the spirit of this joyous festival continues to thrive, reminding everyone of the power of righteousness and the significance of unity in the face of adversity.

Every year devotees come and enjoy the melodious bhajans, Archana and Aarti. We have travelled to different suburbs over greater Sydney and in some years we have completed 9 days of prayer at devotees' residence.

NA TU MAM SHAKYASE DRASHTUMANENAIV SVACHAKSHUSHA
IDIVYAM DADAMI TE CHAKSHU PASHAY ME YOGAMESHWARAM

Your external eyes will not be able to comprehend my Divine form. I grant you the Divine Eye to enable you to behold Me in my Divine Yoga. Gita Chapter 11.

The word *Durga* (दुर्गा) literally means "impassable", "invincible, unassailable". It is related to the word *Durg* (दुर्ग) which means "fortress, something difficult to defeat or pass" as stated in the Devi-Atharvashirsha Upanishad

यस्याः परतरं नास्ति सैषा दुर्गा प्रकीर्तिता ॥२४॥

She who is renowned by the name "Durga" is superior to whom no one exists.

As Durga Saptashati stats, She is eternal, embodied as the universe. By her all this is pervaded. Nevertheless, she incarnates in manifold ways; hear it from me. When she manifests herself in order to accomplish the purposes of the devas, she is said to be born in the world, though she is eternal.

Maa Durga in Hinduism the Goddess Durga also known as Shakti or Devi, is the protective mother of the Universe. She is one of the faith's most popular deities, a protection of all that is good and harmonious in the world. Sitting astride a lion or tiger, the multi-limbed Durga battles the forces of evil in the world.

The name Durga means the Invincible one. As the Consort of Lord Shiva, Durga is the most auspicious one, the daughter of mountains and the remover of obstacles.

Durga Puja coincides with Navratri and Dussehra celebrations observed by other traditions of Hinduism. Over the years Durga pooja has morphed into an inseparable part of Indian culture with a diverse group of people celebrating this is their unique way while on traditions

Our ancients have prescribed the worship of Maha Kali, Maha Lakshmi and Maha Saraswati during Navratri (nine nights). Durga is the embodiment of all powers.
Durga represents the combination of all the powers of body, mind and soul. Maha Kali symbolises destruction of evil with the help of these powers.

Maha Kali and Maha Durga are not elsewhere. They reside in everyman. When the mind and the senses, instead of following the dictates of conscience, follow wicked qualities, man becomes a slave to evil habits and turns wicked.

Navaratri is to annihilate cruelty and wickedness in man to bring forth the principle of the Atma in pristine form. - Satya Sai BABA

The significance of Nava Durga?

प्रथमं शैलपुत्री च,द्वितीयं ब्रह्मचारिणी ।
PRATHAMAM SHAILPUTRI CHA DWITIYAM BRAHMACHARINI
तृतीयं चन्दघण्टेति,कूष्माण्डेति चतुर्थकम् ।।
TRITIYAM CHANDRAGHANTETI KUSHMAANDETI CHATURTHAKAM
पंचमं स्कन्दमातेति,षष्ठं कात्यायनीति च ।
PANCHAMAM SKANDMAATETI SHASHTHAM KAATYAYNEETI CHA
सप्तमं कालरात्रीति,महागौरीति चाष्टमम् ।।
SAPTAMAM KAALRAATRITI MAHAGAURITI CHAASTAMAM
नवमं सिद्धिदात्री,च नवदुर्गाः प्रकीर्तिताः ।
NAVAMAM SIDHHIDAATRI CHA NAVDURGAAH PRAKEERTITAAH

Goddess Durga represents protection, love, prosperity, and knowledge. Unlimited and vibrant love, compassion and mercy are regarded as the divine attributes of Mother Goddess. She is known as Durga and worshipped in different forms.

Although she has over 1000 names and many different forms, the main 9 forms are as below;
1**. SHAEL PUTRI** - Goddess Parvati, the daughter of the King of the Mountains Himalava, is called as 'Shailputri". In her previous birth she took birth in the house of Dakhsa, the Prajapati, as his daughter. She was also known as Sati. Once Prajapati Daksa organized a very big sacrificial ceremony in which he invited all gods to receive their sacrificial share. Lord Shiva was the only exception.
2. BRAHM-CHARINI - The second Durga Shakti roop is of Goddess Brahamcharini. Brahmacharini originated from the word “Brahma” that is who observes penance (tapa) and good conduct. Thus she is the one who practices penance. she practiced terrible penances in order to obtain Lord Shiva as her divine consort. Due to her unearthly penances she was termed as Brahmacharini.

3. CHANDRA-GHANTA - Third among the Shakti Roopas is Goddess Chandraghanta. Chandraghanta originated from the word Chandra (Moon) and Ghanta (Bell). She has crescent moon on her forehead and her roaring voice is like a tumultuous sound of a bell that makes the atrocious demons tremble. By worshipping her one can get rid of all worldly sorrows, and attain the supreme goal spontaneously.

4. KUSH MAANDA - The fourth among Shakti Roopas is goddess Kushmanda. Kushmanda (Ku+Usma+Anda) has been originated from the world 'Ku' means 'a little'; 'Usma' is warmth, heat or energy and 'Anda' means the cosmic egg or universe. She resides in the universe, in the inner portion of Surya loka and she emanates a solar aura. Kushmanda devi helped create the brahmand or universe when there was nothing. Except darkness everywhere.
5. SKHAND MATA - Skandmata is also called Parvati, Maheshwari and Gauri. Being the mother of Skanda she is Skandamata. Riding a lion, she holds her son Skanda in her lap. She displays three eyes and four hands - two hands holds lotus while the other two hand display defending and granting mudras, respectively. It is said that by pleasing Skandmata, even a fool becomes a master of knowledge.
6. KATYAANI MATA – Sage Katyayana practiced penance for several years to propitiate mother Goddess. At the time of boon he requested Mother Goddess to take birth as his daughter. The goddess was pleased to accede to his request. She accepted the worship of Katyayana for three days and then killed the demon Mahisasur.
7. KAAL RATRI MATA - most known as maha kali devi.she derived her name from her looks being completely dark black (kala). although her features appear scary, devotees who worship find immense benefits and help in resolving daily problems.
8. MAHA GAURI - like her name, this devi is completely gaura (or fair). As parvati, she did a lot of sacrifice to find lord shiva as husband despite so much opposition from families; rishi munis (saints).
9. SIDHI DATRI - gives you 18 main elements like wealth & health in
life. Shri devi puran says that with the blessings of this devi, did lord shiva earn half female body for himself.

Devis Weaponry and its significance

Durga carries a variety of weapons and other items that she uses in her fight against evil. Each has a symbolic meaning important to Hinduism; these are the most significant:

The conch shell symbolizes the Pranava or the mystic word Om, which indicates her holding on to God in the form of sound.

The bow and arrows represent energy. By holding the bow and arrows both in one hand, Durga demonstrates her control over both aspects of energy—potential and kinetic.
The thunderbolt signifies firmness in one's convictions. Just as a real bolt of lightning can destroy anything it strikes, Durga reminds Hindus to attack a challenge without losing confidence.
The lotus in Durga's hand, not yet fully in bloom, represents the certainty of success but not finality. The lotus in Sanskrit is called Pankaj, which means "born of mud," reminding the faithful to stay true to their spiritual quest amid the worldly mud of lust and greed.
The Sudarshan-Chakra or beautiful discus, which spins around the index finger of the Goddess, signifies that the entire world is subservient to the will of Durga and is at her

command. She uses this unfailing weapon to destroy evil and produce an environment conducive to the growth of righteousness.

The sword that Durga holds in one of her hands symbolizes knowledge, which has the sharpness of a sword. Knowledge free from all doubts is symbolized by the shine of the sword.

The trident or Trishul is a symbol of three qualities: Satwa (inactivity), Rajas (activity), and Tamas (nonactivity). Deva uses these to alleviate physical, mental, and spiritual suffering.

Durga's Transport- In Hindu art and iconography, Durga is frequently depicted standing atop or riding a tiger or lion, which represents power, will, and determination. In riding this fearsome beast, Durga symbolizes her mastery over all these qualities. Her bold pose is called Abhay Mudra, which means "freedom from fear." Just as the mother goddess confronts evil without fear, Hindu scripture teaches, so too should Hindu faithful conduct themselves in a righteous, courageous way.

Famous quotes By Sri Shankaracharya.

1. The Supreme Self (or Ultimate Reality) who is Pure Consciousness perceived Himself by Selfhood (i.e. Existence with "I"- Consciousness). He became endowed with the name "I". From that arose the basis of difference.

2. He exists verily in two parts, on account of which, the two could become husband and wife. Therefore, this space is ever filled up completely by the woman (or the feminine principle) surely.

NOTE: The above two verses explain how the One Ultimate Reality which is of the nature of non-dual Existence - Consciousness became the cause of the universe of multiplicity. The first creative impulse in the Supreme Self is the pure “I” consciousness. This brings in duality in the One Transcendent Reality, which is symbolically expressed as husband-wife representing Pure Consciousness and its Creative Energy. This Creative Energy is the effective cause as well as the material cause of the entire universe which is stated to be filled with it.

3. And He, this Supreme Self thought (or reflected). Thence, human beings were born. Thus say the Upanishads through the statement of sage Yajnavalkya to his wife.

NOTE: The primal manifestation of the creative energy of Pure Consciousness is the “I” - consciousness which results in duality. From that arises thought or ideation of multiplicity, which gives rise to the entire universe of beings.

4. From the experience of bliss for a long time, there arose in the Supreme Self a certain state like deep sleep. From that (state) Maya (or the illusive power of the Supreme Self) was born just as a dream arises in sleep.

NOTE: The non-dual Supreme Self is of the nature of Pure Existence-Consciousness-Bliss. Just as a dream arises in sleep and produces various objects, an inscrutable power called MAYA manifests in the quiescent, blissful state of the Supreme Self and this produces the bewildering variety of objects and phenomena constituting the universe.

The concept of Maya is central to Advaita Vedanta (or non-dual conception of the Ultimate Reality as propounded in Vedic literature).

5. This Maya is without the characteristics of (or different from) reality or unreality, without beginning and dependent on the Reality that is the Supreme Self. She, who is of the form of the THREE GUNAS (qualities or energies of nature) brings forth the Universe with movable and immovable objects.

NOTE: Maya is not real, since it disappears on the dawn of knowledge of the Supreme Self. Maya is not unreal, since such a thing would never appear at any time. Maya is equated with Nature or the visible universe consisting of the three modes of energy - Sattwa or harmony, Rajas or activity and Tamas or inertia. Maya is the inscrutable cause which depends on the Supreme Self which is the Ultimate Reality. Nature is its apparent effect.

6. (Objection): As for Maya, it is invisible (or not experienced by the senses). How can it produce a thing that is visible or experienced by the senses? How is a visible piece of cloth produced here by threads of invisible nature?

Note: The purport is that it is as impossible for the visible universe to be produced from invisible Maya as it is for a visible piece of cloth to be produced from invisible threads.

7 (Reply): As there is the emission of the generative fluid on to a good garment on account of the experience of copulation in a dream, the pollution of the garment is seen as real on waking while the copulation was not true, the man in the dream was real (while) the woman was unreal and the union of the two was false (but), the emission of the generative fluid was real, so does it occur even in the matter in hand.

NOTE: In this example, an unreal cause (viz., copulation in a dream) produces a real or visible effect (viz., seminal emission). Similarly, the apparent world could arise from the undefinable Maya.

8. Thus Maya is invisible (or beyond sense-perception). (But) this universe which is its effect is visible (or perceived by the senses). This would be Maya which, on its part, becomes the producer of joy by its own destruction.

NOTE: When the illusive power, Maya, disappears, what remains is Pure Existence-Consciousness-Bliss.

9. Like night (or darkness) Maya is extremely insurmountable (or extremely difficult to be understood). Its nature is not perceived here. Even as it is being observed carefully (or being investigated) by sages, it vanishes like lightning.

NOTE: By enquiry into and contemplation on the nature of the Ultimate Reality, Maya and its effects vanish and there is the spontaneous absorption of the mind in undifferentiated Being- Consciousness. There is no entity (called Maya or by any other appellation) other than the Supreme Self.

10. Maya (the illusive power) is what is obtained in Brahman (or the Ultimate Reality). Avidya (or nescience or spiritual ignorance) is said to be dependent on Jiva (the individual soul or individualised consciousness). Mind is the knot which joins Consciousness and matter. That mind is to be as imperishable until liberation.

NOTE: Avidya is nescience or spiritual ignorance which makes the soul forget its real nature which is Eternal, Pure Being-Consciousness- Bliss, identical with the Ultimate Reality and impose upon itself separateness, embodiment and the state of a doer or enjoyer. Mind is the entity which is the link between matter and Consciousness and is the field of operation of Avidya. It is synonymous with worldly existence and it disappears on the dawn of liberation or intuitive perception of Reality. Just as Maya, the inscrutable illusive power of the Ultimate Reality, gives rise to the universe of multiplicity, Avidya is the cause of the world perceived by the individual soul.

11. Space enclosed by a pot, or a jar or a hut or a wall has several appellations (eg.,pot space, jar space etc.). Like that, Consciousness (or the Self) covered here by Avidya (or nescience) is spoken of as jiva (the individual soul).

12. (Objection): How indeed could ignorance become a covering (or an obscure factor) for Brahman (or the Supreme Spirit) who is Pure Consciousness, as if the darkness arising from the night (could become a concealing factor) for the sun which is self-luminous?
NOTE: The darkness of the night on the dawn of the sun. The very nature of Brahman is Pure Intelligence or Consciousness. How could it be covered by ignorance which is antithetical to it?
12. (Reply): As the sun is hidden by clouds produced by the solar rays but surely, the character of the day is not hidden by those modified dense collections of clouds, so the Self, though pure, (or undefiled) is veiled for a long time by ignorance. But its power of Consciousness in living beings, which is established in this world, is not veiled.

"What if you sleep, and what if in your sleep you dreamed, and what if in your dream you went to heaven and there plucked a strange and beautiful flower, and what if when you awoke you had the flower in your hand? Ah, what then?" - Coleridge

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The Dasa (Ten) Mahavidyas
KALI TARA MAHAVIDYA SODASHI BHUVANESWARI.
BHAIRAVI CHHINNAMASTA CHA VIDYA DHUMAVTI TATHA.
BAGALA SIDDHA VIDYA CHA MATANGI KAMALATMIKA.
ETAAHA DASAMAHAVIDYAAHA GUPTA VIDYAAHA PRAKEERTITAAHA.

In Tantra, worship of Devi-Shakti is referred to as a Vidya. Of the hundreds of tantrik practices, the worship of the ten major Devis is called the Dasa Mahavidya. These major forms of the goddess are described in the Todala Tantra. They are Kali, Tara, Maha Tripura Sundari (or Shodasi-Sri Vidya), Bhuvaneshvari, Chinnamasta, Bhairavi, Dhumavati, Bagalamukhi, Matangi, and Kamala. These ten aspects of Shakti are the epitome of the entire creation. Chapter 10 also outlines their consorts, although Dhumavati, the widow form, is not allocated a consort.

There are several “levels' ' at which these Devis can be worshiped with the prescribed Mantra and Yantra. Like a simple worship of the yantra with the mantra recitation, as a remedial astrological measure, elaborate worship with all tantrak rituals for obtaining various siddhis associated with these tantras and for spiritual salvation.

Successful sadhana of these Vidyas gives several boons to the practitioner. The Tantrik-Yogi who has control over his senses and is positively inclined uses the boons to guide people and for the benefit of mankind. The ones whose head starts spinning with success use them for the gratification of the senses, gather a bunch of disciples around them and become fake gurus.

The last chapter of todala Tantra equates Vishnu’s ten incarnations with the ten Mahavidyas as follows:

“Shri Devi said: Lord of Gods, Guru of the universe, tell me of the ten avatars. Now I want to hear of this, tell me of their true nature. Paramesvara, reveals to me which avatar goes with which Devi.
“Shri Shiva said: Tara Devi is the blue form, Bagala is the tortoise incarnation, Dhumavati is the boar, Chinnamasta is Nrisimha, Bhuvaneshvari is Vamana, Matangi is the Rama form, Tripura is Jamadagni, Bhairavi is Balabhadra, Mahalakshmi is Buddha, and Durga is the Kalki form. Bhagavatì Kali is the Krishna murti.” (Todalatantra, chapter 10)
The worship of these is also prescribed as an astrological remedy – for the 9 planets and the Lagna as follows:
Kali for Saturn, Tara for Jupiter, Maha Tripura Sundari (or Shodasi-Sri Vidya) for Mercury, Bhuvaneshvari for Moon, Chinnamasta for Rahu, Bhairavi for Lagna, Dhumavati for Ketu, Bagalamukhi for Mars, Matangi for Sun, and Kamala for Venus.

The tantric worship of these most powerful Vidyas must be practiced only under the guidance of a siddha Guru.



Durga Maa with offerings of Red Chunrari from her Devotees



Maa Ki Chauki – Live singing of Durga Maa Bhajans by prominent singers and musicians.



HHS members doing Sewa - collecting Donations at Annual Function

Mrs Prem Maharaj in pink sari, Mrs Lalita Singh standing

The Hindu Heritage Society conducts poojas throughout the year, including Saraswati Pooja, Holi, Guru Purnima, and Durga Pooja. These poojas serve as opportunities for devotees to connect with their spiritual roots, seek blessings, and celebrate the divine energies associated with each occasion. They provide a platform for fostering unity, promoting cultural traditions, and deepening one's spiritual journey within the framework of Hinduism.



SOCIETY



Shaping our lives, a collective endeavor,
Opening doors to connections that will never sever,
Cultivating communities, bonds that intertwine,
Inspiring unity, embracing diversity, so fine,
Envisioning progress, a shared vision we hold,
Transforming lives, with stories yet untold,
Yearning for justice, a compassionate plea.

1) Articles given by Office Bearers of Hindu Heritage

President (2023)



Mr Sachindra Shandil – President of the Hindu Heritage Society commitee as of 2023

Commented [2]: committee

Secretary (2023)



I am Aanant Maharaj, currently serving as the Secretary of the Hindu Heritage Society (HHS). My journey with HHS began as a volunteer when it was first established, and over the years, I have taken on various roles within the organization. In 2019, I became the treasurer, and in 2023, I was entrusted with the position of Secretary.

My connection to Hinduism and our cultural heritage runs deep. As the eldest son of co-founder Pdt. Jagdish Maharaj and Mrs. Prem Maharaj, I was introduced to the basics of Hinduism through Bal Vikas classes in Suva, Fiji. These Sunday classes, conducted by Dr. and Mrs. Kamath, played a vital role in teaching local children about our rich culture and religion. Our family roots can be traced back to Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh, in India, and my ancestors made their way to Fiji through the Girmit Indenture system under the British government. My great grandfather, Gajadhar Maharaj, worked in Natal, South Africa, and Rangoon, Burma before settling in Fiji, brought there by CSR Sugar, his employer. My grandfather, Parmeshwar Dutt Maharaj, and my father, Pdt. Jagdish Maharaj, were both born in Fiji. I myself was born in Suva in September 1979, and later moved to Sydney, Australia in 1994, where I continued to embrace and practice my religious and cultural heritage through regular visits to temples and participation in pujas.

In 2008, my wife Kaveeta and I had a traditional Hindu wedding ceremony in Fiji, and we have continued to maintain our connection to our faith by regularly attending temples and participating in various pujas. Celebrating major festivals like Diwali with our extended family has always been a significant part of our lives.

In 2021, we had the honor of celebrating the Janeo Sanskar/Yagnopavit ceremony for our son Saurav and my nephew Sidharth. This two-day program, led by Pdt. Narayan Bhatt as the Janeo guru, held great significance for us as it marked a continuation of a family tradition. My younger brother Anmol and I had completed our own Janeo Sanskar in Fiji in 1991 when I was around 11 years old and Anmol was approximately 7 years old. Witnessing our sons undergoing the same ceremony with all the religious rituals filled us with immense pride.

In 2022, our parents organized a Bhagwat Katha at our residence, spanning over the eight days of Krishna Janmashtami. This auspicious event brought together individuals from Sydney, Melbourne, Fiji, and the United States. The presence and positive feedback from our neighbors, who were amazed by the magnitude of the event held in an Australian suburb, added to the joy and success of the Bhagwat Katha.

As we celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Hindu Heritage Society, I feel a deep sense of pride and joy in being part of this momentous occasion. It is an honor to contribute to the ongoing success of HHS and to continue promoting and preserving our Hindu heritage for future generations.

Treasurer (2023)



Mr Kavish Maharaj is a son of Pt Shailendra and Mrs Malti Maharaj. He is the current Treasurer and past Secretary of the Hindu Heritage Society. Kavish was born in Suva, Fiji and has lived in NSW, Australia since migrating with his parents and younger brother in the late 1980's.

Kavish completed his High School Education at St Paul's Catholic College. He has a Bachelor of Commerce & Economics from Macquarie University and a Graduate Diploma in Business Administration from the University of Technology, Sydney. Since completing his undergraduate studies, Kavish has built a successful career in Institutional Banking and is currently a Vice President at State Street Australia Limited.
The elder of 2 sons, Kavish and his younger brother Akshay are third generation descendants of Pt Ram Charitar Maharaj who migrated from India to Fiji in 1913. Both Kavish and Akshay are active members of the HHS.

Growing up in Australia in the 1990's, the Hindu Heritage Society's vision of promoting culture, with a focus on education set it apart from Indian Cultural associations. This was something that appealed to me, my younger brother Akshay and many others of our age group. I remember attending functions that featured oratory in Hindi, dance, and other cultural activities. Much of the credit goes to Pandit Narayan Bhatt and the Hindu Priests that work closely with him.

This structure and community provided by the HHS would take on greater meaning as I completed my degree, began developing a career and settled down with my wife Saras. Pundit Bhattji & HHS community was present at mine and Saras wedding and continues to be a key part of our lives as we look to raise our son Aryan and teach him the importance of cultural identity and tradition that has been carefully preserved by each successive generation of our family.

Satish and Lalita Singh





Mr and Mrs Satish and Lalita Singh are very active members of the Hindu Heritage Society.

Mr Satish Singh, Formerly of Suva Fiji is the son of Late Mr Amar Singh who was the Head Teacher of the Nehru Memorial Primary School in Fiji.

Mrs Lalita Singh,(nee Shandil) is the daughter of the late Mr and Mrs Shyam Sundar Shandil.
Late Mr Shandil was an Officer in the Fiji Police force and a very well known and respected Brahman Pundit upon his retirement. Being the daughter of a well respected Pundit and being brought up in a Brahman household, made Mrs Lalita Singh a very devout Hindu.

Mrs Singh has served as the Treasurer of the Hindu Heritage Society in the past.

You will always find the couple very actively participating at all Hindu Heritage Society Functions and religious events in Sydney

Gita Jayanti

By **Mrs Lalita Singh:**

Gita Jayanti is a very important day for Hindus. On this day, the holy book of Hindus, Bhagavad Gita was born, ie Gita Jayanti is the day when Lord Shri Krishna told the Gita to Arjuna. It is celebrated on Shukla Ekadashi on the 11th day of Margashirsha month of the Hindu calendar. The Bhagavad Gita was described by Lord Krishna himself before the Mahabharata war began. It is believed that in the Mahabharata, the seeds of the Pandavas and the Kauravas had decided to go to war even after every possible reconciliation effort.

Gita Jayanti is an annual celebration to commemorate the day when Lord Krishna rendered his philosophical teachings and imparted the essence of Vedic knowledge to Arjun, over 5000 years ago. Krishna enlightened Arjun about the ultimate goal of life. The sermon is delivered on the battlefield of Kurukshetra in an epic battle full of ethical dilemmas. But that is only metaphorical, for it quickly moves beyond the immediate context of the battlefield to the larger realm.

When Arjun refused to fight against his cousins, the Kauravas in the battle, Lord Krishna sent\forth the truth of life and the philosophy of Karma and Dharma to him, thereby giving birth to one of the world's greatest scriptures: the Gita.

The ***Bhagavad Gita*** is considered to be the most important and influential Hindu scripture for its philosophical, practical, political, psychological, and spiritual values. Bhagavad Gita Jayanti, or simply Gita Jayanti, marks the birth of this holy book. According to the traditional Hindu calendar, Gita Jayanthi falls on the Ekadashi day of Shukla Paksha, or the bright half of the Margashirsha month.

The ***Bhagavad Gita*** is not just an ancient scripture, but even today, it also serves as an essential guide to the 'Art of Living'. ***Gita*** prompts an individual to think, to make a fair and just decision, and to look at life from a different perspective, without surrendering one's identity. The Gita has been addressing contemporary issues and solving everyday problems of humanity for many thousands of years, the relevance of which should not be just confined to the mystical and spiritual pursuits.

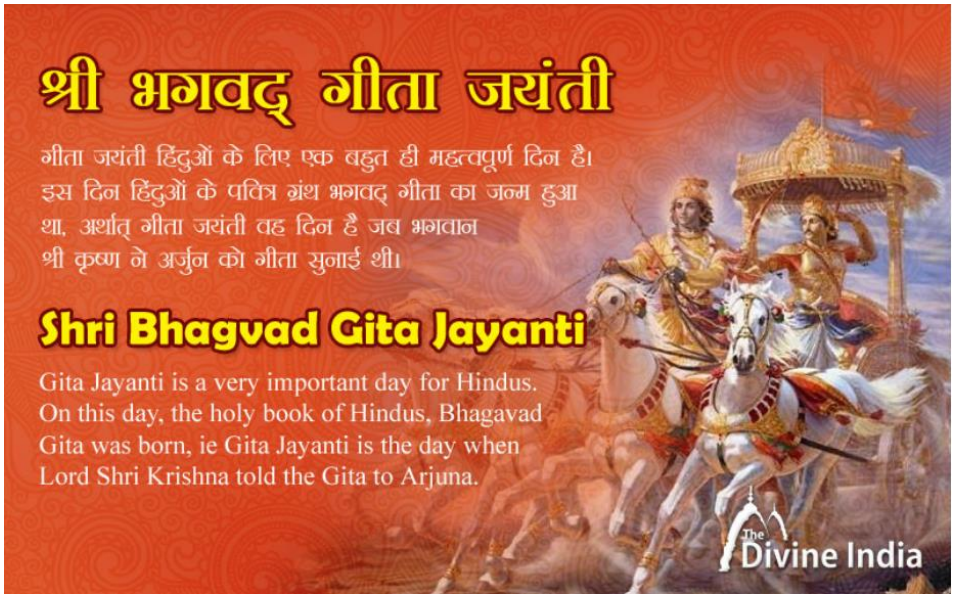
The timeless and universal message of Gita is all-encompassing in its expression of truth. Bhagavad Gita means the "Divine Song," the divine communion of truth-realization between man and his Creator, the teachings of Spirit through the soul, that should be sung unceasingly.

We learn from the Bhagwat Gita about the permanence of universal truth, and if it is universal, it must be so for the entire mankind.

For thousands of years Gita has been a spiritual and philosophical guide to an entire civilization. Sages, scholars, philosophers, religious teachers and leaders alike, have all tried to interpret its message for us, they have dived to its depth to understand its message and the Truth, and now, as the world discovered it, it has become a subject of universal study.

Such is the power of the Divine Message. It is timeless and universal; it endures through time and space. It is difficult for anyone to claim to have fully understood it. Gita is a journey of discovery, with no destination bar, only constant progress.

We should not reduce Gita to reading and rituals only. We should deep dive in it, understand the message behind it, and relate it to our lives.
It goes without say that we should celebrate Gita Jayanti continuously, not only for offerings and prayers, but also for discussions and debates, in order that the next generation can begin to think deeply on the message and relate it. So too, for older generation who can reflect deeper in its meaning and understanding.



6) Youth Segment Corner and their perception about continuity of traditions and scope of new inclusive segments.

FORMATION OF YOUTH CIRCLES

BY SACHIN SHANDIL

As we said above, youth organizations can be started by two broad groups of people: young people themselves, or an adult who cares about them. Both options make sense, and HHS has taken both options to offer youth inclusion.

My journey with Hindu Heritage Society started in 2000 during my tertiary education days in Sydney. I was made aware of all the events and attended them. Pt N Bhatt gave me an opportunity to play Tabla, sing Bhajans, and included me slowly to be part of the society. The only requirement to myself was “commitment” when required to assist with any events from cleaning to closure of an event site. I made new friends at every event and they were all engaged through Pt N Bhatt’s motivation. We slowly became a small team to perform bhajans, playing musical instruments, sound controls; not only at our hosted events but to the community. The important thing here was guidance from the adults of the HHS community, priests, and from feedback. I have seen like many of HHS members has, how current executives were then little youths are now being put on front of the Hindu community and to run the society with guidance from our senior HHS leaders.

Societies, communities, and organisations should encourage youths involvement and some benefits seen are:

- Youth in Hindu societies can help change public awareness of young people from being "the problem" to an important part of making life better in the Hindu and wider community.
- Involving young people in the HHS has helped see themselves as part of the whole inclusion of the community and society
- By involving young people, the HHS is allowing them to carefully develop their leadership potential within the Hinduism remit, so that as they grow and learn they can become thoughtful, prepared leaders of the Hindu society. Such as e.g. kids are encouraged by their parents to set up events, coordinate events, and showcase other youths to be part of the society; such events give kids opportunity for public speaking, singing, music, drama plays and prayer recitals.

In conclusion young people can bring a remarkable amount of life to an organization; often, their energy, enthusiasm, creativity, and perspective are invaluable to members of larger community initiatives that choose to actively involve them.

PROFILE OF 20 AWARDEES WHO MADE THE JOURNEY OF HINDU HERITAGE MORE IMPACTFUL

HINDU COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA



Hindu Council of Australia is a peak body organisation founded in 1998 with an aim to create a strong and unified Hindu community in Australia. Since HCA was founded, it has been acting as a representative of the Hindu community in Australia in dealing with the federal, state and local governments, apart from reaching out to other Hindu organisations and institutions

Hindu Council of Australia's mission is to work for a strong, cohesive and active Hindu community in Australia, aiming to live in harmony with other religious and cultural communities while also devoted to preserving, promoting and sharing Hindu faith, culture and traditions with others in the society.

Hindu Heritage is a member organisations with the Hindu Council of Australia.

SANATAN DHARMA SABHA OF AUSTRALIA. SHRI RAMA KRISHNA MANDIR (Austral)

The Shree Sanatan Dharm Sabha of NSW inc is a religious organization based in New South Wales, Australia. It is dedicated to promoting and practicing the teachings of Sanatan Dharma, which is also known as Hinduism. The organization runs the Ram Krishna Temple in Austral (Sydney), which is a place of worship and community center for the Hindu community in the area.



Pt Narayan Bhatt together with Mr Ajay Singh (President of Shree Krishna Temple)

SANATAN DHARMA BRAHMAN PUROHIT MAHA SABHA

A few HHS priests are members of the BPMSA and are holding very important positions with BPMSA . HHS members are genuinely involved in organising and running religious events of BPMSA such as annual Gayatri Maha Yagya, Mirtunjaya Yagya and Ganga Pooja .They are also involved in preparation of yearly Hindu Festival Calendar.

The Brahman Purohit Maha Sabha has three primary objectives at its core. Firstly, it aims to provide services that meet the religious, spiritual, and cultural needs of the Hindu community in Australia. Secondly, it seeks to promote Hindu rituals through educational programs and the training of prospective Hindu priests. Lastly, the Sabha strives to ensure that all Sanatan Vedic samskaars (sacraments) are performed according to the rituals prescribed in the Vedas, Purans, and Upanishads. In addition to these key objectives, the Sabha engages in various projects involving the Ethnic Hindu and other communities, including celebrations such as Saraswati Devi poojan for children, Indra/Ganga poojan, Maha Mritunjai yagan, Maha Gayatri yagan, and Kirtan samelan. The educational program, which has become a favorite topic among members, is seamlessly integrated into the routine administrative work conducted during monthly meetings. The Sabha maintains strong relationships and collaborative work ethics with brother organizations such as the Sanatan Pratinidhi Sabha of Australia, Sanatan Dharam Sabha of NSW, Hindu Heritage Society of Australia, Hindu Clergy Society, Sita Ram Mandir in Carramar, as well as several other organizations from India, Fiji, and New Zealand.

A few HHS priests are members of the BPMSA and are holding very important positions with BPMSA . HHS members are genuinely involved in organising and running religious

events of BPMSA such as annual Gayatri Maha Yagya, Mirtunjaya Yagya and Ganga Pooja .They are also involved in preparation of yearly Hindu Festival Calendar.

AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF HINDU CLERGY

For promoting our faith with government agencies ACHC was established in Australia in 1989 and is has lobbied with govt. agencies for our religious needs also many member Priests are associated with HHS.



The Australian Council of Hindu Clergy (ACHC) is an organization that represents the interests of Hindu priests and clergy in Australia. It was founded in 1989 and aims to provide a unified voice for the Hindu community in matters relating to religion, culture, and tradition.

The ACHC comprises Hindu priests and spiritual leaders from various sects and traditions of Hinduism. Its main objectives include promoting the practice of Sanatan Dharma, preserving the cultural heritage of the Hindu community, and providing guidance on religious and spiritual matters to the community.

The ACHC also plays an active role in promoting interfaith dialogue and understanding. It works with other religious and cultural organizations in Australia to promote harmony and mutual respect among different communities.

One of the key initiatives of the ACHC is the training and certification of Hindu priests and clergy. It offers a range of courses and training programs to help individuals become qualified priests and spiritual leaders, and also provides ongoing support and guidance to those already in these roles.

Overall, the Australian Council of Hindu Clergy is an important organization that serves the needs of the Hindu community in Australia, and helps to promote the values and traditions of Sanatan Dharma in the country.

VISHWA HINDU PARISHAD

VISHVA HINDU PARISHAD OF AUSTRALIA INC
NEW SOUTH WALES

R. Subramanian - National President

The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) Sydney is a chapter of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, a global Hindu organization dedicated to promoting Hindu culture and values worldwide. The VHP Sydney was established to serve the needs of the Hindu community in Sydney, Australia, and promote the practice of Sanatan Dharma.

The VHP Sydney is involved in a range of activities and initiatives aimed at promoting Hindu culture and values. It organizes cultural events, festivals, and religious celebrations, and provides educational resources on Hinduism and Indian culture. The organization also works to promote interfaith dialogue and understanding, and engages with other religious and cultural groups in the community.

One of the key objectives of the VHP Sydney is to promote the welfare of the Hindu community in Australia. It provides support and assistance to individuals and families in the community, and advocates for the rights and interests of the community at a local and national level.

The VHP Sydney also plays an active role in promoting social and environmental causes. It supports various charitable and humanitarian initiatives in Australia and India, and works to promote sustainable living and environmental awareness.

Overall, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad Sydney is an important organization that serves the needs of the Hindu community in Sydney, and helps to promote the values and traditions of Sanatan Dharma in the country.

SYDNEY SANSKRIT SCHOOL

School Of Vedic Sciences (Aust) Inc.

Sydney Sanskrit School, affiliated with the School of Vedic Sciences (Aust) Inc., was established in 2006 to fulfill the need for a community language school teaching Sanskrit primarily to the migrant community in Australia. With the support of well-wishers and community members, it became the first Sanskrit community language school under the NSW Community Languages program. The school's curriculum focuses on reading, writing, speaking, and listening to Sanskrit, introducing students to the Upanishads, Puranas, Ramayana, and Mahabharata through stories, rhymes, and songs. In 2011, the school affiliated with Sura Saraswati Sabha, Dakshinamnaya Sringeri Jagadguru Adi Shankaracharya Peetam, providing certifications for Sanskrit learning. The school has witnessed tremendous growth, with students achieving the third level of Sanskrit exams, equivalent to a bachelor's degree. The school has also released a bilingual songbook, "Yabun" (Matra), showcasing a blend of Sanskrit and indigenous Aboriginal culture. Students actively participate in recitals and competitions, receiving unwavering support from the Hindu Heritage Society and Sri Mandir, Auburn. The school's vision is to disseminate Sanskrit knowledge to the younger generation, and the support from organizations and community members reinforces this vision. The journey of the school was further sweetened when one of its senior students received a Minister's Award for Learning in 2022, the highest recognition for academic achievements in community language schools. The school expresses gratitude to the NSW Department of Education, committee members, and community organizations like the Hindu Heritage Society for their support and assistance.

GREEN VALLEY HINDI SCHOOL

Green Valley Hindi Language and Arts School (GVLAS) is dedicated to providing excellent cultural and language education services under the guidance of the NSW Department of Education and the NSW Federation of Community Language Schools. The school offers Hindi language classes from kindergarten to grade 12, including the opportunity to study Hindi at the Higher School Certificate (HSC) level. In addition to language education, GVLAS also offers art classes, including vocals, harmonium, tabla, and Bollywood/Bharatanatyam dances.

IABBV INDO AUSTRALIAN BALBHARTI VIDYALAY HINDI SCHOOL

The Indo-Aust Bal Bharathi Vidyalaya Hindi School (IABBV-Hindi School) was established by a group of migrant mothers from India who wanted their children to maintain their language and culture in Australia. The school provides Hindi language education to children and adults, fostering bilingualism and biculturalism. In addition to language classes, the school offers a diverse curriculum including sports, music, drama, dance, and cultural exchange. The supportive environment of the school allows students to connect with others facing similar challenges and helps them shape their identities as Indo-Australians. Supported by the NSW DTEC Community Languages program, IABBV-Hindi School operates as a non-profit organization run entirely by volunteers. With multiple classes and over 140 students each year, the school covers a wide range of ages and proficiency levels, preparing students for Hindi language exams and offering comprehensive Hindi education in Sydney

SWAMI NARAYAN SANSTHAN (BAPS)

The Swaminarayan Sansthan, commonly known as BAPS (Bochasanwasi Akshar Purushottam Sanstha), is a global Hindu organization dedicated to the spiritual, social, and cultural upliftment of individuals and communities. Founded in 1907 by Bhagwan Swaminarayan, BAPS follows the teachings and principles of Swaminarayan Bhagwan and is guided by its spiritual leader, His Holiness Mahant Swami Maharaj.

BAPS centers around the world serve as hubs for religious worship, education, and humanitarian services. The organization promotes moral values, family harmony, and selfless service through various activities, including spiritual discourses, festivals, youth programs, and socio-economic initiatives. BAPS is known for its magnificent temples, intricate craftsmanship, and devotion to the principles of spirituality, knowledge, and unity. With millions of followers worldwide, BAPS continues to inspire individuals towards a balanced and fulfilling life rooted in spirituality and service to humanity.

SRI RAMA RAMANUJA ACHARYA

Born in Durban South Africa. Pandit Rami Studied Vedanta philosophy at Sivananda Ashram in Rishikesh for 1 year at the age of 18. He then went to Benaras and studied Sanskrit and Veda at Swami Sanjayananda's gurukul for 2 years. He also studied Karma-kanda, Yajna and Puja vidhi under Satyanarayana Shastri of Tirupati. His theoretical Agama training was done in Madras under Srimati Sita Padmanabhan. In 1983 he took pancha-samskara initiation from His Holiness Sri Sri Varada Yatiraja Jiyar swami the (late) pontiff of Adi Kesava Perumal temple in Sriperumbudur, Tamilnadu and in 1993 he was granted the Acharya degree by His Holiness and given full authority to teach, initiate, administer the sacraments and to conduct temple installations and consecrations. He studied Vedic astrology under the renowned Hart deFouw and has been serving the Hindu community in Australia as a purohit, counselor and Dharma-teacher since 1980.

He is much valued for his extensive explanations of the rituals being performed and for his inclusion of English in marriage vows etc. Rami-ji is also a registered nurse. He travels extensively and teaches Hindu Philosophy, Sanskrit and ritual and regularly participates in Yoga workshops in Australia, Bali and in the USA. He has participated in a number of temple consecrations in Australia and in the USA.

NATYANIVEDAN:

for promoting Bharat Natyam in Sydney Natya Nivedan school of cultural dance such as Bharat Natyam has voluntarily participated in HHS programs from time to time and has a good reputation in the community.



Natyanivedan & Guru Smt. Nikhila Kiran

Natyanivedan, a sincere and dedicated school aspiringly endeavours to propagate this elegant, divine and ancient form of dancing to the world with the blessings of God, Gurus & Elders. This is a presentation of Bharathanatyam to the community established in the year 1997 in Sydney imparting training in classical Bharathanatyam. The school offers technical & professional training of this divine art to students. In the last few years Women's group classes have been introduced as well allowing women in pursuit of bharathanatyam seeking Bharthi path in this way.

Guru Smt Nikhila Kiran is the disciple of **Natyacharya Guru Sri H R Keshavamurthy.** After completing Diploma in Bharathanatyam by Keshava Nrithya Shala, she obtained Vidwath Grade (Proficiency) in Bharathanatyam from Karnataka

State Education Board. She is a graded artist in Doordarshan channel 9. Vidushi Nikhila Kiran discovered her passion for dance at an early age, fascinated by the deep connection of body, mind and soul. Upon arriving in Sydney to a community largely unaware of Indian classical arts, she felt compelled to propagate this art form to younger generations. Nikhila has dedicated 26 years of her tireless efforts to continue the passing down of ancient Indian values and customs. She is an internationally recognised teacher and performer, but her greatest reward will always be watching her young girls blossom into empowered women. Smt Nikhila Kiran fiercely encourages her students to train their bodies as much as their minds, making them do various body weight exercises and yoga. In this way she is not only empowering young girls and women mentally and spiritually, but also physically.

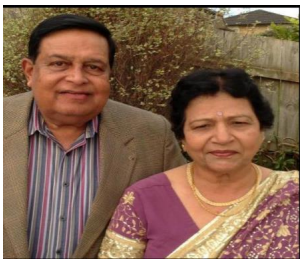
Guru Nikhila Kiran believes in giving back to the society through the art form, hence has participated in many charity events like raising funds for Cancer Council Australia through their event Dancing with the Stars, Fundraising for Westmead Hospital, fundraising for artists in India affected during Covid, Hindu Council of Australia,Sri Venkateswara Temple Helensburgh, Sri Siddhi Vinayaka Temple at Townsville and many more organisations for various great causes.

As a Choreographer & Director, Vidushi Nikhila Kiran in her conceptual production Sharanaagathy, Bhajanaa-Natya,Ramayana Katha Nrithya, Shri Krishna Namamrutham, Prakruthi and Andal these were very experimental. Under her able tutelage and guidance many arangetrams, salangai puja and productions have met great public appraisal.

She has been conferred with many accolades for her work in this divine art form, including the highly coveted Aryabhata International Award, Gargi Award by Hindu Council, awards by Sydney Kannada Sangha, United Indian Association and Basava Samrithi Australia wing for her contribution to Bharathanatyam.

The Natyanivedan recently got accepted and accredited by International Dance Council - COD, and is recognised by UNESCO.





The Lala family are life members and one of the biggest single donors to HHS. They have single-handedly sponsored the 108 Kund Yagna at Kemps Creek Mandir.

Padam Raj Lala is the Managing Director and founder of Lotus Garments Ltd. Mr. Lala has served as the Chairman of R. B. Patel Group of Companies, Merchant Finance, Hume Industries, Standard Concrete Industries and Land Transport Authority. He was also the Deputy Mayor of Suva City Council and Deputy Chairman of the Fiji Development Bank. Mr. Lala served as a Board member of the Fiji Trade & Investment Board and as the Chairman of the Textile Clothing and Footwear Council of Fiji and also the President of Fiji Manufacturers Association. He was Chairman of Fiji TV and the President of the Rotary Club of Suva.

Mr. Lala has vast experience in clothing manufacturing, retail and wholesale trade. He is a very successful real estate investor and developer. His multifarious activities with the business community in Fiji is well recognised, together with his political, cultural, educational and community involvements.

The Lala family has roots from the village of Kampil in the district of Farrukhabad , City of Kanpur in U.P India. This used to be the Kingdom of King Durpat and birthplace of Queen Dropati of Mahabharat era.

Lala Ramdin came to Fiji on vessel S.S. Mutlah in 1915. Later he was joined by other family members of Lala Totaram and his mother Ganga Devi. They initially set-up a trading post in Nandali next to Nausori Airport. In later years, they moved to main Street in Nausori Town and established a major grocery and drapery shop. In the late 90's, the business activities extended to the City of Suva and established Lala's Store, in Waimanu Road.

DHARAM JEET SINGH & SON

Long term supporter of the Hindu Heritage Society with regular donations to HHS events over the years since its inception as Kala Mandir

This is the story of Dhram Jeet Singh Indian Diaspora – Mrs Prem Maharaj's great Grandfather, (Par Aaja/or Par Dada in Hindi), Late Thakur Kuldip Singh, was one of the Original Girmitya's from India. He arrived on board the ill-fated Syria Jahaj on 14th May, 1884. The ship sank off the coast of Nausori after striking a reef. Very few people were rescued after the disaster, of which Late Thakur Kuldip Singh was one.

Thakur Kuldip Singh's family was settled in Raralevu after completing the Indentured period of 5 years. They moved to the present property on the Raralevu mountain area. The family has been in this place for over 100 years. The landmark is the Dharam Jeet Singh Store. This was established in 1943. Thakur Kuldip Singh's family originally hails from Bihar in India. The families have been in contact all these years. Letters were exchanged regularly between the parties in India and Fiji

The Hindu Heritage Society is grateful to the extended family members of the Dharam Jeet Singh Family who have volunteered their time and have also contributed financially towards the events that have been hosted by the Society. May the Blessings of the Almighty always remain upon your family.



A rare photo of Late Mr and Mrs Dharam Jeet Singh of Raralevu Nausori. Mr and Mrs Dharam Jeet Singh were both born in Fiji

SHRI MUKESH GUPTA



Mukesh Gupta is a business owner and has a very important role in the Indian community in Australia.

Originally from Ludhiana Punjab, India residing in Sydney since 1998.

Gupta ji comes from a business family background and is a loyal husband, devoted father of 3 successful professionals and a grandfather.

The Indian charitable organisations in Australia always get needed support from the Gupta family and Hindu Heritage Society also received his cash and kind support when approached.

Shree Sanatan Dharm Pratinidhi Sabha of Australia Inc.

Shree Sanatan Dharm Pratinidhi Sabha of Australia Inc.
श्री सनातन धर्म प्रतिनिधि सभा ओफ ओस्ट्रेलिया
Registered No. Y2517622
SUPREME ORGANISATION OF SANATAN DHARM
Postal Address : P O Box 598, Blacktown, NSW 2148, Australia. Website: www.sanatanaustralia.com.au
Endorsed for Charity Tax Concession

Our organisation propagates the teaching and philosophy of Hinduism and allied religious cultures in accordance with Vedic Sanatan Dharma. We also promote sports,music,arts,meditation and other cultural art forms. Our organisation also uses resources to encourage participation in bhajans,kirtans,folk songs and pravachans as collective and communal forms of religious cultures

PDT. HARISH SHARMA



Harish Chandra Sharma is a former Fiji Indian politician who became the leader of the National Federation Party in 1987. He was also the leader of the organisation representing most of the Hindus in Fiji, the Shree Sanatan Dharam Pratinidhi Sabha of Fiji.

Mr Sharma was born in Nausori, Fiji in 1932. He worked as a civil servant and as an insurance agent before departing for Tasmania in 1960, where he received the LL.B. from the University of Tasmania in 1964. On his return to Fiji he first worked for Sidiq Koya then for A. D. Patel, before setting up his own law firm in 1969. He was nominated to the Senate by the Leader of the Opposition in 1970 and remained a Senator until the 1972 general election

Mr Harish Sharma was the President of the Fiji Law Society from 1989 to 1990. In 2007 he was honoured with the life membership of the Fiji Law Society. He finally retired from the practice of law at the end of 2002 after a career spanning 38 years. He migrated to Australia in January 2003

Social and religious contribution

Pandit Sharma was a founding member of Sanatan Dharam Pratinidhi Sabha of Fiji which was formally formed on 29th November 1958 at the Sanatan Shiv Mandir Samabula. He was later the secretary of Sanatan Dharam Shiv Mandir, Samabula and was actively involved in the formation of the national body. After 35 years he was elected the national president of the Sabha and held the position successively for ten years

Upon his retirement he was awarded “Sanatan Ratna" and made life member of Shri Sanatan Dharam Pratinidhi Sabha of Fiji. He was awarded a second "Sanatan Rattan" by Shri Sanatan Dharam Pratinidhi Sabha of N.S.W. inc in November 2013 for his services to the Sanatan community in Australia

In February 2018 he was honoured with "Hindi Gaurav Samman" by International Hindi Parishad Adharshila

He helped establish Korovuto Secondary school which is now known as Korovuto College and was its very first manager for a period of ten years. He was later made life member of the school on retirement.

He also helped establish Nawai Junior Secondary School, now known as Nawai Secondary School and was its manager for more than a decade. Made life member of the school on retirement. Both the schools have made amazing progress since inception

Legal Career

Mr Sharma enrolled as a law student at the University of Tasmania at the beginning of 1960. He formally qualified as a lawyer at the end of 1964. He practised law for one year in Hobart, Tasmania under a Queen's Counsel

Upon his return to Fiji, he joined Koya and co as a Legal practitioner in 1966.

Joined A.D Patel and Co in 1968 as Mr. Patel's Associate. Upon Mr. Patel's death formed the firm of Patel and Sharma with Mr. P. B Patel.

In March 2005, he was given a special certificate of appreciation by the Fiji Law Society for dedicated and invaluable service rendered to Fiji Law Society and the legal profession.

SANATH & NIRLA PANDEY (Brisbane)



Pundit Sanat Pandey is married to Nirla Pandey and has two daughters and four grandchildren. He is a retired Chartered Accountant who migrated to Australia in 1987 after the first coup in Fiji. Pundit Sanat Pandey has dedicated most of his time to his community, especially the Fiji Indian Community.

As a practising Hindu priest, Pundit. Sanat Pandey offers his services to the Gayatri Temple in Boondall, Lakshmi Narayan Temple in Burbank and Sanatan Centre in Berrinba conducting prayer meetings and giving sermons during religious ceremonies such as Shiv-Ratri, Ram Naumi, Krishna Janam-Ashtami, Hanuman Jayanti, etc. He also conducts Sola-Sanskar prayers according to the needs of various devotees. He is also a Religious and Civil Marriage Celebrant and he has conducted several marriage ceremonies locally, nationally and destination weddings as well.

He also conducts funeral rites and many other religious ceremonies as and when required by the Indian Community. He has authored a book titled 'Lakshmi Poojan for Diwali' and is currently writing an additional book on 'Sixteen Sanskaars'.

He is actively involved in promoting and supporting the study of the Hindu religion at various educational levels. Being invited to speak at Graduation Ceremonies in different Faith Centres is a testament to his knowledge and expertise in the Hindu religion. Such opportunities allow him to share his insights and inspire graduating students as they embark on their next chapters in life.providing interpreting services to hospitals, government institutions, and courts indicates his linguistic abilities and willingness to bridge communication gaps. Interpreters play a crucial role in ensuring effective communication between individuals who speak different languages, and his contributions in this area are commendable.
Offering prayer services to sick patients in hospitals is a compassionate act. Providing spiritual support to those who are unwell can bring comfort and solace during challenging times. It's wonderful that he has been able to provide this service to those in need.

Collaborating with the State Government to prepare a booklet specifically tailored to the needs of Hindu patients is another noteworthy endeavor. Such initiatives demonstrate a commitment to enhancing cultural understanding and ensuring appropriate care for individuals from diverse religious backgrounds.
Overall, his dedication to volunteering and serving various communities through different roles reflects his passion for his faith and his desire to make a positive impact on the lives of others.

Pundit Sanat Pandey has been serving community members as a qualified Justice of Peace since the year 2000 and has been involved in numerous fund-raising projects for the poor, needy and temples. He is a regular speaker at various Senior Citizen Associations and religious organisations. He has been the vice president of Lakshmi Narayan Temple at Burbank for numerous years and also served as a treasurer and auditor for various religious groups. As a highly respected and trusted Priest, he is also called upon to help people having problems with their marriages and children not complying with the norms of the community.

ARYA PRATINIDHI SABHA OF AUSTRALIA.

Arya Pratinidhi Sabha of Australia Incorporated was formed on 15th February 1994. In 2003 APSA purchased 69 Shane Park Road at Shanes Park NSW and established their office.

The members of APSA participated in Arya International Maha Sammelans in Delhi and Singapore. This inspired us and Arya International Maha Sammelan was held at our Shane Park property from 27th November to 29th November 2015. It was a very successful event. We have been successfully organising Yog, Meditations and Vedic Studies throughout Australia. Various scholars and parcharaks have been successfully conducting Vedic teaching here. In near future more scholars from Bharat will be arriving here to conduct Vedic Dharma teaching etc.

I would like to extend, special thank you to all our members, support groups, friends and well wishers,who worked continuously to bring the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha of Australia to what it is today.

God bless you all 🙏

Suresh Chand
President/Arya Pratinidhi Sabha of Australia.

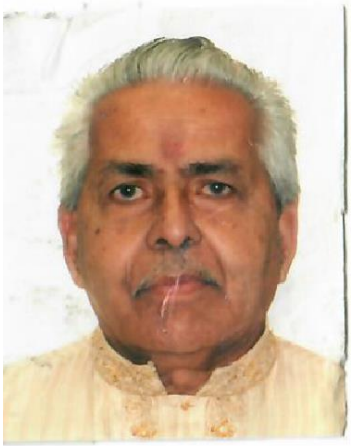


NEPALESE HINDU COMMUNITY

Nepalese Hindu Society of Australia (NHSA) is an organization to preserve Hindu religion and practice Hindu rituals continuously for all Hindus.

It was established in 2011. NHSA serves all Hindus living in Australia according to Hindu religion through a voluntarily available Hindu Priest to carry out the religious activities, which will be required during birth, death and other necessary ritual religious activities in an affordable method according to Hindu religion.

PUNDIT SADA NAND SHARMA



I have much pleasure in writing about a nonagenarian, who "single handedly" saved the Hindu /Sanatan Dharma in Sydney Australia.

Pandit Sada Nand Sharma was born in Ba in the western division of Fiji. He was a first generation Fijian Indian Diaspora to arrive in Australia in 1973, as a practicing Sanatani purohit, still in the "White Australia Policy". The number of Hindus in Australia at that time were few.

While in Fiji he was a practicing Hindu purohit, conducting all Sanatani rituals, including weddings, funeral rites and other samskaras.

He together with Pandit Khushi Ram Sharma and Pandit Ramayan Maharaj was instrumental in establishing the WAILAILAI KUTI (Mandir), which to this day is still a well known Mandir, patronized by thousands of devotees each year.

In Australia he was yearning to establish a similar Mandir, he quickly partnered with one Mr. Gyan Singh and others formed the FIRST Sanatan Dhram Mandir in Sydney, Australia at Chipping Norton. As the patronage increased, the Mandir was later relocated to more spacious premises at Prestons near Liverpool. Pt. Sadanand was the first “Sansthapak " and “Pracharak in both of these mandirs. Today this Mandir is in AUSTRAL, LIVERPOOL, the SANATAN DHARM RAM KRISHNA MANDIR, boasting a modern mandir, function hall and a huge carpark. Pt. Sadanand is still associated with this mandir, although not as a fulltime priest.

In addition to a practicing purohit, he was the first Hindu Marriage celebrant appointed in Australia.

His entire family followed him to Australia in 1978. He has been doing Ramayan Prachar; Kirtan bhajans and katha pravachan in Sydney ever since.

Pt. Sadanand ji has performed many weddings, officiated at numerous funerals and provided counselling to many in need.

With ailing health, he now performs with reduced workload, but is still active in the Hindu community.

He is regarded as a father figure, in so far as the Hindu community and the Sanatan Dharm in Sydney is concerned.

SPONSORS & CONTRIBUTORS SPACE



HARDIK THAKKAR

MANAGING DIRECTOR
ICONIC TILES AND BATHWARE
120-122 Warren Road Smithfield NSW

Mr. Hardik Thakkar is a successful businessman and the owner of Iconic Tiles and Bathware, a reputable company that specializes in importing and distributing high-quality tiles, timber flooring and bathroom fixtures in the Western Sydney area.

& Bathware

Born and raised in Gujarat, India, Mr. Thakkar arrived in Sydney in 2009 as an international student, with a dream to pursue a career in business. Despite facing numerous challenges, he remained focused on his goal and worked hard to gain the necessary skills and experience. He started his career in the industry by working at a tile and bathroom fixtures store, where he gained extensive knowledge and experience in the field.

In 2017, Mr. Thakkar achieved a significant milestone when he became a 50% partner in a multi-million-dollar company. His dedication and hard work had paid off, and he was finally making his mark in the business world.
However, Mr. Thakkar didn't stop there. He continued to work tirelessly to grow the company and expand its reach. By 2021, Mr. Thakkar had achieved another milestone - he bought the company out and rebranded it to Iconic Tiles & Bathware, that is one of the biggest showrooms in Western Sydney that is spread over 3000m² of warehousing space. This was a momentous achievement for Mr. Thakkar, who had come a long way since his days as an international student.

Under Mr. Thakkar's leadership, Iconic Tiles and Bathware has become a well-known

ASHWIN AND NAMITA GOVIND

Mr. Ashwin Govind and Mrs. Namita Govind are a highly respected couple who have made a successful life for themselves in Sydney, Australia, after migrating from Auckland, New Zealand. They are well-known for their philanthropic work and their active involvement in the Hindu Heritage Society.

Mrs. Namita Govind is originally from the famous Dharam Jeet Singh & Son Family of Raralevu Nausori in the Fiji Islands. She is highly regarded for her strong sense of community and dedication to promoting cultural heritage. As a member of the Hindu Heritage Society, she has been actively involved in organizing cultural events and promoting the rich cultural heritage of India.

Mr. Ashwin Govind is an accomplished businessperson who has worked in the IT industry for several years. He has a reputation for being highly professional and has built a successful career for himself in Sydney. He is well-respected in the community for his entrepreneurial skills and his commitment to supporting local businesses.

Together, Mr. and Mrs. Govind are highly involved in philanthropic activities, supporting various charities and community organizations in Sydney. They are passionate about giving back to the community and have been actively involved in supporting the Guru Purnima Program in 2023 as sponsors.

Their commitment to promoting cultural heritage and giving back to the community has earned them widespread respect and admiration in Sydney. Their dedication to supporting various charitable causes is a testament to their strong sense of community and their belief in making a positive impact on the world around them.

Mr. Ashwin Govind and Mrs. Namita Govind are highly respected members of the community who have made a significant contribution to promoting cultural heritage and supporting charitable causes in Sydney. Their commitment to giving back and making a positive impact on the world around them is truly inspirational.

AGNEE FUNERAL SERVICES



Mr Jainesh Jogia - Directory of Agnee Funerals



SAHARA FUNERALS



Trusted Indian Funeral Directors Sydney

As **Indian funeral directors Sydney**, we are part of your community. And with warmth and compassion, it will feel like we are part of your family – guiding you through a deeply personal, cultural ceremony with a traditional touch.

Families turn to us in their time of need, trusting our humble hands-on husband and wife team to take care of every detail.

We understand that you have a lot to think about during this difficult time. So we promise to carefully and clearly explain everything to you. Every step of the service is on our shoulders

LIST OF ALL OFFICE BEARERS AND ORGANISING COMMITTEES WITH THEIR PHOTO

Pandit Shailendra Maharaj – Hindu Priest, Commonwealth Registered Marriage Celebrant, JP NSW - my Diaspora story:

My Ancestral Journey from India to Fiji and to Australia





My grandfather Pundit Ram Charitar Maharaj was brought to Fiji under the British Indenture system. He arrived in Fiji in September 1913 and travelled on the SS Ganges No2. He was from Gorakhpur Belwa Jila, Uttar Pradesh. On the SS Ganges No2 there were a total of 784 Indians being brought to Fiji. Many got sick on the voyage, and some passed away before reaching Fiji.

After completing five years of indentured labour contract, my grandfather was given 2.5 acres of land by the Colonial Sugar Refinery Company and settled in Daku village, (Fijian name Dakuina). Daku is forty Kilometers (twenty-five miles) from Labasa town on the island of Vanua Levu.

My grandfather walked for kilometers to get to homes where he would perform the poojas. My elder brother and I often accompanied him on these pooja visits.

My father Pandit Ram Dutt Maharaj was the second child among five brothers. He was married to my mother Tara Wati and I am fifth among my eight siblings. My maternal grandfather Pundit Mahadeo Maharaj, was born in Fiji and my maternal great grandfather Pandit Ram Bharos Maharaj was born in India, however, very sadly the exact details of the name of the Jila or district he came from has been lost.

I am very grateful to my grandparents and parents who preserved the Hindu religion and culture in Fiji and passed on their language, religion and culture from generation to generation. My uncle Pundit Hari Dutt Sharma after doing tireless search was successful

in tracing our ancestral connections and visited my grandfather's home in Gorakhpur, Belwa Jila on 17 November 2010.

I moved to Australia in 1989 with my wife Malti and two sons, Kavish and Akshay. Kavish is married to Saras and they have a son Aryan. Akshay is married to Vikantha.

Since moving to Australia, we have always been affiliated to Ramayan Madali's. This has allowed my family and I to continue to celebrate all the Hindu Parvas. Being part of the Hindu community has enabled us to keep our language, religion and culture alive. In our Australian Fijian community, we celebrate Holi, Ram Navami, Krishna Ashtami, Navratri and Diwali festivals.

My family and I have been closely associated with Pt Narayan Bhatt ji and the Hindu Heritage Society since 2006. The HHS is a non-profitable organization and promotes Hindu religion, language and culture. Malti and I are now retired and we continue with our work with HHS to promote our Hindu religion, language and culture so that our future generations continue with their Sanskriti, Sabetha and Sanskar.

On this occasion of HHS's 25th anniversary, I together with my family wish the Society and its members best wishes in the future.

MR SUNIL MISHRA

Former President of HHS



Sunil Mishra Profile

Justice of the Peace(NSW)
BA (Economic & Management)
President – Hindu Heritage Society Inc. 2019-2023
President – Australian Hindu Educational & Cultural Society 2006 - 2017

Secretary -Australian Hindu Educational & Cultural Society 1998 - 2006

Sunil Mishra is a highly respected community leader and is well known in the Fiji Indian community. He is a known philanthropist at heart and has supported many sporting clubs and charity organisations through sponsorships and donations.

He has been an active member of various religious and cultural groups and has been active in promoting (Sanatan Dharma) religious and cultural values since arriving in Australia in 1990.

Sunil comes from Fiji islands where his forefathers were brought in by the Colonial powers to cultivate Sugar plantations.

Mr Sunil Mishra is a self-made man who comes from humble beginnings, hailing from the beautiful Island Nation of Fiji with Indian descent. His great great grandfather was from Sarwan Pur village in the town of Basti in Uttra Pardesh, India.

Mr Mishra migrated to Sydney with his wife and two beautiful daughters in 1990. As a graduate from the University of the South Pacific with experience in the financial sector, Sunil pursued his career in the industry to establish his own finance broking business, Mortgage Hotline NSW.

As a mortgage broker and Director of Mortgage Hotline NSW, Mr Sunil Mishra, continues to serve the public of Sydney and the surrounding regions for over 30 years with assistance in personal and mortgage financing via banking and non banking channels.

Mr Sunil Mishra is also highly respected and widely known on the community front, serving the community as a current Justice of the Peace and being an active member in executive roles of various community-based associations, Sunil is the immediate past president of Hindu Heritage Society of Australia and currently holds the position of

Vice President.

Apart from being a successful businessman and a leader in the community, Mr Mishra is also a proud grand father of 3 beautiful little munchkins, Diya, Riyaan and Ariana.

Pt Sukhendra Shandil



From L-R Top : Padma Shandil, Pt. Sukhendra Shandil
Bottom: Namrata Shandil, Viraat Shandil, Vivaan Shandil and Sachin Shandil.

Pundit Sukhendra Shandil, a third generation Fiji Indian now living in Sydney, Australia is following in the footsteps of his ancestors in serving the community.

His great grandparents and grandparents late Pt. Ramdin Shandil and Pt. Sarju Prasad Shandil of Dauesh district, Kamhari Thana, Sagoui village, India arrived in Fiji on 27 March 1904. For a brief period, they lived in Samabula, Suva and later moved to the second largest island, Vanua Levu and provided community services as a Hindu priest. His grandparents and parents were very actively involved in helping in establishing temples, schools and Ramayan Mandalis' in Fiji to ensure Hindu culture and religion were kept active.

Pt. Sukhendra is the youngest son of Late Pt. Muni Prasad and Basuda Shandil and is a practicing Hindu priest. He is married to Padma Shandil, and they have two children and two grandchildren.

Some of the achievements in community services as listed below:

- Past President of Suva Jaycees
- Past Vice President of Fiji Jaycees
- Past Member of Sanatan Dharam, Suva, Fiji
- Past Secretary of Navyuak Satsangh Ramayan Mandali
- Member of Hindu Heritage Society
- Members of Australian Hindu Clergy
- General Secretary of Brahman Purohit Maha Sabha of Australia
- Recipient of Youth Exchange program to Queensland, Australia, 1984
- Recipient of Rotary International student exchange program, Oregon, USA, 1985

Pundit. Sukhendra is very actively involved with Hindu Heritage Society, Brahman Purohit MahaSabha of Australia and Ramayan Mandli's in promoting religious and cultural activities.

He has been associated with HHS for over 20 years and have many treasured memories. Over the years we have formed a very strong bond among the members which saw my family being actively involved in the HHS activities in one way or another.I value the principles and values of the HHS and fellowship which has made me a better person.

Some of the highlights where I took active roles at HHS as follows:

- Represented HHS at the Australian Hindu Council meetings and supported in the organising Deepavali puja.
- Assisted in organising a conference for all Priests from Brahman Purohit MahaSabha of Australia, Australian Hindu Clergy and HHS.
- Initiated and successfully organised Hindi Oratory Contest for Hindi schools in Sydney region.

Service to the community is the best work of life and through small contributions that we can make for the wellbeing of all we can make the world a better place to stay.

CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

The Following people have received a certificate of appreciation from the Hindu Heritage Society for her tireless efforts in organizing and promoting cultural events and festivals in the community over the last 25 years.

Individuals who have been helping HHS including foundation and Life members.

1. Mrs. Savitri & Mr Amrit Ram
2. Mr. Yadav & Mrs Basundhara Dhungel
3. Mr. Ashok & Mrs. Sudha Singhal
4. Mr. Hitendra & Mrs Renuka Ram
5. Pdt. Shashi & Mrs Saras Maharaj
6. Mr. Anand Narayan Foundation Member
7. Mrs. Shashi & Mr. Satish Dass
8. Mr. Indar & Mrs Damyanti Nair
9. Mr. Dinesh Chander & Mrs. Anita Gupta
10. Mr. Anil & Mrs Neelam Fulwaria
11. Mr. Anil & Mrs. Soni Kumar
12. Mr. Arvind & Mrs. Roselyn Narayan
13. Mr. Kamal Krishna & Mrs Swapna Laha
14. Mrs. Neera Srivastava
15. Mr. Yash & Mrs. Mamita Mishra
16. Mr Niten & Mrs Pooja Singh

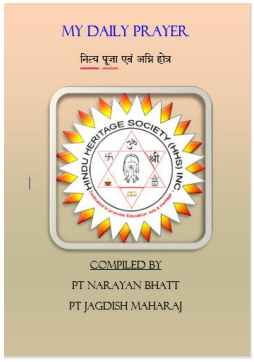
17. Mr Anand & Mrs Ashika Prasad
18. Mr Satya & Mrs Manita Prakash
19. Mr Satish & Mrs Sarita Sharma
20. Mr. Andrew Prasad
21. Mr Ashwin & Mrs Namita Govind
22. Mr. Sachin & Mrs Shivon Govind Desai
23. Mr Shamal & Mrs Neelam Singh
24. Mr. Dhurup & Mrs. Kiran Singh
25. Pdt Sukhendra & Mrs Padma Shandil
26. Pdt Shailendra & Mrs Malti Maharaj
27. Mr Satish & Mrs. Lalita Singh
28. Pdt Gautam Maharaj
29. Mr Sunil & Mrs. Sunita Mishra
30. Pdt Amrit & Mrs. Shanta Prasad
31. Mr. Sashi and Mrs. Roma Singh
32. Mr. Kuar Pal & Mrs. Angela Indrani Sharma
33. Mr. Anil & Mrs. Swapna Doma
34. Pdt Davendra Sharma
35. Mr. Ramend & Mrs. Pushpa Kumar
36. Pdt Bharat Sharma Volunteer
37. Mr Avichal & Mrs Amita Narayan
38. Mr Ashutosh Sharma
39. Mrs Seema Bhardwaj
40. Pdt Krishna Murthy Venkatraman

41. Pdt Lalbahadur Mishra
42. Pdt Jatin Kumar Bhatt
43. Pdt Prakash Dodhari
44. Mrs Shradha Tewari
45. Mr Sanjesh Nand
46. Shiva Chandiran
47. Ms Aruna Gandhi

HHS PUBLICATIONS

· **Divya Darshan - Divya Darshan is a quarterly magazine released by the Hindu Heritage Society, dedicated to promoting Hindu culture, spirituality, and values. The magazine serves as a platform for sharing knowledge, insights, and perspectives on various aspects of Hinduism. Divya Darshan features articles, interviews, and scholarly pieces written by experts and enthusiasts in the field, covering topics such as Hindu philosophy, mythology, rituals, festivals, and social issues. It aims to provide readers with a deeper understanding of Hindu traditions and their relevance in the modern world. The magazine also showcases inspiring stories of individuals who embody the principles of Hinduism in their lives and make a positive impact on society. Divya Darshan is a valuable resource for those seeking to explore and connect with their Hindu heritage, fostering a sense of pride, identity, and spiritual growth among readers.**

· **PDT JAGDISH MAHARAJ – 6OTH BIRTHDAY release**
My Daily Prayer



· **AMRIT KALASH - Amrit Kalash, a Hindu religious radio program hosted by Pt Jagdish Maharaj, is a divine source of spiritual nourishment**

for listeners. The program offers a rich tapestry of religious facts, captivating stories, devotional songs, and soul-stirring bhajans that resonate with the hearts of the audience. Pt Jagdish Maharaj, with his profound knowledge and wisdom, enlightens listeners about various aspects of Hinduism, guiding them on a spiritual journey filled with meaning and purpose. The program goes beyond entertainment, featuring insightful interviews with prominent Hindu religious leaders, who share their deep understanding of scriptures and offer valuable insights into spiritual practices. Additionally, Amrit Kalash serves as a valuable resource for devotees seeking guidance on performing poojas, providing clear instructions and guidelines to ensure the correct observance of rituals and ceremonies. Through this divine platform, Pt Jagdish Maharaj spreads the essence of Hinduism, fostering a deeper connection with the divine and inspiring individuals to embrace spirituality in their daily lives. Amrit Kalash is a beacon of light that illuminates the path of seekers, nourishing their souls with the wisdom and devotion of Hindu traditions.

· Online diwali youtube (channel)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8CLcmiOORcI&t=16s

Simple Dipawali Puja - Conducted by Pt Narayan Bhatt, showcasing the Step by Step procedure on conducting Diwlai POojan. Kindly assisted by Ptji's Family

List of booklets published

1- **Yearly Calendars (Hindu Festival Dates)**
2- **Our Great Sages - 2004**
3- **Satya Narayan Vrat katha (Hindi version) 2006**
4- **Vishnu Sahastra Naamam 2006**
5- **FAQ in Hinduism- 2007**
6- **Panchdev Puja vidhi (Hindi version) 2010**
7- **My daily pooja english hindi version 2011**

8- **Panchdev Puja vidhi (English version) 2011**

9- **Saral Bhajanaawali-2012**

10- **Satya Narayan Vrat Katha (English version) 2013**

Memories of past

Photo Gallery

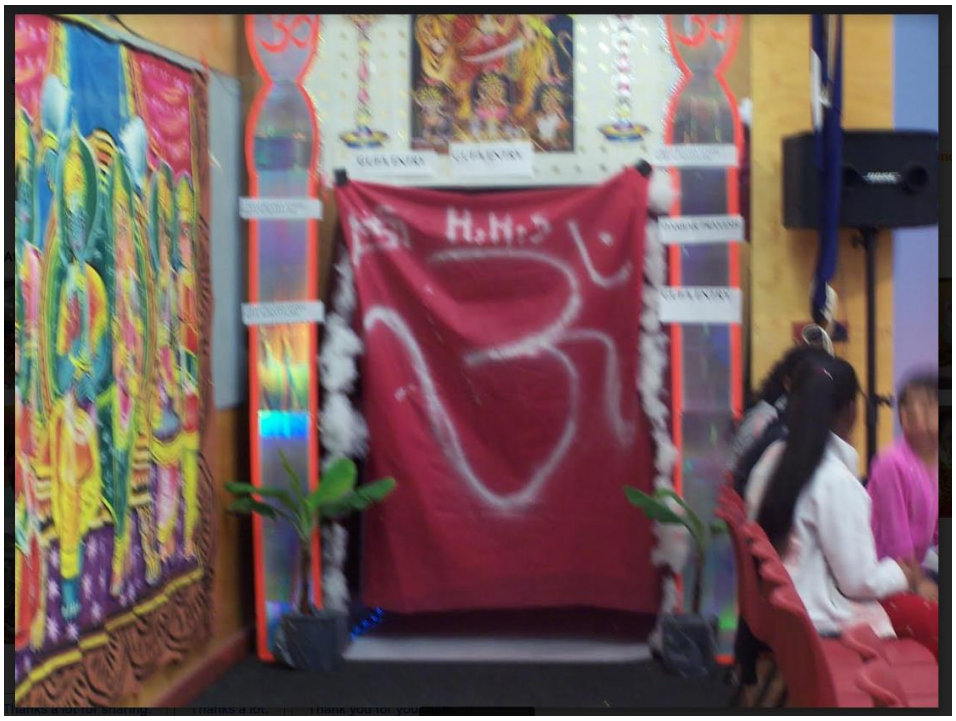


Pundits Shri Jagdish Maharaj Ji (left) and Shri Narayan Bhatt Ji (Right) with local Mayor





Hindu Heritage Society held first ever Brahman Sammelan in 2012



Real life Durga Ma Guffa (Cave)

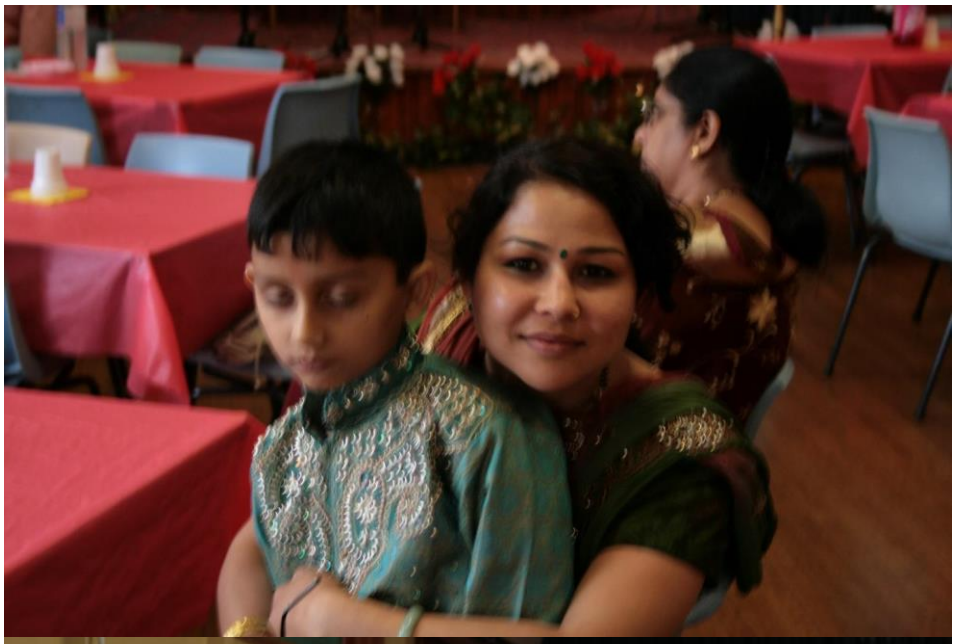
diorama built for participants to experience divine energy of Mata



Shrimate Lalita Singh manning the Archana Table for Yajmaans



Havan Yagna at Hindu Heritage Society Puja Function



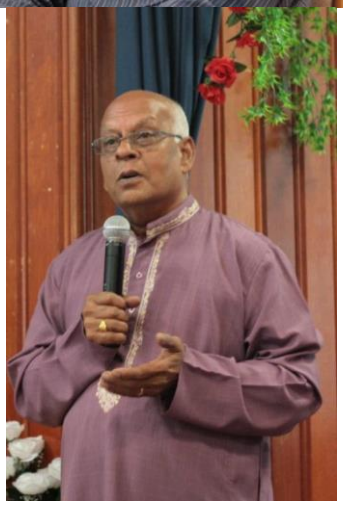

EXIT




Panchdev
Bhajan
Panchdev
Dance
HHS Web
Slide Show
Vote Of Th
Dinner








Add sparkle to the
celebration this Diwali
Send money to a bank







Annual Durga puja celebrations of Hindu Heritage Society in Sydney








WELCOME



Ladies at an Annual Guru Purnima Function organised previously by Hindu Heritage Society



Pundit Shri Narayan Bhatt and Shrimati Radhika Bhatt with a Devotee at the Annual Devi/Navratri Puja organised by the Hindu Heritage Society


01/01/2003









सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज ।
अहं त्वां सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ।। 66।।

sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śharaṇaṁ vraja
ahaṁ tvāṁ sarva-pāpebhyo mokṣhayiṣhyāmi mā śhuchaḥ























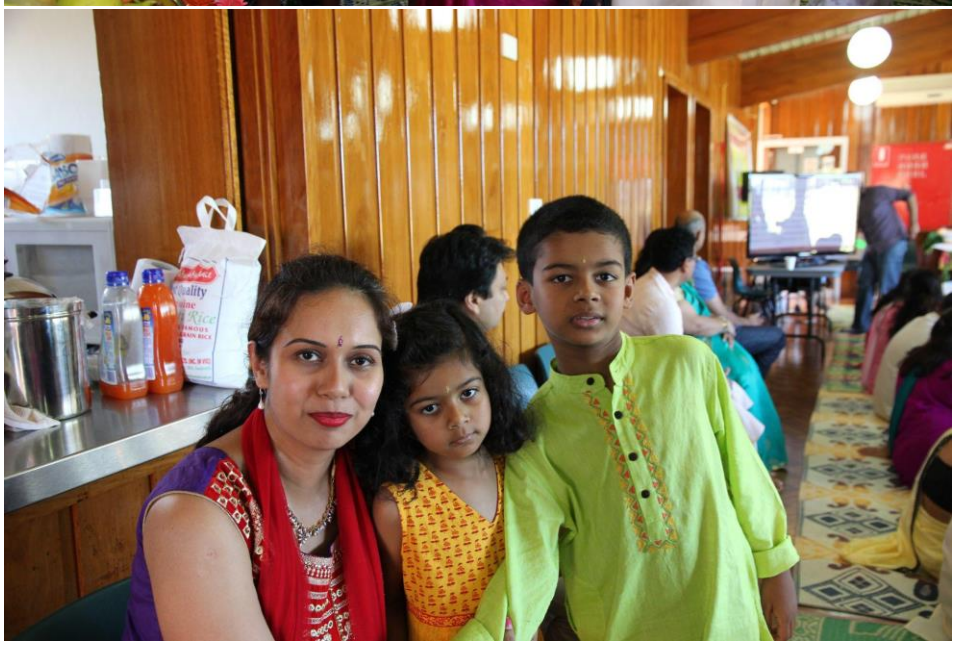





E SOCIETY INC.


HERITAGE SOCIET






































MENS CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP






OF
PARRAMATTA


HINDU HERITAGE SOCIETY (HHS) Inc.
ANNUAL CELEBRATION


Panchdev Cd Launch
Bhajan
Panchdev Cd Cover Launch
Dance
HHS Web Site Launch
Slide Show
Vote Of Thanks

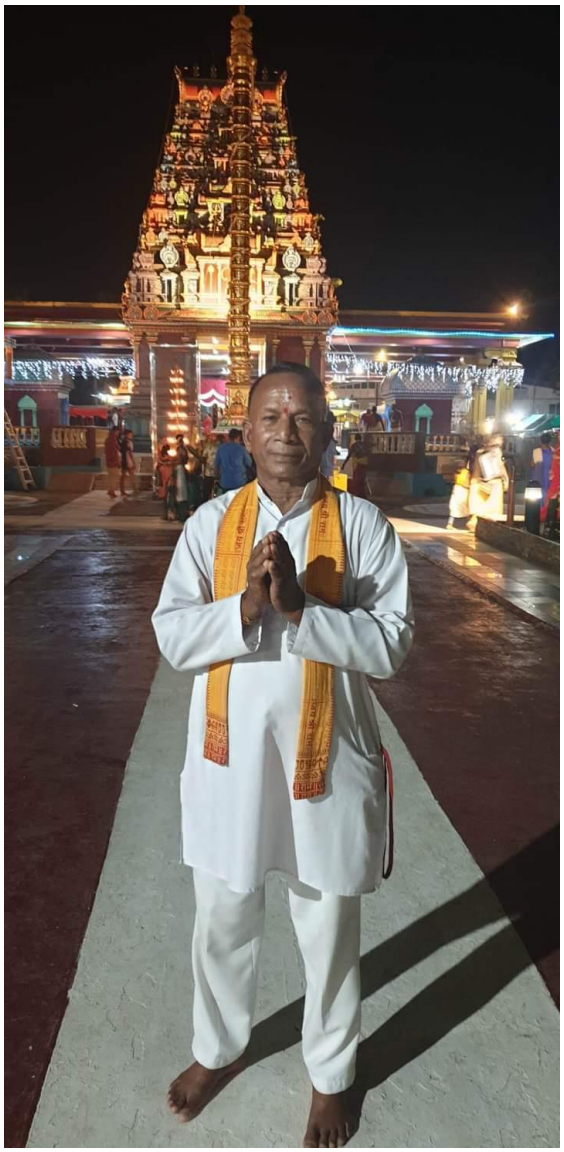





01/01/2003



Members singing Bhajan



Mr Anand Narayan

9) ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP AND LIFE TIME MEMBERSHIP CHARGES DETAILS

Member Information

First Name _____

Last Name _____

Mobile _____

Email _____

(Please tick one of the options below)
[ ] Life Membership $ 500
[ ] Gold Membership $ 100
[ ] Annual Membership $ 20
[ ] Active Member* or
[ ] Associate Member*

I hereby apply to become a member of the Hindu Heritage Society (HHS) Inc. and give assurance that upon my admission, I shall abide by the rules and regulations of the Society at all times and declare that I am over eighteen years old

Active member

An Active member is expected to:

1. Attend all Annual General Meetings of the Society and vote either being present at the AGM / SGM or by proxy
2. Participate in programs decided or organized by the Society.
3. Follow all the rules and regulations as set out in constitution

Associate member

An Associate member is expected to:

- Respect the constitution of the Society
- Act at all times in the best interests of the Society
- Pay membership fees when they fall due
- Attend meetings if suitable and be identified as an advisor
- Change membership category to Active member with consent of the committee

Signature

_____

(Official Use Only)

RECOMMENDATION

I, _____ a current member of the Society recommend and nominate the applicant who is well known to me for membership of the Society.

Signature of Nominator _____

Date _____

Please forward the completed form to the Secretary of the Society via email hhsydinc@gmail.com

Having paid the prescribed sum of $____ by the applicant, this application has been approved by the committee on this _____ Day of _____ Year_____

Secretary: _____ Receipt Number: _____

CONTACT US:

Website: https://hinduheritage.com.au/

Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/hinduheritagesociety/

A YouTube channel:

https://www.youtube.com/@hinduheritagesocietyaustra2743

