



# BRAHMA VANI BRAHMA JYOTI



*“Reclaiming Dharma  
through Dharmic  
Studies & Dharmic  
Actions”*

*A Joint Publication of  
Brahman Samaj of North America (BSNA)  
&  
Global Brahma Confederation (GBC)*

*Twenty-first Annual BSNA Convention  
Sixth Annual GBC Convention  
Aug 26-28, 2016*

*San Diego  
California  
U.S.A.*

***Welcomes All Delegates of the 21<sup>st</sup> BSNA and  
6<sup>th</sup> GBC Annual Convention from  
President of BSNA, Dr. Keshav Shukla &  
Family, Houston, Texas***



***From Left Standing: Shanti, Shriya, Keshav, Simrin, Shailendra, Sonia, Sonal  
and Gyan Shukla. From Left Seated: Amishi Shukla and her friends***

**21<sup>st</sup> Annual Convention of Brahmin Samaj of North America  
and 6<sup>th</sup> Global Brahman Confederation**



**San Diego, California, August 26-28, 2016**

# BRAHMA VANI & BRAHMA JYOTI

## Convention Souvenir Issue, AUGUST 2016

Annual Convention of BSNA & GBC, San Diego, California, USA

BRAHMA VANI (Volume XXI) and BRAHMA JYOTI (Volume III) August 2016

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**&**

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### ***Disclaimer:***

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“BSNA is a not-for-profit, cultural, religious, educational and charitable organization approved under the IRS Section 501 © (3). Since its inception in 1994, BSNA has made steady progress to preserve, promote, protect and advance Brahmanic values, Vedic culture and heritage in North America and Globally. BSNA has a vision to unite and uplift different segments of society by way of education, spirituality, service, networking, and exchange of ideas.”

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**BRAHMA VANI (Volume XXI) and BRAHMA JYOTI (Volume III) August 2016**



**21<sup>st</sup> Brahman Samaj of North America and 6<sup>th</sup> Global Brahman Confederation Annual Convention**  
**San Diego, California USA, Aug 26-28, 2016 Crown Plaza, Hotel Circle**



**TENTATIVE PROGRAM SCHEDULE**

**Friday, August 26, 2016 (Day 1)**

<b>1:00 PM – 6:00 PM</b>	<b>Registration</b>
3:30 PM – 6:30 PM	Coffee/Tea/snacks and Networking
5:30 PM – 6:30 PM	Executive Committee, Board of Trustees Meeting
6:30 PM – 7:30 PM	Special Talent Program (Ram Stotram, Bansuri, Kathak, Bharatnatyam, Bollywood Dance, Karaoke)
<b>7:30 PM – 8:30 PM</b>	<b>Dinner/Kareoke</b>
8:30 PM – 11:00 PM	Cultural Program (Piano, Bollywood, Violin, Song, Bhajan, Guitar Duet (in case more artists, can start by 8 once people are in the hall)
11:00 PM – 12:00 PM	Kavi Sammelan, Songs, Hasya, dance



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**Saturday, August 27, 2016 (Day 2)**

<b>8:00 AM – 6:00 PM</b>	<b>Registration</b>
7:00AM – 8:00 AM	Yoga by Arun Tiwari
7:30 AM – 8:00 AM	Bhajans by LS Dube and Tabla by Abhay Dube
8:00 AM – 9:00 AM	Breakfast
<b>9:00 AM – 9:15 AM</b>	Welcome with Vedic Mantras, Lamp Lighting, Brahma Vandana (Inauguration of the Convention)
9:15 AM - 9:25 AM	Welcome by Sanjay K. Pandey, Convention Director
9:25 AM - 9:35 AM	Remarks by Shrikant Mishra, President of GBC-(BOT Chair Shiva Bajpai)
9:35 AM – 9:45 AM	Welcome Remarks by Keshav Shukla, President of BSNA
9:45 AM - 10:15 AM	Keynote Speech by Shri Vibhuti Jha, Introduction by Abhay Dube



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**Saturday, August 27, 2016 (Day 2)**

<b>12:30- PM – 2:00 PM</b>	<b>Lunch Break and Family Introduction</b>
<b>2:00- PM – 3:00 PM</b>	<b>Health, Yoga and Dharma Management</b> Vipin Chaturvedi-From Ayurveda to the Supreme Yoga and every thing in between Minu Razdan Diabetes: Role of Ayurveda in Modern Medicine Kalyani Tripathi: "Overview of Yoga Therapy for Common Medical Conditions".
<b>3:00- PM- 3:30 PM</b>	<b>Coffee/Tea Break</b>
<b>3-30 PM - 4:30 PM</b>	<b>Business and IT Forum</b> Sarvajna Dwivedi: From Varanasi to Valley (3:00-3:20) Ved Pathak: Wall street 101 (3:20-3:40) Nishith Chaubey and John Chatlani: Wireless trends, past and future (3:40-4:00)
<b>4-30 PM - 5:00 PM</b>	<b>Coffee/Tea Break</b>



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**Saturday, August 27, 2016 (Day 2)**

<b>10:15 AM – 10:45 AM</b>	Guest Speech by Acharya Shri Roop chandraji Maharaj
<b>10:45 AM – 11:30 AM</b>	<b>Panel Discussion</b> Frankly Speaking: A Youth-Seniors Conversation on Dharmic Issues Participants: Abhay Dube, Rashi Mishra, Vipin Chaturvedi, Vibhuti Jha, Dwijendra Tiwari, Vinod Mishra (more to come)
<b>11:30 AM – 12:30 AM</b>	<b>Speech on General Topics</b> Lalan Mishra : Ancient Yoga (11:30-11:50) Sen Pathak: Vedic Dharma and Human Happiness (11:50-12:10) Sukrit Mukherjee-A Scientific look at some Indian values (12:10-12:30)
<b>11:30 AM - 12:30 PM</b>	<b>Youth Programs (break out session)</b> -Jeopardy, Ice-breakers, etc. (youth presentation, <i>Coordinators: Abhay Dube, Vineet Pandey, Rahul Pandey, Nitin Chatlani, Arya Mishra, Nish Chatlani, Sampurna Dube, Anjali Sharma, Varun and Som Chaturvedi, Eshaan Pathak, Shauna Birly, Aseem and Sonal Tiwary, Shivangi and Shefali Chaubey, Rashi and Ridhi Mishra, Saurabh Pandey</i>



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**Saturday, August 27, 2016 (Day 2)**

5:00 PM - 6:00 PM	<b>Youth and Senior interactive Forum</b> Varun Chaturvedi-Neuro Economics (?) -10 min Nitin Chatlani-Internet of things (IoT)-10 min Aryan Pandey-Brahmanic values-10 min Ajay Pandey-Review of matrimonial efforts on behalf of BSNA- 10 min Name#1 -10 min Name#2- 10 min
6:00 PM - 6:30 PM	Break
6:30 PM – 8:30 PM	Dinner ( <i>remind people to have dinner by 7:30 since we gave extra time to accommodate convenience</i> )
7:30 PM - 12:30 PM	Cultural Program, Local Talents <b>Invited Guest Artist - Pt. Girish Chatterjee</b>



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**Sunday, August 28, 2016 (Day 3)**

6:30 AM - 7:30 AM	Yoga
7:30 AM - 8:30 AM	Bhajans - Sanjay Joshi/Tabla Abhay Dube or Sukrit Mukherjee
8:00 AM - 9:00 AM	Breakfast
9:00 AM - 10:00 AM	<u>General Body Meeting</u> – EC Report/Constitution Amendment: Chair: Keshav Shukla, President of BSNA, Chair of CAC and for BOT Chairman S. Bajpai: Shrikant Mishra All EC Members: Lakshmi Shankar Dube, Gopal Chaturvedi, Sanjay Pandey, Ashok Sarswat, Abha Dwivedi, Neeru Birly, Sukrit Mukherjee, Satish Dubey
10:00 AM – 11:30 AM	Shashikiran Vaze (Mumbai, India); Vastushastra -A perfect result oriented Vedic Science (15 min), Dwijendra Tiwari-Global Dharma in Bharat - plans and policies that sustain and project growth (15 min), Speakers/ Indian Delegates.
11:30 AM - 12:30 AM	Award Ceremony, Youth recognition, etc.
12:30 PM - 2:00 PM	Lunch
2:00 PM	Vote of Thanks and Adjournment



Established September 1994

# Brahman Samaj of North America

A Not-For-Profit Organization

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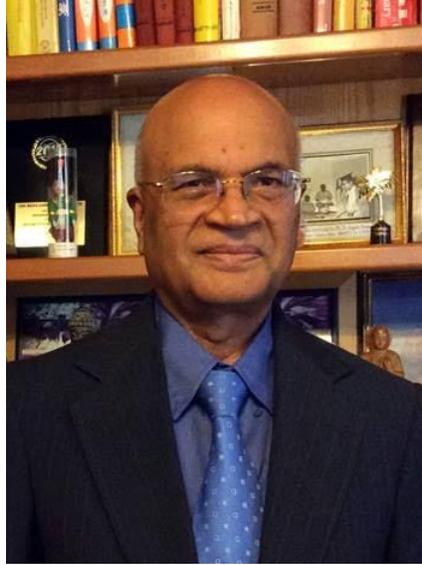
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## Message from the President of BSNA



Dear Brahman Families and Friends,

It is my great honor and pleasure to welcome all the delegates to the joint 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Convention of Brahman Samaj of North America (BSNA) and 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of Global Brahman Confederation (GBC) at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in San Diego, California, from Aug 26 - 28, 2016. The theme of this year convention is: **“Reclaiming Dharma Through Dharmic Studies and Dharmic Actions”**, which is very appropriate in the modern age to both youth and adults to lead their professional, social and family lives following spirituality, Vedic values, culture and heritage.

I am most grateful to the selfless volunteers of the Convention Committee including both youth and adults for their outstanding efforts and hard work under the Convention Director Dr. Sanjay Pandey and Mrs. Archana Pandey to organize such a wonderful convention in San Diego.

I extend my gratitude to the delegates, sponsors, donors, members of Executive Committee, Chairman of Board of Trustees (BOT) of both BSNA and GBC, Dr. Shiva Bajpai, and BOT members, GBC President Dr. Shrikant Mishra and EC, senior advisors, chapter presidents and general body and their families for their continued support to BSNA, especially their selfless dedication and sponsorship to make this convention a great success. My special welcome is to the delegates of Brahman Samaj organizations of India for their active participation and support to both BSNA and GBC.

I welcome and thank our keynote speaker Mr. Vibhuti Jha, who is an articulate and engaging speaker with solid content and can help motivate both the youth and adults, and the spiritual leader His Holiness Swami Roopachandra ji Maharaj for agreeing to address the convention and grace the occasion. Also, I welcome renowned artist Pt. Girish Chatterjee for giving his wonderful performance and thank all the performers including the accomplished and talented community members, youth and children to prepare the outstanding cultural programs and related activities.

The convention provides an excellent platform and opportunity for both the adults and youth to meet, interact, network and share knowledge and experience in Vedic culture, scriptures and heritage relevant to the modern society, science and technology, healthcare and modern medicine, entrepreneurship, finance planning, business, legal affairs, senior citizenship, leadership, cheering old friends and making

new friends, matrimonial service, and many more. One of our important goals is to involve younger generation and youth to share the responsibility and make BSNA a vibrant organization to serve the entire Brahman and Hindu community. The true challenge is how to imbibe our value system in our own lives and motivate our youth to adopt our rich culture and values.

Also, as the Editor-in-Chief of the Souvenir Magazines Brahma Vani (VB) and Brahma Jyoti (VJ), I am grateful to the Editorial Board, Dr. Sen Pathak, Dr. Sanjay Pandey, Mr. Shailen Shukla, Dr. Sukrit Mukherjee and numerous volunteers for their timely submission of articles, messages and financial contributions to support the convention activities, and the BSNA member Kalpesh Rana for printing the magazine. After the convention, BV-BJ will be updated and posted online at the [www.bsna.org](http://www.bsna.org) website.

I am proud of my family members for their active support and encouragement for dedicating my time and effort to the volunteer services of BSNA and Brahmanic causes, my wife Shanti Shukla, son Gyan and daughter-in-law Sonal, younger son Shailen and daughter-in-law Sonia. We are truly blessed to have three beautiful and loving granddaughters Shriya, Amishi and 5 months old Simrin of whom we are very proud. The support from my close and extended families and friends from across Texas, USA and India is greatly appreciated.

Finally, I thank you all for your continued support and providing us the opportunity to serve the entire Brahman community to protect, preserve, promote and advance Brahmanic values, Vedic culture and heritage across North America and globally. Our hard working and energetic Executive Committee is continually looking for ways to strengthen our organization and to better serve the community.

As you all know the fund is one of the key issues for the success of any organization. Therefore, I request you to please extend your support to BSNA by Tan (Involvement in Activities, karmana), Man (Constructive Advice, manasa-vacha) and Dhan (Fund). May your stay at the convention be enjoyable and pleasant.

ॐ सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः । सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु मा कश्चिद् दुःखभाग्भवेत् ॥ ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

*OM sarve bhavantu sukhinah sarve santu niraamayaah, Sarve bhadraaNi pashyanttu ma kashcid duhkhabhaagbhavet. OM shaantih shaantih shaantih.* May all be happy and healthy. May all enjoy prosperity and none suffer from sorrow. OM Peace Peace Peace.

***With Best Regards***

***Dr. Keshav Shukla***

***President of BSNA***

***Professor of Subsea Engineering, Dwight Look College of Engineering***

***Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas***

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

*"Brahman Samaj of North America (BSNA), founded in 1994, is a not-for-profit, cultural, educational, religious and charitable organization approved under the Tax Exempt Code of US IRS Section 501 (c) (3), serving the needs of Brahman Community and Hindu Community at large in North America. BSNA is not a caste based organization and does not discriminate against anybody. BSNA believes in Vedic culture and aims to preserve, promote, protect and advance Brahmanic values, culture and heritage, and build a dynamic and vibrant society rooted in the eternal values of Dharma and Vedic Culture to benefit the entire Hindu society and humanity via education, learning, service, networking, exchange of ideas, and imparting knowledge to our youth and younger generation to improve the value system of the society."*

## Message from the President of Global Brahman Confederation



My Dear Brahman Bandhus, Executive Committee Members, Chair of BOT and Members, Chapter Presidents and General Body Members of BSNA and Executive Committee Members and Members of Global Brahman Confederation,

It gives me great pleasure to serve as the president of GBC. I would like to share with you the completion of another year on January 2016 by my governing body. We have made great progress on our stated manifesto since the time of my nomination and acceptance of the presidency of GBC. We had a very successful year. We had an outstanding BSNA and GBC convention in 2015 at Airport Hilton. We are going to have our 21<sup>st</sup> BSNA and 6<sup>th</sup> GBC convention in San Diego on August 26-28 2016 under the directorship of Dr. Sanjay Panday and current BSNA president, Dr. Keshav Shukla and their team. You can access the program of the convention and the entire Brahm Vani on our website: [www.bsna.org](http://www.bsna.org).

Now I want to take this time to discuss the challenges we need to overcome to reach our goals of promoting, preserving and protecting Brahmanic values. We need greater focus on networking, education, leadership, **youth involvement**, and funding. It is vital that we are all well connected through cultural, political, or professional networks to ensure inclusiveness amongst our community members. Since education is the foundation of any organization, we should establish study programs, seminars, Sanskrit and Vedic literacy missions to enhance Brahman/Vedic/Scriptural knowledge. Creating Community Centre for Brahmans will also aid in this endeavor. We need greater leaders to help lead these initiatives. Therefore, leadership enhancement programs for both volunteers and professionals are necessary. More importantly, these programs should promote Brahman youth involvement at the global level. We need to make sure that the younger generation is prepared to carry on the teachings and values of the Brahm community. Brahmans must take up again intellectual, spiritual, cultural, economic and socio-political leadership in India and across the globe. However, to carry out all the mentioned tasks, we need funding. With the help of your contributions, we can help fund these programs.

I want personally thank Abhay Dubey who has taken leadership for the youth and Sonal Tiwari who will be involved in youth activities.

Lastly, I want to urge all the participants from different parts of USA, Canada and other countries, particularly contingents from India, to work collectively to promote, preserve and protect Brahmanic values

and help all Brahmans become capable of achieving their outstanding status in the modern age. If you recall my keynote speech during 2012 convention in LA, "Strategic Adaptation of Global Brahmanic Values," there are many tasks that have not yet been accomplished. We should work collectively to achieve those stated goals and objectives. I can assure you that with your help we can and will be able to work on these achievable goals, "Jai Parashuram." I look forward to seeing everyone at the next annual convention.

Sincerely,

**Shri Kant Mishra**

***Past President of BSNA and current President of Global Brahman Confederation***

***MD MS ABMS FAN FNAF, FANA Professor of Neurology Keck School of Medicine of University of Southern California, Clinical Professor of Neurology David Geffen School of Medicine UCLA***

***Director of Neuromuscular Program VA GLA Health Care System and Olive View UCLA Medical Center***



## Message from the Chairman of Board of Trustees of BSNA



Dear BSNA and GBC Family,

It is my pleasure to welcome you in San Diego, CA, to participate in the joint 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Convention of BSNA and 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of GBC.

I request all the Brahmans from different parts of USA, Canada and other countries including India, to work collectively to promote, preserve, protect and advance Brahmanic values and help all Brahmans become capable of achieving their outstanding status in the modern age

The Organizing Committee under the leadership of Dr. Sanjay Pandey has done an outstanding job in preparing for a successful convention. I extend my best wishes to each and every member of the organizing committee and volunteers who had worked tirelessly to make this convention a success. I extend my thanks to the Executive Committee headed by Dr. Keshav Shukla and Board of Trustees, BSNA Members and GBC President Dr. Shrikant Mishra who have wholeheartedly supported the convention.

**Sincerely,**

Prof. Shiva G. Bajpai, Ph.D. (SOAS, London)

Chairman of Board of Trustees of BSNA

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## Message from the Convention Director



*“Ashtadasha puraneshu Vyasaya vachanam dwayam; Paropkarah punyaya, Papaya parapeedinam”*

-Vedavyasa’s summary of 18 Puranas

*“Parhit saris dharam nahi bhai, parpida sam nahi adhmahi”*

-Goswami Tulsidas’s Ramcharitmanas

*In the name of religion, there is no better dharmic activity as good as helping others. There is no worse sinful activity as hurting others.*

Dear BSNA Family and Friends,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you all to the 21<sup>st</sup> BSNA and 6<sup>th</sup> GBC Convention in San Diego, California. It is an exciting time for the organization as we continue to grow and adapt to new opportunities, challenges and ideas. This convention provides an exciting and vibrant platform to bring together both the young and old in order to inspire our members to connect over their life experiences.

It is a distinct honor for me to be this year’s Convention Director in San Diego, the first time my city has hosted the convention since BSNA’s 1994 inception. The San Diego chapter has been recently rejuvenated with the inclusion of several families; their continued support has made this convention possible. I sincerely appreciate their generosity in hosting pre-convention preparatory meetings at their homes and providing great suggestions to improve our convention.

At this convention you can expect a gathering of outstanding people from all walks of life –prominent speakers, saints, businessman, scientists, doctors, engineers, a lively youth panel and our speaker on the topic of “Vastu Shastra. As a result of our diverse members, this year’s Convention will feature a wide array of topics. This year’s theme is “Reclaiming Dharma through Dharmic Studies and Dharmic Actions”, and I hope we can explore this idea further during the course of the convention.

I am extremely thankful and indebted to those who helped in making this convention a reality. My sincere thanks to our immediate past President Dr. Shrikant Mishra and our present President Dr. Keshav Shukla for their selfless service to the organization. I am deeply thankful to Shri Gopal Chaturvedi and his wife Archana Chaturvedi for all their hard work in rallying our Los Angeles group. In addition, I would like to thank members of the Executive Committee, Board of Trustees, donors, sponsors, and friends. I would like to extend a special note of thanks to Abhay Shankar Dube for his great efforts in suggesting the theme for this year’s convention as well as being the link to our keynote speaker, Vibhuti Jha. In addition, the tireless efforts of Sukrit Mukherjee in coordinating several convention related matters such as designing the flyers and banners as well as keeping our bsna.org updated is greatly appreciated. I am also truly thankful to all the volunteers who have extended their time and efforts for a successful convention. Last

but not least, I am also grateful to my wife Archana Pandey and my two sons, Vineet and Rahul, for their continued support during the preparation of the convention.

On behalf of all those in attendance, I would like to also welcome this year's Keynote Speaker, Shri Vibhuti Jha, and our Guest of Honor, Poojya Shri Roop Chandra ji Maharaj.

I welcome the opportunity to host you all to this year's convention in San Diego. Please feel free to direct any feedback or concerns to my contact information located below.

Sincerely,

Dr Sanjay K. Pandey  
Convention Director and Vice President of BSNA  
Mobile: 760-583-3284 | Email: [rsvpandey@gmail.com](mailto:rsvpandey@gmail.com)



## Message from the Former Convention Director



Dear Brahman Bandhus:

It is a pleasure and a matter of pride that the Brahman Samaj of North America (BSNA) is holding its 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Convention this year in the scenic San Diego Area.

I congratulate and thank Dr. Sanjay Pandey, Convention Director, Dr. Keshav Shukla, President of BSNA, Dr. Shrikant Mishra, President of Global Brahman Confederation (GBC) and Dr. Sukrit Mukherjee, Chief Technology Officer, all others who have helped and wish the convention every success. I welcome all the participants.

BSNA and GBC play a very important role in today's society. The theme of the Convention is very relevant. The Brahman community for centuries has been the pillars and theologians of our ancient culture, shaping the society as it evolved by propagating Dharm, living an exemplary Dharmic life. Vidya or education to teach the Dharm so everyone lived in harmony in the true sense was taught by the Rishis and the Brahmans. The devotion and simplicity of a Brahman over the ages has been exemplified in history and in fables. Brahman is not just one belonging to a caste or creed, Brahman is one who is a visionary who has the qualities of a good human being with self-knowledge. In fables the Brahman is always introduced as, "Once upon a time there was a poor Brahman". This was such because the Brahman was not interested in material benefits but he cared for the intellectual contribution to the societies for ages. Brahmans and sages have been instrumental in building civilizations, kingdoms and temples throughout the ancient history, an example being the Angkor Wat in Cambodia, designed and built by the Hindu Sage Kaundinya.

Today we see them in all professions and trades, a symbol of change and tenacity. The values and teachings of Dharma are timeless and they add to the development of an individual with an inner clarity, beyond the pettiness and human frailties. Today our younger generation will carry the torch of the values of a civil society taught by Brahmans if we have open platforms like this convention and show the relevant values to today's world. The wisdom of so many assembled here at the convention to pass on the Dharmic values as relevant today to generations is laudable.

I urge all of the participants to continue to do so in the organization and to get your family and friends involved for future activities and conventions. Again I wish the convention success and I congratulate everyone involved for their efforts and commitment.

Thank you.

KV Kumar

July 31, 2016

## In Search of the Science behind Religious Traditions

Dr. Sukrit Mukherjee



The relationship between religious traditions and science has been a subject of study since ancient time that have been driven by scholars, researchers, and others from time to time. Perspectives from different geographical regions, cultures and historical epochs are diverse, with some characterizing the relationship as one of conflict, others describing it as one of harmony, and others proposing little interaction.

If we try to dig deeper, we will see that science recognizes reason, induction, and proof, while religions incorporate disclosure, confidence and holiness whilst likewise recognizing philosophical and powerful clarifications as to the investigation of the Universe. Neither science nor religion are constant, immortal, or static in light of the fact that both are complex social and cultural endeavors that have changed through time across languages and cultures. This has been suggested by Mikael Stenmark in his book 'How to Relate Science and Religion: A Multidimensional Model' [1] Most experimental and specialized advancements before the scientific revolution were accomplished by social orders sorted out by religious customs.

In this context Hinduism has verifiably grasped reason and observation, holding that science brings legitimate knowledge of the world and thus it is probably based on that idea that our ancestors had formulated our religious traditions that have deep rooted scientific basis. Let's take a look into some of our religious traditions and the hidden significance behind them.

### ***Should we throw coins into rivers or holy water:***

For years it has been a practice to throw coins into rivers or at water reservoirs and it has been said to be way to brings Good Luck. Now if we try to divulge into the scientific perspective we come to see that the scriptures that has first reference of such thing was written during early Vedic period that started from 1500 BCE which was during Indian Bronze Age [2] and was well before Iron Age started in India (probably around 1200 BCE onwards). During those days, most of the currency (not only currency but also regular utensils) used to be made of copper. Copper is an essential trace mineral present in all body tissues. According to a recent research publication by U.S. National Library of Medicine [3], human need copper in their diets. The metal is an essential trace mineral, crucial for forming red blood cells. The research also suggests that if touch surfaces are made with copper alloys, the reduced transmission of disease-causing organisms can reduce patient infections in hospital intensive care units (ICU) by as much as 58% [4]. Now it is easy to

see that based on experimental proof our ancestors postulated that storing water in pots made of copper and copper alloy is good practice for purification of water. Throwing copper coins into the holy rivers was one of the ways our fore-fathers made to ensure that we consume infection free water, as rivers were the primary source of drinking water. Making it a custom ensured that all of us follow the practice. If coins remain in rivers for a long time, then it becomes beneficial for those who drink it. However, this may no longer be the practice of our generation as do not consume river water any more.

### ***Should women really wear silk sarees during religious festivals:***

This has become a fundamental practice for women to wear silk sarees during religious festival. While trying to make sense of this practice we need to analyze what silk clothes are. Silk clothes have the ability to draw in and store electro-magnetic energy [5]. With the friction between the body and the silk garments, electric energy is created, which gives rise to electro static attraction. According to scriptures, this energy would act on the mind of the devotee. It is also said that the vibrations, which are generated while worshipping, are also stored by wearing the silk clothes. The external clothing, which prevents the loss of these vibrations, would work on the mind to sustain the much needed concentration. And in any worship, concentration is the key focus and thus the silk sarees help women to get aligned with the focus. Hence all over India, silk garments are favored amid Poojas, be it a Maharashtrian woman in Ganesh Puja, or a Bengali woman in Durga Pooja or a Gujarati woman in Laxmi Pooja amid Diwali.

### ***Should all women wear banlges:***

The tradition of wearing bangles in India started way back in ancient times. However, even today, women love to wear bangles to enhance their feminine grace and beauty with the help of bangles that are available in various colors and models. The word bangle has been derived from the hindi word Bangri or Bangali, which in Sanskrit means “The ornament which adorns the arm”. The system of wearing bangles originated based on a scientific requirement. In Ancient days men used to go out and work in farms and forests which involves lot of muscle work, while women used to do all the household work. Though house hold involves lot of work but compared to men’s work out in the field it’s kind of small. Since most of the women in ancient India used to sit at home and were not exposed to much physical work, their blood pressure used to increase resulting in impatience. Now the wrist of hand is in constant activation on any human. Also the pulse beat in this portion is mostly checked for all sorts of ailments. The Bangles used by women are normally in the wrist part of one’s hand and its constant friction increases the blood circulation level [6]. Further more, the electricity passing out through outer skin is again reverted to one’s own body because of the ring shaped bangles, which has no ends to pass the energy outside but to send it back to the body. In order to put this in control, or in a way we can say to avoid such impatience problem from occurring, women were asked to wear bangles and some other ornaments including waist belt, anklets, armllets.

We can logically conclude that our religious practices are not some hard and fast rules framed by one individual and his followers or God’s words in somebody’s dreams. All the rituals, all the practices are, in reality, well researched, studied and scientifically backed thesis which form the ways of nature to lead a good healthy life.

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**About the Author:** Being an engineer-turned-scientist by profession, the author is currently involved with research in bio-medical informatics under federally funded institution. Apart from his

profession, the author has vast training and experience with Hindu rituals with a number of publications in international journals. One of author's interests include searching for logical explanation behind every religious practices. The author's long association with his father, who was a priest of the President of India has yielded enough exposure for the author to take the Hindu Vedic rituals to a new level.

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## Bhagwan Shiva's Seven Indicators of Yoga Siddhi



### ॐ श्री गुरुभ्यो नमः

In the *Dharmic* tradition, *Bhagwan Shiva* is known as *Adi Yogi* – as in the first *Yogi*. He is credited with developing the system of *Hatha Yoga* and teaching it to his consort *Devi Parvati*. The *Shiva Samhita* is the dialogue between *Bhagwan Shiva* and *Devi Parvati* in which he teaches her the secrets of *Hatha Yoga*. As *Yoga* instructor Faye Martins accurately summarizes, the *Shiva Samhita* includes instructions on proper performance of *Yoga asanas*, *mudras*, *pranayams*, meditation, *tantric* practices as well as the finer points of abstract *Yogic* philosophy. I thought it would be beneficial for all to share one of the great gems from the *Shiva Samhita* that applies to every goal-driven aspect of life – and that is the Seven Indicators of *Yoga Siddhi*. Below you will find the original *Sanskrit* text, *Hindi* explanation, English transliteration and finally, a very brief commentary on the same.

मूलम्--फलिष्यतीति विश्वासः सिद्धेः प्रथम-  
लक्षणम्॥ द्वितीयं श्रद्धया युक्तं तृतीयं गु-  
रुपूजनम्॥ १९॥ चतुर्थं समताभावं पञ्चमे-  
न्द्रियनिग्रहम् ॥ षष्ठं च प्रमिताहारं सप्त-  
मं नैव विद्यते ॥ २० ॥

*1The Seven Indicators of Yoga Siddhi - as per Shiva Samhita (Sanskrit)*

टीका—योगसिद्धि होनेका प्रथम लक्षण यह है कि,  
उसके सिद्धिमें विश्वास हो दूसरे श्रद्धायुक्त तीसरे गुरु-  
पूजारत हो चौथे प्राणीमात्रमें समताभाव रखे पांचवें  
इन्द्रियोंका नियंत्रण रहे छठवें परिमित भोजन करे यह छः  
लक्षण योनिसिद्धिके हैं और सातवाँ नहीं है ॥१९॥२०॥

*2Basic Hindi Translation*

Phalis'yatiiti vishva'sa siddherprathama laks'an'am  
Dvitiyam' shraddhaya' yuktam'  
Trtiyam' Gurupu'janam  
Caturtho samata'bha'vo  
Paincamendriya nigraha  
S'as't'hainca pramita'ha'rah  
Saptamam' naeva vidyate

3Transliteration

Bhagwan Shiva explains to Devi Parvati that there are seven indicators of *Yoga Siddhi*:

- 1) One must have a clear and defined *Laksha* (goal/ambition)
- 2) One must have *Shraddha* (reverence) for his/her ideology
- 3) One must perform *Guru puja* (prayer to the spiritual master who guides one from the darkness of ignorance to the vibrant light of knowledge)
- 4) One must keep the mind in equilibrium a not suffer from inferiority or superiority complexes. In other words, hopelessness in defeat or arrogance in victory should be avoided.
- 5) One must have self-restraint (control of the senses)
- 6) One must have a balanced diet. Nourishment should be provided to one's body, mind and *Atma*. A *Sattvic* diet is recommended by most *Siddhas*
- 7) As for the seventh indicator, there is no seventh indicator

As one can clearly see, *Bhagwan Shiva* also has a great sense of humour (Re: The seventh indicator). The applicability of *Bhagwan Shiva's* seven indicators is rather evident. For example, a musician who wishes to achieve name and fame can only do so if the seven indicators are present in his/her daily practice. In the same way, a sprinter cannot become an Olympic Gold Medalist without the same discipline. Even a successful tech *Guru* like Steve Jobs or Sundar Pichai have demonstrated the same. You have just been introduced to one small passage from *Shiva Samhita*. Imagine how much more one can attain from and benefit by reading and applying all that is available in the original source material.

Yours in *Dharma*,

अभिवादये - Angirasa, Barhaspatya, Bharadvaja Tryarisheya, Pravaranvita

Bharadvaja gotrah,

Katyayana sutrah,

Yajuhshaakhaadhyaayi,

Shri AbhayaShankara Dube Sharmaa Naama aham asmi bhoh

(Toronto, 2016)

## Our Hindu Values that Transcend Time

By Mihir Pandya

What does it mean to be a Hindu? Many Hindu youth - and even adults, are confronted by this question each and every day. It is difficult, especially living in the Western world where many outsiders think of our religion simply as one with “many many Gods with many many heads and arms” or “extremely ritualistic” - to understand what it means to be a Hindu. Does it just mean to go to *Bhagavan* in the morning before going to school or work and to do *pranam* with a restless and weary mind? Does it mean to quickly go to *Mandir* right before going out to dinner? Does it mean to attend weekly *pujas* at a friend’s house where you spend most the time socializing? This is not what it means to be a Hindu - and unfortunately, after years and years of low-engagement with our religion, these mediocre efforts at “being Hindu” have become the norm. When we do not know what it truly means to be a Hindu, not only do Western generalizations and stereotypes on our religion become true, but we also do injustice to our magnificent *Sanatana Dharma* whose values transcend time and space.

Ok, so maybe we are not being “true Hindus” in our daily lives, but to be fair, what *does* it mean to be a Hindu? Well, of course, not even a 500-page article could truly explain that, because our *Sanatana Dharma*, or our Hindu Culture, is one of the oldest religions on Earth, and its vastness is incomprehensible to any of us, regardless of how much we study or know. According to Swami Tejomayananda in [Hindu Culture An Introduction](#), *Sanatana Dharma* really means “the eternal, universal values to be followed by all people in life, irrespective of nationality, age, profession, or station” - and that is why our Hindu Culture is known as *Sanatana Dharma*, because it prescribes these eternal and timeless values which we must integrate into our lives. Three of the eternal and timeless values that are regarded as the “foundations” of our *Sanatana Dharma* are Satyam (truthfulness), Brahmacharya (self-control), Ahimsa (non-violence). You may recognize these terms, or you may not - but they are commonly known by the way Mahatma Gandhiji integrated them into his life, and was walking proof of these values at work.

Now, I know what you are thinking. You are most likely confused or unsure what you just read - and possibly mad at this presumptuous teen author who seems to be a know-it-all. I assure you, I am not, and this knowledge is not of my creation or of my thought - these ideas and questions are ones that the greatest spiritual masters have raised years and years before you and I, and what they teach us are the real Hindu values that transcend time and space.

These components of *Dharma* may sound like foreign ideas, but they really are simple. Let us start Satyam, or truth. At the very simplest level, and a very important level nonetheless, the idea of truth means that we should speak the truth at all times. We should not hide information, be deceptive, or lie to any and every person that we meet. No, telling the truth does not mean we should not have a filter. We learn from *Hanumanji* from the *Ramayana* about the value of *vakpatutvam*, eloquence of speech - when to speak, where to speak, what to speak, how to

Speak, and how much to speak. Note that this does not mean do not speak, or lie, but rather it means that what you say should always be truthful, yes, but there is a correct way to deliver. We can only be truthful on the outside if we are truthful within - being true to ourselves. Of course, we want to hold the highest standards we can for ourselves (as values, not materialist goals), and staying true to who we are in the face of adversity and improving ourselves with the *help* of those meant to help us in life – the scriptures, our Gurus, parents (at any age), teachers, other family, friends, and others in that order.

The next component is Brahmacharya, or self-control. Thinking about Brahmacharya, a quote by Swami Chinmayananda comes to mind, “Not to do what you feel like doing is freedom.” This is one powerful quote - but it must be taken in the right context. First off, this does not mean to resent nor suppress good action; and by “good” I mean action selfless action that is not desire-prompted. This quote discusses the idea that “not to do what we feel like doing” - winning control over our own mind, over the pleasures and objects of the world, “is freedom” as we have become masters of our own mind. Self-control is vital not just because it prevents us from becoming slaves to our senses and objects of the world, but more importantly because we gain mastery and control over our own mind, and with that, we can rise above the ups and downs of the world that our minds ruthlessly chain us to, imposing our happiness on objects of the world.

The last of the three components of *Dharma* and most known is *ahimsa*. As many of you may be aware, *ahimsa* means nonviolence. Now, there are two parts to *ahimsa* in regards in Hinduism. First, there is the widely familiar concept of vegetarianism. As Hindus we *must* embrace the concept of vegetarianism. We cannot call ourselves Hindu if we do not obey this ideal. Why, you may ask? Part of what we believe in as Hindus is that there is one, omnipotent, causeless cause; a supreme reality, that constitutes the entire universe, called *Brahman*. This divine power is in you, it is in I, it is in that chicken and its chicks, it is in that cow, it is in the trees, the sky, that book you really love and that one that you do not. It is the known, it is in the unknown. It is the *only* reality. Do not think of *Brahman* as some sort of God or force that is solely restricted to the Hindu religion, but rather an ultimate, all-pervading force that supersedes all differences and divisions within the known world. Now, if this divine force is in a chicken, or a cow, or a pig, how can we have the audacity to slaughter that animal for our personal pleasure? If what has given life to the animal, is the same source that has given life to me; we both have the same divinity within us, and therefore it is not sanctioned in any way to kill that animal. The second part of this concept of *ahimsa* is integrating the concept of non-violence into our life; beyond vegetarianism and what we eat. As stated in by Swami Chinmayananda, in Self-Unfoldment, “the principle of non-injury (*ahimsa*) is: ‘In your mind, don’t injure others.’” Most often violence and injury does not express at the physical level, but rather as negative and harmful thoughts in the mind. The way we live, not just what we eat (which is just as important) determines if we are living non-violently. We must resist aggression and negativity, even in its most subtlest of forms, as it appears in our mind - and become a beacon of love and bliss, as Swamiji says again in Self-Unfoldment, “let our hearts flow out in love and kindness to all, wishing everyone welfare.” Living non-violently, including the

essential, and I mean *essential*, concept of vegetarianism, will not only change our outlook and attitude on life, but also those around us.

So after reading through, you are either very angry that I went to the extent that I did, or you are curious by some of the concepts that were mentioned. I apologize sincerely if I left you offended, but it is not me, it is this knowledge that is omnipotent and all-powerful - often times we tend to be frustrated at that which points out our faults. Look, I am not anywhere near perfect; none of us are; we are just blessed that our *Sanatana Dharma* provides us with the guidance needed to navigate through the turbulent waters of life and at the very least, allow us to be good people.

\*If after reading this, you have more questions or you sparked an interest on the topic, please refer to these books that I cited in the article and consulted throughout the writing process:

Hindu Culture An Introduction, Swami Tejomayananda - A book published based on a series of lectures given by Swami Tejomayananda about our *Sanatana Dharma* from the caste system, to vegetarianism, to the purpose and symbolism of *puja* and rituals, to the role of Hindu Women in our society.

Self-Unfoldment, Swami Chinmayananda - Arguably one of the most powerful and influential books written by Swami Chinmayananda, discussing our true nature and the eternal happiness that we can achieve; essentially a “*Vedantic Philosophy 101*” explaining the greatest teachings from our *Sanatana Dharma* in a common-sense, easy-to-understand manner.

Vedanta: Swami Chinmayananda His Words, His Legacy, by the Chinmaya Mission Mananam Team - A book published by the Chinmaya Mananam Team for the Chinmaya Birth Centenary Celebrations about a fictional character named Maya who meets Swami Chinmayananda and learns about the essential *Vedantic* philosophy - at the same time, Swami Chinmayananda’s work with establishing institutes and centers across the globe for teaching *Vedanta*, and his legacy.

## The Point of No Return

By Som Chaturvedi & Varun Chaturvedi

San Diego, California, USA

In the course of human existence, many individuals, known in our western society as “enlightened despots,” have pondered upon the root of our misery and suffering. They have aimlessly searched around the world for this answer, and in the process, have created an illusionary sense of false hope in the form of baseless religions built upon the foundations of mental concoctions. The crux of their very ideologies entails gaping holes full of contradictions, to which their followers blindly follow; the hypocrisy of such institutions have allowed for the world to fall in terms of spiritual progress, and the void in knowledge has led people, especially in the western world, to succumb to a degree of self-autonomy, as well as self-satisfaction. The masses are so preoccupied trying to please their senses that they forget who they are, and forget what the purpose of human existence is really about. Unfortunately, this ignorant and parochial mindset is slowly manifesting itself within our motherland, India. In the effort of advancing and developing into a powerful and influential nation, many aspects of India are changing – and that too with negative ramifications. In our humble opinion, the despicable and ill-conceived obsession with “Bollywood” occurring presently is emblematic of said materialism. As both of us see the regression of humanity to an almost animalistic state, we refer to *Srimad Bhagavatam* and the *Bhagavad Gita* for understanding. Raised in a *Brijwasi* family, we were taught that teachings of *Krishna* in said texts are the basis for understanding. Only by reading the spiritual texts, and learning through a bona fide spiritual master can one attain a minute understanding of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, or the ultimate truth. The original institution of the *Varnasrama System* in ancient India is a necessity, for it teaches all levels of people the duties of every entity, and describes how such a system is based on spiritual progress. Thus, we need to educate the youth about our spiritual duty if we are to progress materially. In the *Srimad Bhagavatam*, Canto 7, Chapter 11, Narada Muni describes in great detail as to what the prescribed duty of a *Brahman* should be. This entails the “control of the mind, control of the senses, austerity and penance, cleanliness, satisfaction, forgiveness...and complete surrender to the Supreme Personality of Godhead” (text 21). Furthermore, the three mandatory occupational duties of a *Brahman* include “worship of deity, study of the *Vedas*, and giving of charity” (text 14). However, in the age of *Kali-Yuga*, even so called “*Brahmans*” do not behave appropriately, and do not follow the rules and regulations given by our *Shastras*. Only by name are they *Brahman*, but their activities of meat eating, drinking, gambling, and overall interest in material advancement in place of spirituality yields the character of a lower person, or *Sudra*. Therefore, what is the solution to such an ailing problem within our

own enlightened society? We refer to the *Chaitanya Charitamrita*, the guide for living a devotee's life. According to *Adi-lila*, Chapter 17 Verse 24, Krishna is telling us:

*"Harer nama harer nama harer namaiva kevalam kalau nasty eva nasty evanasty eva gatir anyatha"*

"In this age of quarrel and hypocrisy the only means of deliverance is chanting of the holy name of the lord. There is no other way."

The formation of this *Brahman Samaj* is a crucial way of retaining our *Sanskara* and *Vedic* values. But we must remember to continuously serve our eternal father, lest we forget the truth. We must take advantage of the knowledge handed down to us, and surrender to Krishna with our heart. We must improve and understand ourselves before correcting the world. For in order to break this cycle of birth and death, all of us must make a collective effort in devoting as much time as possible for Him. We ought to refer to the one of the greatest devotees, *Prahlad Maharaj*, who states that "The Supreme Lord is always fully satisfied. Therefore, when something is offered to Him, the offering, by the Lord's mercy, is for the benefit of the devotee, for the Lord does not need service from anyone" (Canto 7, Chapter 9, Text 10). As an aspiring *Vaishnava*, one must come to the understanding that no one is the doer other than *Krishna*; we have no power over nature or even our body. Therefore, as *Krishna* instructs *Arjun*, "...you are not entitled to the fruits of action. Never consider yourself the cause of the results of your activities, and never be attached to not doing your duty" (Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, Text 47). One might perhaps say that we have been cynical about the dynamic shift in global spirituality, especially that in India. But the concern and dire need for an establishment of *Dharma* must be institutionalized in India, as well as America. Kids who were not as fortunate as us to have the rules and regulations at hand must be instructed and devoted in order to preserve our values and principles that have lasted through the centuries. Humanity is "Crossing the Rubicon," and is going through a desolate period full of confusion. Only by chanting the *mahamantra*, and purifying ourselves, can we hope to save those around us. Namaste.

# Finding My Place: 3 things I learned from my 1<sup>st</sup> Solo Trip to India

By Vineet Pandey | *let's continue the conversation – connect w/me:* [vineet90@gmail.com](mailto:vineet90@gmail.com)

In between jobs, a choice was ahead of me: to venture through Western Europe with a friend or visit India alone. The choice was clear – well, so it seemed.

Depending on whom you asked, experiencing unexplored parts of Europe would be hands down the opportunity of a lifetime. Taste true Italian pizza? Check. Live it up in Ibiza? Sign me up. Post a picture of me back at the Eiffel Tower on Facebook? I know I'll get at least 200 Likes. However, I decided instead to use my free time to discover India. Even though I never traveled India as a tourist, some (Indian) friends of mine reacted as "that's not much of a travel trip." Fair point if and only if you had first heard my itinerary.



After an extended layover in Dubai, I visited Amritsar, Mumbai, Goa, Varanasi, and New Delhi. Here's what I learned:

## 1. Finding Comfort in Commonality

- When in California, my sense of self is associated with being Indian. Those moments when you see that random Indian in a place you didn't expect and suddenly, the place you're at feels comfortable? I had the opposite sensation occur abroad – when I saw westerners, I strangely found an immediate connection amongst the teeming sea of similarly skinned individuals. Does this have to do with my duality (i.e., brought up Indian at home and American outside)?
- ➔ Fun fact: I met someone on my **Mumbai** bike tour who lived 1 block away from my San Francisco home!

## 2. Re-establishing Familial Relationships without Facilitators

- Locked in with my proficient Hindi, I spent almost a week of my trip with family in India sans the help of my translators (i.e., my parents). I was nervous. What if I ran out of things to talk about? What if I offended someone? (for the record, both of those things happened). In reality, I felt much more integrated and felt a better sense of belonging by being accepted for who I am, instead of who I'm not. Between my Santosh Chacha leading me through the alleys of **Varanasi** on his motorcycle to getting up at 5am to watch the sunrise at the Ganges with my cousin Anshu, I gained appreciation of my family across the pond.

## 3. Spiritual Reclamation

In the spirit of this year's Convention theme, I do feel as though my trip fulfilled me on more than just a personal level:

- In **Amritsar**, I observed thousands of Sikhs flock to the Golden Temple to enable their spiritual transcendence.

- As I moved down south to **Goa**, the dominant spiritual establishments were in the form of churches as large as those found in Western countries to as small as those corner Mandirs found littered in Indian neighborhoods.
- And then finally, I went to my hometown of **Varanasi** – here, I ventured to numerous temples daily especially in light of the ongoing Navaratri festivities. As the Hindu philosophy aligns to my belief system, I obviously felt most connected to the city by the Ganges. Despite having gone to **Varanasi** numerous times, this trip was the most special to me, especially my trip to the famous Kashi Vishwanath Temple, where I observed for the first time the evening aarti – the most unique aarti I’ve ever seen in my life. In the area which couldn’t be larger than 5’ x 5’, about 8 priests were chanting in sync while another played the damaroo. The youngest of the 8 priests must’ve been in his mid-20s which is where I stand age-wise. A moment of truth dawned upon me ... what a world I live in that families continue to pass down their practice of ancient traditions to this day? I would’ve never seen a similar sight outside of India, I thought. Why isn’t spirituality as important to me as it might be to other Brahmins?
- Before I left India, I had the privilege to observe the last day of Navratri at Chhatarpur Temple, a Shakti Peeth, with my Bubbli Bua.

During my trip back to San Francisco, I felt partly relieved to miss the fast-approaching Indian summer months but more so, I felt like I left something behind.

Reflecting on my journey, I think renaming this piece to “A Place Found Me” feels much more fitting.



# General Benefits of Yoga and Meditation

## A Collection

Yoga provides both physical and spiritual benefits through meditation. Yoga is a powerful tool to make one feel better and a regular practice can offer numerous mental and physical health benefits such as improved flexibility, well-being of the body, mental clarity and stress reduction, among others. Numerous Yoga practitioners, spiritual thinkers, ancient and modern medical researchers have demonstrated the several benefits of Yoga. That has led to declare the United Nations the June 21<sup>st</sup> of each year since 2015 to be the International Yoga Day for the benefit of all human beings. Yoga encourages development of a positive self-image, as more attention is paid to nutrition and the body as a whole. Regular yoga practice is associated with less age-related weight gain.

Yoga helps shape long, lean muscles, helps improve balance as one gets older, improves in pain and **mobility**. The increased flexibility and strength can help prevent the causes of some types of back pain. Many people who have back pain spend a lot of time sitting at a computer or driving a car. That can cause tightness and spinal compression, which you can begin to address with yoga. Yoga also improves the alignment, both in and out of class, which helps prevent many other types of pain.

- **Flexibility** - The flexibility of the body decreases as we age leading to immobility and pain. Stretching of the body in a controlled way helps make it more flexible, and increases the range of motion to tight areas, enhancing flexibility in the muscles and joints including shoulders, back, hips and hamstrings, etc. Thus, Yoga can help enhance the mobility and reduce the pain.
- **Strength** - Many yoga poses require to support the weight of the body in new ways, including balancing on one leg or supporting oneself with the arms. Holding poses over the course of several breaths also builds strength. Yoga asanas use every muscle in the body, increasing strength literally from head to toe. A regular yoga practice can also relieve muscular tension throughout the whole body.
- **Stress** - The practice of yoga reduces the physical effects of stress on the body. The body responds to stress in a combination of the sympathetic nervous system and hormonal pathways activating, releasing cortisol – the stress hormone – from the adrenal glands. Cortisol is often used to measure the stress response. Yoga practice can reduce the levels of cortisol. Most yoga classes end with a relaxation pose, which further helps reduce the experience of stress. Yoga encourages you to relax, slow your breath, and focus on the present, shifting the balance from the sympathetic nervous system (or the fight-or-flight response) to the parasympathetic nervous system. The latter is calming and restorative; it lowers breathing and heart rates, decreases blood pressure, and increases blood flow to the intestines and reproductive organs. Any physical activity is good for relieving stress, and this is particularly true of yoga. Because of the concentration required, the daily troubles seem to go away during the time of Yoga. This provides a much-needed break from the stress, as well as helping to put the problems into perspective.
- **Awareness** - Performing Yoga can give an increased awareness of the body. The subtle movements to improve the body alignment increases the level of comfort in the body leading improved posture and greater self-confidence.
- **Pain** - Studies have shown that practicing yoga asanas, meditation or a combination of the two, can reduce pain arising due to cancer, multiple sclerosis, auto-immune diseases and hypertension as well as arthritis, back and neck pain and other chronic conditions.
- **Breathing** - The breathing practices of Yoga known as pranayam can be effective for reducing the stress response, improving lung function and encouraging relaxation. The pranayams emphasize slowing down and deepening the breath, which activates the body's relaxation response. By changing the pattern of breathing, one can significantly affect the body's response to stress. This is one of the most profound experience learnt from the yoga practices. The most of us take shallow breaths and don't give much thought to how we breathe. Yoga breathing exercises, focus the attention on the breath and teach us how to take deeper breaths, which benefits the entire body. Certain types of breath can also help clear the nasal passages, helpful for allergies and even calm the central nervous system, which has both physical and mental benefits.

- **Weight Management** - Experience shows that Yoga helps to support weight loss. Many teachers specialize in yoga programs to promote weight management and find that even gentle yoga practices help support weight loss without practicing the most vigorous forms of yoga to lose weight.

In addition, Yoga helps circulation by efficiently moving oxygenated blood to the body's cells and provides cardiovascular benefits by lowering resting heart rate, increasing endurance and improving oxygen uptake during exercise. The relaxation exercises of Yoga can help the circulation, especially in hands and feet. Twisting poses are thought to wring out venous blood from internal organs and allow oxygenated blood to flow in once the twist is released. Yoga also boosts levels of hemoglobin and red blood cells, which carry oxygen to the tissues, thins the blood by making platelets less sticky and by cutting the level of clot-promoting proteins in the blood. This can lead to a decrease in heart attacks and strokes since blood clots are often the cause of these killers. When you contract and stretch muscles, move organs around, and come in and out of yoga postures, you increase the drainage of lymph (a viscous fluid rich in immune cells). This helps the lymphatic system fight infection, destroy cancerous cells, and dispose of the toxic waste products of cellular functioning.

A consistent yoga practice improves depression and leads to a significant increase in serotonin levels and a decrease in the levels of monoamine oxidase (an enzyme that breaks down neurotransmitters) and cortisol. A regular practice gets you moving and burns calories, and the spiritual and emotional dimensions of your practice may encourage you to address any eating and weight problems on a deeper level. Yoga may also inspire you to become a more conscious eater.

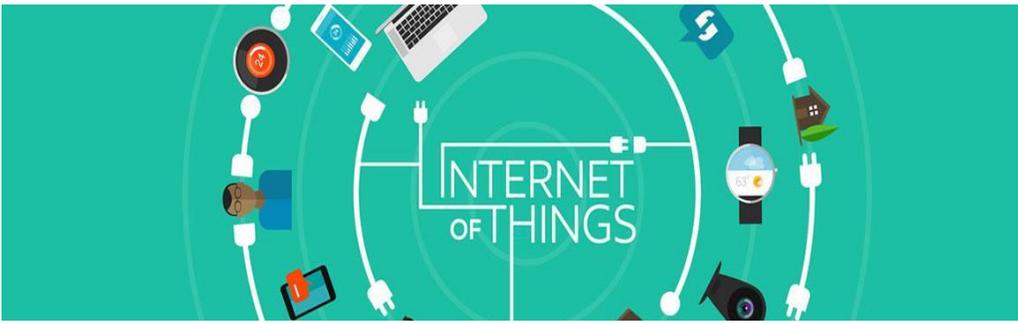
Yoga lowers blood sugar and LDL ("bad") cholesterol and boosts HDL ("good") cholesterol. In people with diabetes, yoga has been found to lower blood sugar in several ways: by lowering cortisol and adrenaline levels, encouraging weight loss, and improving sensitivity to the effects of insulin. Get your blood sugar levels down, and you decrease your risk of diabetic complications such as heart attack, kidney failure, and blindness.

Yoga can provide relief from the hustle and bustle of modern life. Restorative asana, Savasana, pranayama, and meditation encourage a turning inward of the senses, which provides downtime for the nervous system. Another by-product of a regular yoga practice, studies suggest, is better sleep—which means you'll be less tired and stressed and less likely to have accidents.

### **Mental Benefits**

The mental and spiritual benefits of Yoga are to improve concentration, coordination, reaction time and memory and help cultivate inner peace and calm through the meditation leading to develop the spiritual thinking. Concentrating so intently on what your body is doing has the effect of bringing a calmness to the mind. An important component of yoga is focusing on the present. People who practice Transcendental Meditation demonstrate the ability to solve problems and acquire and recall information better—probably because they're less distracted by their thoughts, which can play over and over like an endless tape loop.

Many of us suffer from chronic low self-esteem. If one handle this negatively—take drugs, overeat, work too hard, sleep around—one may pay the price in poorer health physically, mentally, and spiritually. Taking a positive approach of practicing yoga, one will sense, initially in brief glimpses and later in more sustained views, that one is worthwhile or, as yogic philosophy teaches, that one is a manifestation of the Divine. If one practices regularly with an intention of self-examination and betterment one can access a different side of oneself. One can experience feelings of gratitude, empathy, and forgiveness, as well as a sense that one is part of something bigger. While better health is not the goal of spirituality, it's often a by-product.



Alexa

## Go Digital or Go Home

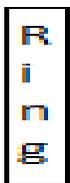
By Nitin Chatlani@ [lacostatechy.com](mailto:nitin@lacostatechy.com)

BSNA Youth San Diego, California

Remember those rotary phones? Or even a tape deck? The only reason that I know about these items are because my dad has those things packed away somewhere in a box. Let's face it even if you are set in your old ways who could even fix these items if they break? You could always pray for it to be fixed. But gone are the days of your ancient analog devices. So with that said, here are a few trends and quick tips to get you started with your new tech!

First and foremost, having a secure smart home is an essential. You could always pay top dollar for a camera or two; however, if you want the full experience in your smart home you could get someone to install the whole thing for you. With a smart home you could monitor the house, ask Alexa, your personal assistant, to make sure the lights are off at home, while you're on vacation!

Imagine a doorbell, Ring, that could allow you to see who is at the door. You could see who is outside but they can't see you. You would be able to talk to them and allow them to talk to you too. My point being, getting a smart home will improve your life and your safety. Getting a smart home can benefit your life drastically. Embrace the technology and embrace this future of things. The present is now the past and the future is now the present. Embrace it. To learn more about me or my business, La Costa Techy, please



visit my website [lacostatechy.com](http://lacostatechy.com).

### Keyboard Shortcuts

- Go to desktop= windows + D
- Copy= ctrl + C; Paste= ctrl + V
- save= ctrl + S

To use the shortcuts above in Mac os, substitute ctrl for command.

## BSNA & GBC Convention Committees 2016



### BSNA Convention Committees

#### Event Coordinators

Sanjay Pandey  
Mudita Chaubey  
Minu Razdan  
Ved Pathak  
Daisy Mishra

#### Hospitality/Reception

Vivek Pandey  
Archana Mishra  
Shayoni Avarsarala  
Rajeev Mishra  
Yogi Razdan  
Lalan Mishra

#### Registration Coordinators

Sanjay Pandey  
Daisy Mishra  
Neerja Chaturvedi  
Archana Pandey

#### Computer and Audio Visual

Sukrit Mukherjee  
Praveen Vashisht  
Nitin Chatlani  
Sanjay Joshi

#### Fund Raising

Shrikant Mishra  
Keshav Shukla  
Gopalji Chaturvedi  
Vinod Mishra  
Sanjay Pandey

#### Publications Committee

Keshavji Shukla  
Archana Pandey  
Sanjay Pandey

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Keshav Shukla  
Shrikant Mishra

#### Health Care Committee and Emergency

Vipin Chaturvedi  
Sanjay Pandey  
Minu Razdan

#### Stage management

Rajeev Mishra  
Mudita Chaubey  
Shashi Mishra

#### Souvenir & Banner

Keshav Shukla  
Sanjay Pandey  
Sukrit Mukherjee  
Rahul Pandey  
Nitin Chatlani

#### Youth Events coordinator

Abhay Dube  
Vineet Pandey  
Rashi Mishra

#### Reception and Welcome

Divya Pandey  
Bharat Avarsarala  
Ratna Chatlani  
Neerja Chaturvedi

#### Decoration

Divya Pandey  
Shashi Mishra  
Neerja Chaturvedi  
Archana Pandey

#### Overseas Invitation

Keshav Shukla, Subhash Tiwari (India)

#### Travel coordination

Ved Pathak  
Rajeev Mishra  
Rahul Pandey

#### Entertainment

Mudita Chaubey  
Shashi Mishra  
Lalan Mishra  
Sanjay Joshi  
John Chatlani

#### Food

Ratna Chatlani  
Divya Pandey  
Archana Pandey



# BRAHMAN SAMAJ OF NORTH AMERICA & GLOBAL BRAHMAN CONFEDERATION



**Theme: Reclaiming Dharma through Dharmic Studies and Dharmic Actions**

## 21st Annual Convention of BSNA and 6th Annual Convention of GBC San Diego Metropolitan Area; August 26 – 28, 2016

Joint Annual Convention to be held in Crowne Plaza, 2270 Hotel Circle North, San Diego, CA 92108, U.S.A. from Aug 26 - 28, 2016. Over 300 delegates including some foreign delegates are anticipated to attend this Convention. This Convention provides an excellent opportunity for members and youth to meet, interact, network and share their knowledge and experience of Vedic Culture and Heritage.

### Highlights

- Seminars & Networking
- Religious Talk and Presentations
- Health Care issues
- Educational Program
- Matrimonial Services for Members
- Open Discussions
- Youth Forum
- Business Development
- Kavi Sammelan
- Cultural Programs

Guest of Honor



His Holiness Poojya Acharya  
Shri Roop Chandraji Maharaj

Keynote Speaker



Vibhuti Jha



Live Entertainment by Renowned Recording Artists  
Pt. Girish Chatterjee (vocal) &  
Dr. Sukrit Mukherjee (tabla)

Contact Person

Dr. Sanjay Pandey, Convention Director & VP of BSNA, Ph: 1-760-583-3284, Email: rsvpandey@gmail.com

Dr. Keshav Shukla, President of BSNA, Ph: 1-832-265-1549, Email: drshuklak@gmail.com

Dr. Sukrit Mukherjee, Chief Technology Officer of BSNA, Ph.: 1-714-504-3493, Email: sukrit\_mukherjee@yahoo.com

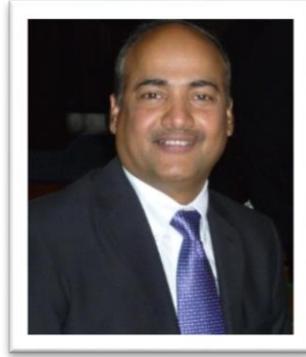
Dr. Shrikant Mishra, President of GBC, 1-310-717-5601, Email: shrimishra@msn.com

Dr. Lakshmi Shanker Dube, Vice President of BSNA (Canada); 514-685-4278; Email: dube\_ls@yahoo.com

for more info and registration @ [www.bsna.org](http://www.bsna.org)

Crowne Plaza San Diego, California,  
2270 Hotel Circle North, San Diego, CA 92108, U.S.A.  
Ph: 619-297-1101; Fax: 619-297-0555

## Message from the Editor of Brahma Bharati



Dear BSNA Family,

I am delighted to continue to serve as the Editor of Brahma Bharati (BB), BSNA's quarterly online magazine. I would like to thank all of the authors who contributed to this and prior issues—I look forward to your continued engagement in forthcoming issues.

Similar to past years, we continue to hold our annual conventions at popular destinations. This year's 21<sup>st</sup> annual convention is being held in San Diego, California from August 26th to August 28th at the Crown Plaza Hotel. The theme for this year's convention is: **Reclaiming Dharma through Dharmic Studies and Dharmic Actions**. I invite you all to join this year's convention to foster the growth, teaching, and networking amongst our noteworthy members. The convention will also provide an excellent opportunity for members and youth to share their knowledge and experience of Vedic culture and heritage as well as professional and business interests. The convention program will include various topics such as education, healthcare, social, cultural, religious, entrepreneurship, and many more. In addition, there will be various social, cultural, educational and matrimonial programs. Aside from the ongoing convention activities, San Diego offers a variety of attractions. "America's Finest City" boasts beautiful beaches, Balboa Park, Belmont amusement park, San Diego Zoo, San Diego Zoo Safari Park, Legoland, and SeaWorld San Diego. In addition, San Diego has excellence in Academic and IT institutions, and companies such as Salk Institute, UCSD, Scripps Institute, and Qualcomm are located here.

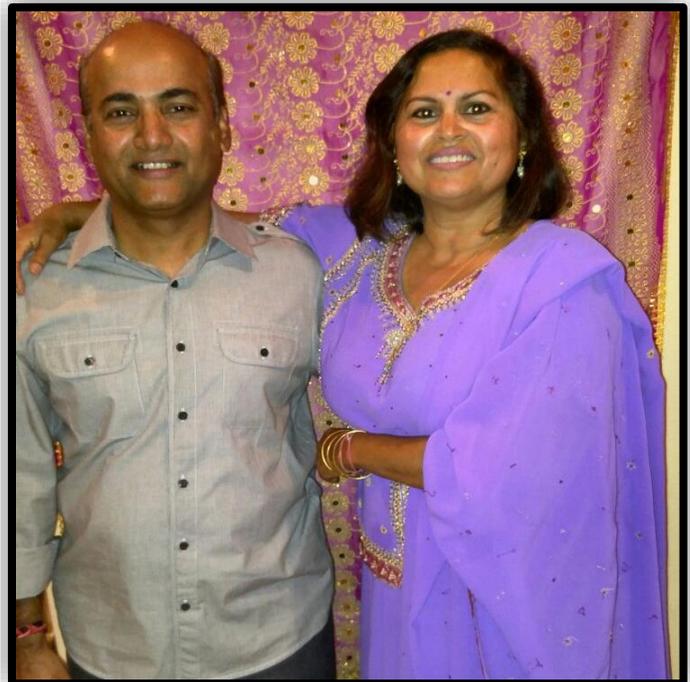
I would like to thank Dr. Keshav Shukla, my wife Archana Pandey and my two sons Vineet and Rahul for their continued support. Moreover, thanks to all those who have contributed to the several issues of BB by contributing their articles. Lastly, the BB publication would not have been possible without the support from our readers. If you have any suggestions or comments on upcoming BB magazines, please let me know.

Best Wishes,

Dr. Sanjay K. Pandey

Editor-in-Chief of Brahma Bharati  
President, San Diego Chapter

Mobile: 760-583-3284 | Email: [rsvpandey@gmail.com](mailto:rsvpandey@gmail.com)



## ***Best Wishes to Delegates of BSNA & GBC Convention***



***Gopal Chaturvedi (EVP of BSNA), Pooja, Poonam & Archana Chaturvedi, LA, CA***

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## ***Greetings to BSNA & GBC Convention Delegates***



***Dr. Sen Pathak, BOT Member of BSNA***

***Distinguished Professor of Genetics  
The University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, Houston, TX, USA***

*Wishing Everyone Good Health and Happiness*



***Kapil, Sudeep, Dr. Kavita, Dr. Vinod & Mrs. Rita Mishra, LA, CA***



BSNA & GBC Convention 2015, LA, California

## Some Highlights - 2015 BSNA & GBC Convention

### Los Angeles, CA

Los Angeles had the distinction of hosting the combined 20<sup>th</sup> convention of BSNA and 5<sup>th</sup> convention of GBC. from July 3 -5, 2015 under the leadership of Dr. Shrikant Mishra, President of BSNA and GBC, and Mr. KV Kumar, Convention Director and Ellis Island Medal Award Receptionist of 2015.



Group Picture of BSNA and GBC Officers & Members with **Shri Puthige Swami Ji**



Youth Group Interaction at the Convention 2015



Chief Guest Ed Royce, US House for Representatives from California

# Welcome to all Delegates of BSNA & GBC Convention - BSNA Texas Chapter

Reported by Dr. Keshav Shukla

Texas Chapter Meet Hosted by Nilesh Purohit, Life Member of BSNA, July, 2016





**Meet Hosted by Chetna/Sunil Upadhyay, Sugar Land, TX**

**Swami Roopchandraji Maharaj, Houston**



**Texas Chapter (Dallas) President Mr. Shri Niwas Gaur & Family, Dallas, July 2016**



**Priyanka Goswami, Youth BSNA Member, 2016, Katy, TX**



Welcome to all Delegates of BSNA & GBC Convention **BSNA Michigan Chapter**

Picnic Reported by Chapter President Dr. Ajay Pandey



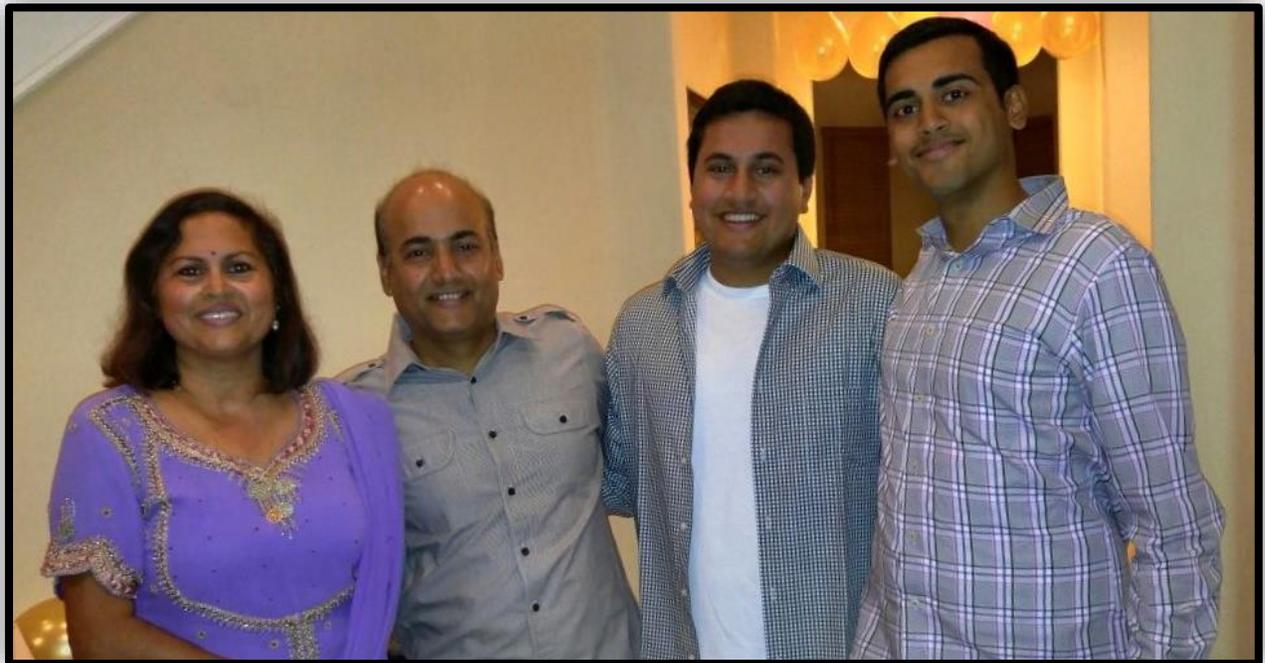
Welcome to all Delegates of BSNA & GBC Convention

**BSNA Los Angeles and San Diego Chapters**

Reported by San Diego Chapter President Dr. Sanjay Pandey



Diwali Milan (LA)



Mrs. Archana Pandey, Dr. Sanjay Pandey, Rahul and Vineet Pandey, San Diego, CA

**BSNA Los Angeles and San Diego Chapters**



**A Very Colorful Holi Celebration, San Diego, CA**



**A Very Colorful Holi Celebration, San Diego, CA**



**Dr. Sukrit Mukherjee and Family, LA, CA**

## Congratulations to Dr. Shrikant and Archana Mishra and Family, LA



Congratulations to the Newly Wedded Couple Soniya and Alok Mishra, LA, CA

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## Welcome to Delegates of BSNA & GBC Convention

Reported by Virginia Chapter President Dr. Ashok Saraswat



## Some Highlights – Global Brahman Confederation



GBC meet, New Delhi, India (2015)



GBC meet, Varanasi, India (2015)



GBC meet, New Delhi, India (2015)



GBC meet, Varanasi, India (2015)



GBC meet, New Delhi, India (2016)



GBC meet, New Delhi, India (2016)

## ***Warmest Greetings to the Delegates of BSNA & GBC Convention***

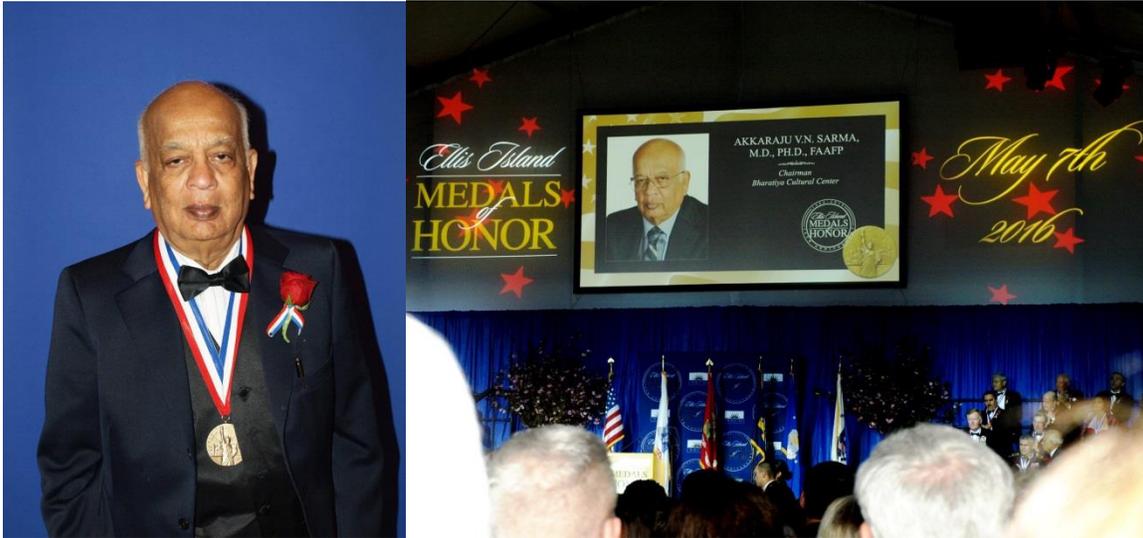


**From Left; Mr. Murli Tiwari, Dr. Ratan Tiwari and Dr. Bhoodev Tiwari, Hemet, CA**



**Dr. Bhoodev Tiwari, Daughter Venuka and Mrs. Vidhya Tiwari, Hemet, CA**

# Ellis Island Medal Award to Dr Akkaraju Sarma



BSNA is very proud of Dr Akkaraju Sarma to be the recipient of the 2016 Ellis Island Medal of Honor *Sponsored by* NATIONAL ETHNIC COALITION OF ORGANIZATIONS – NECO. The Medal was presented to him on May 7<sup>th</sup> 2016 on Ellis Island during a ceremony that included other distinguished Americans, as well as Joint Service Color Guard, the West Point Band, performers and dancers in native costume among other entertainment. BSNA extends the Heartfelt Congratulations to Dr Sarma. Dr. Akkaraju Sarma is a Life Member and Member of Board of Trustees (BOT) of BSNA. He is actively involved in Bharatiya Vidyalaya in Pennsylvaniya, USA.

## BHARATIYA VIDYALAYA

Culture

Religion

ગુજરાત	<b>Gujarati</b>
धन्यवाद	<b>Hindi</b>
ಧನ್ಯವಾದ	<b>Kannada</b>
त्वां धन्यं वदामि	<b>Sanskrit</b>
நன்றி	<b>Tamil</b>
ధన్యవాదాలు	<b>Telugu</b>

Language

**Souvenir Book**

**Bharatiya Temple, Inc.**  
 1612 County Line Road,  
 Chalfont, PA 18914  
 215-997-1181  
<http://www.b-temple.org/>

## Ramayana: The Principals of Life

By Aryan Pandey, San Diego, California, USA

An ancient literary monument that incorporates a rational perspective and approach towards life helps a person resolve infinite possible questions, unlock morals and ethics, and approach enlightenment. The Ramayana, a relic with sacred relevance not only to India, but all of humanity, includes the innumerable queries by humans, answers them with morality, principals, and philosophical beliefs. This Indian heroic epic poem, comprises of approximately 24,000 verses, is mostly written using the shloka meter and is divided into 7 books, each containing 500 chapters. It provides a narrative allegory of Rama's life and other characters who have become fundamental people in Hinduism. They also express the responsibilities of people in relationships. Overall, the Ramayana presents Hindu teachings from ancient sage Hindus with philosophical concepts which has inspired religion, beliefs, ideas, humanity, and principals of life.



Henceforth, an epic narrative, the Ramayana's textual history and formation dates back to centuries before the Mahabharata, during the Kurukshetra War as believed by Hindu religion and archaeological findings. In tradition, it belongs to the second of 4 yugas or eons, which is Treta Yuga in the Hindu chronology and is considered kavya poetry. The profound thinker and poet, Valmiki is credited for single handedly conceptualizing the Ramayana's original version known as the Srimad Valmiki Ramayana, originally written in Sanskrit. It was discovered in several thousand manuscripts, for example palm-leaf manuscript in Nepal, dating back to the 11th century CE and another in Kolkata, a 6th-century manuscript. The first and last chapters of Valmiki's Ramayana have been deliberated whether or not if he composed them because of conflicting ideas between the rest of the book. In fact, the epic poem is a smriti and because of its antiquity, some verses have been changed resulting in the confusing ideas. Subsequently, there have been innumerable amounts of retellings by multiple prudent people and researchers are continuously trying to atone these inserted phrases from retellings.

As a result, this monumental scripture has had a gargantuan effect on culture and art, influencing and changing art as humanity knows it today. It had a tremendous impact in the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia. In consequence, it sparked a tradition of works comprising of royal courts and Hindu temples. The Ramayana's popularity spread throughout Southeast Asia during the 8th century, symbolizing literature, architecture, and theatrical acts. Hence dramatic enactments of this epic poem, named Ram-Leela, occur across India and around the globe. Also, many painting have depicted the Ramayana, especially by a Malaysian artist Syed Thajudeen in 1972 who erected the epic tale on a canvas covering 9 panels with astounding proportions of 72cm x 453cm. It portrays three crucial parts in the Ramayana, which are The Abduction of Sita, Hanuman and Sita, and Hanuman Burns Lanka. Also, the Ramayana has such a humongous meaning that innumerable movies and television serials have been

produced based on it and has become performed by people all around the world. This painting is currently in the Malaysian National Visual Arts Gallery, expressing the Ramayana's significance across the globe.

Nevertheless, the prolific Ramayana's most prominent significance is religion by including a protagonist, or hero, a powerful deity praised in Hinduism. This crucial character is Rama, the seventh representation of Lord Vishnu and the eldest son to King Dasharatha of Ayodhya. For example, every year, devotees go on a toiling trek across India and Nepal, approaching and worshipping every holy site along the way! Apart from being a literary manuscript, it has permanently fused into Hinduism and its morals are practiced every day. It's so dominant in Hinduism, many believe that if one even reads or hears it, of specific verses, one can be released from all his sins and be blessed. Additionally, this book emphasizes Hindu beliefs and morals, some that were portrayed are karma, dharma, and reincarnation. For instance, reincarnation is illustrated when Vishnu decides to incarnate himself as King Dasharatha's son after he makes a sacrifice to the gods. Plus, dharma is depicted in the Ramayana when Bharata brought mortifying news that their father died and Rama needed to come back, leaving from exile as the successor. However, Rama righteously pursued his dharma and insisted that he must complete the duration of his exile. Ergo, the divine and holy Ramayana has established and elaborated Hindu principles, also spiritual beliefs kindling avid devotees, spreading Hinduism while praising it.

In the final analysis, a myriad of humans believe that the Ramayana has influenced religion, perspectives, thoughts, humanity, and life's elements, a paramount source of wisdom applicable to anyone. Its very creation established a new front in human creativity, integrity, and philosophy fabricating a preferable world. This profound book has encrypted life's questions, resolving them with scholarly wisdom. A poem longer than the Iliad and Odyssey is so colossal that it reflects ethics of the world and its culture. The outcome of it is an enlightening pathway through life as it aids in revolutionizing a person's judgement creating intelligent leaders, one being Mahatma Gandhi. It doesn't get as much credit as the Bhagavad-Gita; on the contrary, it is predominant compared to other holy books and should be considered as the luster of the Bhagavad-Gita, known as the jewel of India's spiritual wisdom. "The fragrance of the flower is never borne against the breeze; but the fragrance of human virtues diffuses itself everywhere" -Ramayana.

**A poem by the same author summarizing the Ramayana:**

Ravana, the ominous ten headed demon despised by all,

His faith was going to be pronounced by the multiple gods in the blissful hall,

For an heir, the childless King Dasharatha made a sacrifice to the gods,

Vishnu agreed to come to Earth as Rama, the king's son, to abolish Ravana and maraud,

Queen Kaikeyi came to fulfill her two wishes granted long ago when saving King Dashratha's life,

"I want Bharatha to become the king and exile Rama for fourteen years," explained Kaikeyi with strife,

"What terrible deed has Rama ever done," the king argued against her with stun,

Refusing to reply and reconsider, the grief-stricken king exiled Rama with no inflection of fun, Rama, Sita, and Lakshmana departure, crossed the Ganga River, and journeyed deep into the Dandaka Forest,

However, one day, Bharatha and his army approached viewing the place like a tourist, "Rama, our father has died, come back and rule the kingdom of Kosala," Bharatha insisted, "No," refused Rama, although wanting to go back, he followed his dharma and resisted, So, Bharatha gave him slippers which Rama wore and would be placed on the throne, Afterwards, Surpanakha, Ravana's sister, gives Rama a proposal after metamorphosed into a beautiful woman trying to prevent bemoan, Denying her offer, she assaults Sita with her 14,000 demons who is defended by Rama, Surpanakha goes to Ravana and demands him to punish Rama for his rejection to her with drama, Abruptly, a golden deer appeared that Sita loved so she sent Rama to catch it, Rama killed the deer exclaiming, "Lakshmana, Sita," consequently, Lakshmana goes to help with pit, Lakshmana drew a circle that would keep Sita safe if she stayed in it but a Brahman came thirsty, She steps out the circle and provides him water, suddenly; the person revealed his true form as Ravana capturing Sita swiftly, Jatayu attacks Ravana but dies trying to stop him, Meanwhile, Rama seeks help from Hanuman, who agrees to be his ally with a grim, Hanuman, son of the wind gods, discovers the location of Sita and gives the ring Rama gave, He sends him a message but is engaged by Agni, the fire god and is still brave, Rama constructs a bridge to Lanka and then battles Indrajit and Kumbhakarna who he kills, Indrajit returned to Ravana to announce that he has wounded all the soldiers but Hanuman revives them with magic and pills, Then Ravana appears with his 20 arms hurling 20 spears and a fierce battle begins, With a single arrow, Rama defeats Ravana and Rama returns to the throne with Sita to rule his kingdom as kingpins.

## VASTUSHASTRA – A GIFT FOR PEACEFUL LIVING

**Shashikiran Vaze** – Vastu Consultant with American Architect Mr Jeff in Houston, USA

**Shashikiran Vaze** comes from a family where in traditionally Vedic literature is studied and practiced since generations. For the past 9 generations and counting, his family has been practicing Medicine especially Ayurved, however due to his strong inclination towards engineering, he graduated as Mechanical Engineer.



Along with his other three brothers, he did extensive research in Vastushastra by reading Upanishads and Puranas for more than 2 years prior to making his profession and passion as Vastu Consultant. He has been practicing as Vastu Consultant for the past 28 years now, without any commercial advertisement. He has travelled all over the world. His remedial techniques in Vastushastra has been widely appreciated

throughout the world.

On invitation from industrialists and Businessmen, visited Mauritius more than 33 times, Dubai & Sharjah more than 7 times, Oman, Madagaskar, Seychellus, Dar-es-Salaam in Tanzania, Durban & Johannesburg in South Africa, NewZealand and this is forth visit to USA.

He is termed as Master of an Invisible Art by leading newspaper "Mauritius News" in Mauritius and he is the first person to propagate Vastu Shastra - the Vedic Science of Architecture in Mauritius. Shashikiran Vaze has also been featured in many newspapers, magazines and radio talk shows throughout the world.

And he writes:

Vastushastra - Vedic Science of structure is very much related to an Architecture. Vastushastra evolved some 5000 years ago in India, much before Feng Shui. During the Buddhist period, Buddhist monks carried the tradition of Vastu Shastra to China, where it was very developed as Fengshui with similar principles but with local interpretations and taking in to consideration geographical requirement while construing the technique.

India remained the richest and the most advanced country in the world until invaders looted its wealth and destroyed to a great extend its rich heritage of Vedic knowledge and culture. In the past, "All the buildings have been structured to orient to the cardinal point of the compass", has been documented by Archeologists. Foreign invasions and corruption of cultures left little room for the growth and practice of all Vedic Sciences including Vastu Shastra, Ayurveda and Jyotish. This is the most painful part of our history.

The word "Vastu" is derived from Sankrit verb 'vas' means 'to dwell' . Vastu means the site or structure and the word "Shastra" means the Science or knowledge or principles. Vastushastra is the Vedic knowledge or principles for construction of structure or an establishment.

Chinese Technique known as Feng Shui which consists of two words 'Feng' and 'Shui' means "Wind Direction" & "Water Body" . In short, Feng Shui is basically based on Wind Direction and Water Body. Feng Shui takes into consideration Eight directions where as Vastushastra gives importance to all TEN directions i.e Four major Cardinal directions, Four Sub-directions and two additional directions i.e. Upwards and Downwards Vastushastra is a perfect Result Oriented Science.

Vastushastra is based on Solar system of the Universe, Magnetic field of the Earth and the Cosmic rays. It is also based on the Five basic elements: Prithvi पृथ्वी (Earth), Aap आप (Water), Tej तेज (Fire or Light),

Vayu वायु ( Air ) and Akash आकाश (Space). The Vedic idea is that the whole universe has been created from these five basic elements, which are known as 'Panch Mahabhutas' पंचमहाभूत.

As one of its basic principle is Magnetic field of the Earth, naturally 10 directions come in to existence. North, South, East & West are four major cardinal directions; Northeast, Southeast, Southwest and Northwest are four Sub-directions and two additional directions are Upwards & Downwards directions. Vastushastra does take into consideration the Living Plants and Living bodies as these also make impact on the mind. Mind is focal point in Vastushastra. Our sages had realized that if the Mind is at peace, everything goes on smoothly in one's life. Naturally, the surroundings or the environment around is responsible to the status of the Mind. Environment around or the structural dwelling where in day to day human activities are involved, are required to be made in tune with Nature, taking in to consideration its visible and invisible forces.

Nature is the platform for Design or Construction of Vastushastra. It is a transcendental wisdom. Vastushastra is a science to be experienced. It is like a Magnet. The force-power contained in the magnet cannot be seen.

If the input is defective, the output will naturally be disastrous. The architectural, constructional and engineering components defined by Vastu are the inputs. The output is the effect and influence of Vastu on human being. The output is essentially represented by emotional, physical, and material aspects experienced by individuals and society-at-large.

Vedic wisdom needs no justification. The sages never revealed these principles with an approach to justify them. They gave them as their conclusions, totally unaware of the modern critical mind. Magnetic field created by Magnet has been proved so effective in curing migraine, chronic headache, joint pains, high blood pressure and many chronic diseases, then what about the permanent magnetic pull between North and South pole in which we are constantly living, breathing, walking, sleeping, working right from our birth?

The Eastern direction assumes a great significance because the Sunrays of early morning emit more light consisting particularly Ultraviolet Rays, the only reliable source of Vitamin D (Vitamin D is absorbed by the blood directly when the bare skin is exposed to sun), which is vital and less heat, hence the best. In the afternoon, sun moving towards West, grow hot emitting Infrared rays, which are detrimental to health. Thus, due to all these reasons, it is explicitly laid down in Vastu Shastra that more open space, more windows and doors fixed, more balconies and verandahas should be provided towards the East and the North side than in the South and the West side.

Genetic structure or the basic cell structure of the Living Organism being on this planet has been programmed with the cosmic movement. This results from the rotation of Earth on its axis and around the Sun, which makes the whole zodiac appear rising from the East. Therefore, we have an in built anticipation which expects the Sun, Moon and stars to rise from the east. Every day Sun rises from East and every year passes through twelve signs oscillating between tropics of Cancer and Capricorn. Different seasons are created in this way. The energy of the Sun like the path of the Sun, flows from East to West.

In Vastushastra, each of these Ten directions has specific characteristic of its own based on nature. And we should take advantage of these characteristics and design our dwelling to extract maximum benefit out of nature from its visible and invisible forces.

Vedic sages told us that the direction where East meets the North is Ishanya. ईशान्य .

Vastushastra scripture states, Ishanyam Devata Geham! This is the most auspicious direction from where the divine energy flows. Purvasyam Snan Mandiram! Only Bathroom. Agneyam Pak Sadanam! In short it states Kitchen be located in the Southeastern room of the house. Bhandagaram Uttare! Storage

Vastushastra scripture states, Akchira: shayanevidya Dakshinsukhasampad: !!

There is a scientific reason for not sleeping with legs towards South. Human body itself acts as a magnet with the head, the heaviest as North Pole. If the head is directed towards the North while sleeping, the North Pole of the Earth and that of the human body repel each other affecting the blood circulation, causing disturbed sleep, tension and other problems.

In the Vedic period, people built homes, temples and hermitages with a view to have a peaceful and harmonious living. But, in the modern world people build concrete clusters, mainly for the high rate of return.

Now-a-days, when people want to construct a house or other building, they devote more time for minute details of foundation, superstructure, comforts, look, appearance etc. without going into detailed examination as to whether such a house or building will bring them prosperity, health, wealth, wisdom and happiness in the life paving the way for progress and peaceful living or not.

No family, having Toilet in the North-east region of their place of residence will be able to prosper or do progress in life. The residents in the entire wing where toilet is located in Northeast face more or less similar type of problems in their life. This is my personal observation.

The House, Residential Flat, Office or Factory Vastu which is not arranged or constructed as per the rules or directives of Vastushastra, the owners and the occupants must face a particular type of problems depending on which aspect of his Vastu is defective. If Vastu is corrected as per the tenets of Vastushastra, prosperity is bound to take place or particular problem can be solved to a great extent and it can be experienced by family members.

Our sages and saints in India always wanted to ensure happiness and prosperity to mankind. Now-a-days we hear a lot about the importance of ecology, pollution – free environment, nature and all in big seminars and conferences. Our ancestors knew the secret of how to live in perfect harmony with nature and enjoy all that, it bestows in plenty for the positive progress of mankind.

So the rules of Vastu offer deeper insights into the laws of nature that modern science has yet to discover. It is useful to consider harmonizing or balancing the external influences involving architectural structures. Vastu Shastra considers the quality of the soil, the shape and elevations of the land, the direction placement and the number of windows and doors, the thickness and height of walls and doors. In short, not even the minutest details of building are left to chance.

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# On Hinduism

By Raga Misra

It is the third largest and the most ancient living religion in the world. In fact, the origins of Hinduism can be traced back to at least 2500 BCE.

## What is a religion?

The most common answers go something like: Religion is the belief in God, the soul and an afterlife; religion is a set of rules to regulate how people should act in the world; religion is a series of rituals and symbols that address the nature of human beings; or religion is a way of life. While all such answers are surely true, they unfortunately limit our ability to understand the true nature of religion.

## Mother of All Religions - Hinduism - A Way of Life

Now imagine a river. A river is formed when a series of streams converge to form increasingly larger streams that eventually join to form a main waterway. Hinduism can be imagined to be a large river system. Hinduism has no single source or founder, who forms the starting point or root. Instead, there are many streams, separate religious traditions, which combine to make a much larger multi-layered and complex combination of traditions. We often hear that there are 33 million Gods in Hinduism. How can such a complex mixture of traditions in India exist with so many Gods and Goddesses without a unifying root?

There is indeed a unifying root. Instead of it being a historical personality, it is a unifying idea. This idea is that there is only One Consciousness, which is really worthy of the title "God" in Hinduism. The forms are many and varied, according to the mindset of the devotees who worship this One Consciousness. Therefore, there are as many God images in this world as there are imaginations about this One Consciousness. The oldest of Hindu texts, the *Rig Veda*, gives us the simple key to understand the complexity of religious streams that comprise the river of Hinduism: *ekam sat viprah bahudha vadanti* (RV 1.164.46). This short and simple verse is profound in its implications and describes the vast and seemingly complex world of Hinduism. *Ekam* means "one." *Sat*, for lack of a better English word, is "God." *Viprah* means "the learned." *Bahudha* means "many" and *vadanti* means "they say." Thus, "The wise speak of God as One and Many."

## What is Faith?

We may break religion into two parts, namely, faith and tradition. Faith arises from the perception that life is a mystery such as the flash of lightning in the sky, distant galaxies or genes that regulate living things. The tradition is what results from this perception. The wonders and mysteries also make us aware of the negative aspects of life. We call it horror e.g. deaths, destruction and sickness etc. These horrors have a great impact on us. So we ask questions: What is life? Who am I? Why is there suffering, and so forth? Implicit within such questioning comes a faith that there can be answers to such questions. This faith takes many forms, one of which is religious faith. In other words, the origins of religious faith lay within the experience of life itself; and so long as there continues to be life, with all its beauty and mystery, and even horror, there will always be faith. Faith, translated into physical reality results in an almost infinite variety of religious expressions.

## Rituals - Ceremonies

During Vedic times, it was widely believed that rituals were critical to maintain the order of the cosmos and that sacred ceremonies helped the universe to keep working smoothly. In a sense, ceremonies are seen

as part of a deal between humans and the gods: Humans performed sacrifices and rituals, and the gods would return their favor under the form of protection and prosperity.

### **Scriptures (Holy Books)**

When we use the term "sacred writings" or "scripture," this implies written texts. In many cases, the original sacred texts were not texts at all; they were oral transmissions passed down from teacher to student through memorization. Given this fact, one could argue that what scripture actually is voice sounds and words on paper, or more likely today, digital code and marks on a computer screen. In this sense, scripture is not different from any common dialogue or piece of writing. But we know there is a world of difference between scripture and a common book. Scripture is sacred. Common books are secular. Therefore, the quality of "sacredness" creates the difference between scripture and an ordinary piece of writing.

### **The Hindu Way of Seeing Reality**

The Hindu way of seeing reality simultaneously ranges from Multiple to Oneness. When a Hindu enters a temple and sees a dozen different Deities, that person sees both diversity and oneness. God by very definition is complete and full; God is all things. This is the oneness, and yet this oneness manifests in an unlimited number of "expressions," "faces" or "personalities." These are the Gods and Goddesses of Hinduism. The forms of Vishnu, Krishna, Ganesha or of the Goddesses Lakshmi, Sarasvati and Durga are simply multiple faces of the One. This is how we see the world - simultaneous diversity and oneness. This is how the almost unlimited religious streams making up Hinduism are unified under the simple idea: "The wise speak of God as One and Many" (*ekam sat viprah bahudha vadanti*)

### **What is Veda (or Ved)?**

The word *veda* comes from the Sanskrit root *vid*, "to know." So the Vedas are literally what was known, in other words, their sacred knowledge. The sacred traditions of early Hinduism inform us that their seers, known as *rishis*, "heard" the Vedas. The early Vedic tradition is consequently called *shruti*, "what is heard." This *shruti* tradition produced the four Vedas: Rig Ved means "sacred knowledge of poems, hymns and praise, about 3500 BC old. *Sam Ved is sāmaveda*, from *sāman* "melody" plus *veda* "knowledge", Reorganized the poems of Rigveda, about 1000BC old. *Yajur Ved* consist of mantras or verses needed to perform the sacrifices or rituals of the the Vedic period. *Atharva Ved* is reiteration of earlier sacred knowledge mainly composed by rishis living in Atharvanas (forests - away from society). Because the knowledge was passed through oral traditions like recitations, singing hymns, poems, mantras, in other words by listening, these are called Shruiti Vedas. With so much knowledge and information to understand, these four Vedas were compiled into four branches known as: *Samhita*, *Brahmana*, *Aranyaka* and *Upanishad*.

All the hymns praising various Vedic Deities are compiled into Samhita (or Compilation). The Deities of the Shruti Vedas are primarily "Nature" Gods and these *Samhita* hymns were used to call upon these Deities for rain, food and other necessities of life. These hymns formed the substance of the rituals commonly used in Pujas (prayers) or Havans today. In your typical puja the pundit is trying to worship these Gods. The responsibility of detailing, defining and performing these rituals fell on people known as *Brahmans (Brahmanas)*, who describe the cosmic significance, meanings and other details of the Hindu rituals or Yagnas (Havans, i.e. prayers with fire).

The next branch of the Vedas are the *Aranyakas*. *Aranya* means forest and *aranyaka* means "in the forest." These forest works continued the theological speculations of early Hinduism, but they go beyond the rituals and start to develop the theology of the early Indians that eventually takes mature form in the *Upanishads*.

*Upnishads* are the most wellknown part of the Shruti Vedas. The *Upanishads* are the premier theological discussions of early Hinduism and they appear mainly in the form of dialogues between students and teachers asking such questions - What is salvation? What is reality? Who decides Karma? What is good or bad and so forth.

### **What is Vedanta?**

Vedanta is a form of Hindu theology based on the combined interpretations of three sacred sources: Upanishad, Bhagavad-gita, Vedanta-sutra. There are, however, three distinct classical interpretations of Vedanta based on the writings of: Shankara Acharya 788-820 CE, Ramanuja Acharya 1017-1137 AD, Madhva Acharya 1238-1317 AD. Of these three, Shankara Acharya is the most well known and so his particular interpretation of Vedanta is commonly understood to be the only Vedanta. Each of these classical interpretations of Vedanta theology has been named according to their type of interpretation. Respectively they are: Advaita Vedanta (Shankara), Vishishtha Advaita Vedanta (Ramanuja), Dvaita Vedanta (Madhva).

One interpretation of Vedanta is called Dvaita. This is depicted with two finger held up suggesting duality. According to this interpretation the nature of reality is dual, meaning that this universe is comprised of two distinct principles, namely, God and everything else. By contrast, Shankara Acharya, has an interpretation called Advaita, non-duality, which says that nature of reality is not dual, but oneness. Shankara's depiction often shows him holding only one finger up.

According to **Shankara Acharya** there is only one ultimate 'thing' in existence, namely God. This interpretation creates an obvious problem—that if everything is ultimately God, then why do we not know this? Am I God? Is my dog God? The table or banana in front of me do not seem to be God! Shankara's answer to this question is simple. Everything is God, but the reason you do not perceive this fact is because your 'seeing' ability is obscured by illusion (maya) due to ignorance. Remove this illusion through knowledge and you will perceive that all things are God.

**Ramanuja's** interpretation lies between these two interpretations. According to Ramanuja the nature of reality is a Qualified Non-duality. What is this qualification? Ramanuja says that three distinct 'things' exist in this world, namely, God, soul and matter and yet one does not exist without the other. In a certain way we might say that Ramanuja's interpretation of Vedanta is something like saying that reality is both dual and non-dual at the same time.

**Vedanta by Vivekananda** - Vedanta philosophy is Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this Divinity within by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work, or worship, or psychic control, or philosophy—by one, or more, or all of these—and be free. This is the whole of religion. Speeches, or rituals, or books, or temples, or forms, are only secondary details. Religion is the manifestation of divinity already in man. Serving man is serving God.

We all like to see and meet with God if we can. In other words, we wish to have God Realization. Hinduism says that all religions are true, and service to man (SEVA) is the most effective way of realization of God.

## Announcements

### Matrimonial Help by BSNA

BSNA provides the opportunity to Brahman Families through BSNA and GBC for introducing the potential matrimonial matches. One can start the matrimonial process by filling up the matrimonial form by clicking on the following link: [Matrimonial Form](#) on [www.bsna.org](http://www.bsna.org). For the frequently asked questions one can visit the page: [Frequently Asked Questions](#). After filling up the above form with required and optional information, one will get access to the spreadsheet within a day and notified by email. Our objective is to make the process easier and user friendly, while addressing privacy and security concerns. For additional question about “BSNA Matrimonial Initiative”, please contact:

**Dr. Ajay Pandey, Director of Matrimonial Services**, at (248) 509-4508 or  
by email: [ajaykp@yahoo.com](mailto:ajaykp@yahoo.com).

### Global Brahman Confederation (GBC), Inc.

GBC is an incorporated not-for-profit organization registered in the State of Texas, USA and approved under the USA IRS Section 501 (c) (3) as charitable social, cultural and educational organization. GBC files Tax & Public Information Report to the Secretary of State of Texas and IRS of USA annually.

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**Membership forms of BSNA and details are available at [www.bsna.org](http://www.bsna.org):**

#### **BSNA Membership**

Please send your fee donation payable to BSNA and send to the Treasurer, Mrs. Abha Dwivedi.  
(\$5 Foreign Student Annual, \$35 Annual, \$350 Life, \$1000 Benefactor, \$5000 Patron)

### Membership of GBC

#### **GBC Membership**

Payable to GBC and send check to Mr. Satish Dube (\$100 organization) – For more information contact Dr. Keshav Shukla at [drshuklak@gmail.com](mailto:drshuklak@gmail.com)

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***BSNA and GBC are not-for-profit charitable, cultural, education and religious organizations registered under US IRS Code 501 (c) (3) and their donations are tax deductible in USA.***

## OBITUARY

### Obituary: Saraswathi Ganapathy (1924-2016)

An icon - is no more - in his mortal form. But will live on. At 92, a mind as vast as the cosmos, an intellect sharper than a razor, he continued to inspire. There was not much that passed him by - philosophy, politics, medical science... He made it his business to keep abreast of everything. Having never ever bowed down to circumstances or social moors, he stood strong. One can never fathom the depths of his genius, the true grit of his personality. Much of his writing has been lost in the yellowed annals of 'The Mail' in Chennai, India. And in the other newspapers he helped launch. However, he leaves behind a handful of blogs, laboriously typed on the laptop even as his eyes were failing, between brutal dialysis sessions.



He could quote Shakespeare, Milton as the occasion ordained, or even the Rig Veda for that matter. It was all contained in that great brain of his. He never won an accolade, never won an award and did not care for any. He put his heart and soul in the newspapers he helped start. From television to radio, he covered it all. He wrote speeches for famous politicians, from Indira Gandhi, to MGR. He was a king maker, turning down political positions, finding it more entertaining to play politics instead, many a time in the 80s, parliamentary seats swinging by his whim in the background. In an era when entrepreneurship was frowned upon, he started newspapers and magazines, taking on behemoths like 'The Hindu' and 'Indian Express'. And when they failed, he moved on, effortlessly, shrugging them off as another experience down the line. He took risks, let nothing set him back. Never one to ever worry about money, he lived like a king, to his last day.

All the education that ever mattered - books strewn around - thoughts strewn around - from Dostoyevsky, Roman Polanski to Updike and History of Love - in all their glory - to be chewed upon, pondered and discussed. A bounty of thought and visions of far away lands some real, some imagined lay hanging in the air. 'We all live in bubbles' he proclaimed one day. My 5 yr old mind imagined us all in soapy kaleidoscopic bubbles as I walked carefully as to not pop them. "The world is Nothing" he said another day. It took years of rumination to get that one. He said schools were useless, grades a farce and tradition bogus. He filled our heads with existentialism, economic theories, Freud and the like while we were 'taught' grammar and historic dates at school. He taught his children to be intellectual, irreverent, bold, rebellious, carefree, and inquisitive - in an era and culture where girls especially were brought up to be complacent, normative, politically correct and in the box.

Assimilating into a new country was for him, an easy uneventful transition, not a full blown rite of passage. One would think he had lived in his adopted country all his life. And when it was time to start dialysis, 3 brutal times a week, he dealt with it with aplomb, waking up at 5, making friends with the all and sundry and fought on, head on, against it, for 8 years. In the meantime, he researched wearable dialysis gadgets, signed up for clinical trials that never happened and kept his hopes alive nevertheless. Dialysis and any of the other assorted diseases never kept him from enjoying all that life had to offer. His illnesses were mere wrinkles. He ironed them out and moved on.

His intellect carried on as usual. He wrote blogs, followed politics, lived life. In his nineties, when I informed him of the supreme court decision allowing gay marriage, and how things had changed 'since his time', he remarked " things have not changed, this is a concept as old as...and proceeded to educate me on the philosophy of Havelock Ellis. He who took up his mother's name instead of his father's in the 1940s....A Rebel, a Genius, a Mastermind. A great mind never dies.

For Your Information: Gautam Ramesh, son of Dr. Padmaja Ganapathy and Ramesh Nagarajan, was featured in Brahma Bharati of 2004 (Page 5) for his extraordinary talent and superb performance at BSNA convention at the age of 4.

By Padmaja Ganapathy (daughter)



## Four Important EBooks on Hindu Religion and Philosophy

By: Dr. Bala N. Aiyer

I am pleased to inform you all, my family and friends, that I have published Four (4) EBooks through Amazon. They are available on Amazon website in all countries around the world.

Please go to the Local Amazon Website and search for “Books” – “**Bala Aiyer**”.

You will see all my books there. Please see these books and write your comments and recommendations to support my effort.

The EBook is available on Kindle readers. These can be down-loaded on your PC, Laptop, Tablets, iPad and Smartphones to read through Kindle readers. Also, please pass on this information all other friends and family members.

**These are educational books on Hindu Religion for everyone.**

**Of these, Two EBooks are Basic lessons for daily studies and teaching.**

**1: A basic level as a Primer as “Introduction to Hindu Dharma”,**

**2: Advanced level lessons as “Principles and Practice of Hindu Religion”,**

**and, Two EBooks are special lessons for discussion in our Satsangh**

**3: “In Search of an Eternal Reality”,**

**4. “Devotional Prayers & Rituals with Spiritual Realization”.**

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**My E-Books: -- 1. An Introduction to Hindu Dharma: An Absolute Beginner's Guide on Hindu Religion or Hinduism (Basic Concepts of Hindu Religion Book (1)**

[http://www.amazon.com/dp/B01DSHE7VY?ref=pe\\_2427780\\_160035660](http://www.amazon.com/dp/B01DSHE7VY?ref=pe_2427780_160035660)

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**My E-Books: -- 2. Principles & Practice of Hindu Religion: Lessons on the Traditions & Philosophy for Students (Basic Concepts of Hindu Religion Book (2)**

[https://www.amazon.com/Principles-Practice-Hindu-Religion-Traditions-ebook/dp/B01EM3SIUO?ie=UTF8&keywords=Bala%20Aiyer&qid=1462807703&ref=sr\\_1\\_7&s=books&sr=1-7](https://www.amazon.com/Principles-Practice-Hindu-Religion-Traditions-ebook/dp/B01EM3SIUO?ie=UTF8&keywords=Bala%20Aiyer&qid=1462807703&ref=sr_1_7&s=books&sr=1-7)

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**My E-Books: -- 3. In Search of an Eternal Reality: Spiritual Insight into the Hindu concepts of a Supreme Truth (Basic Concepts of Hindu Religion Book (3)**

[https://www.amazon.com/Search-Eternal-Reality-Spiritual-concepts-ebook/dp/B01EWC8XWS?ie=UTF8&keywords=Bala%20Aiyer&qid=1462807703&ref=sr\\_1\\_5&s=books&sr=1-5](https://www.amazon.com/Search-Eternal-Reality-Spiritual-concepts-ebook/dp/B01EWC8XWS?ie=UTF8&keywords=Bala%20Aiyer&qid=1462807703&ref=sr_1_5&s=books&sr=1-5)

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**My E-Books: -- 4. Rituals and Prayers for Spiritual Realization: Practicing the Hindu Traditions with full understanding (Basic Concepts of Hindu Religion Book (4)**

[https://www.amazon.com/Rituals-Prayers-Spiritual-Realization-understanding-ebook/dp/B01FBJH84K?ie=UTF8&keywords=Bala%20Aiyer&qid=1462807703&ref=sr\\_1\\_4&s=books&r=1-4](https://www.amazon.com/Rituals-Prayers-Spiritual-Realization-understanding-ebook/dp/B01FBJH84K?ie=UTF8&keywords=Bala%20Aiyer&qid=1462807703&ref=sr_1_4&s=books&r=1-4)

## Hindu Religion

Classes	Grade/Books/Contents
⇒ Ganga and Kaveri	KG & Grade 1 - Bala Ramayana (Chinmaya Mission) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bala Kanda, Ayodhya Kanda, Aranya Kanda, Kishkindha Kanda, Sundara Kanda, Lanka Kanda, and Yuddha Kanda</li> </ul>
⇒ Narmada and Yamuna	Grade 2 & 3 - Bala Bhagavatam (Chinmaya Mission) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Part I: Stories of King Parikshit, Varaha Avatar, Jaya Vijaya, Hiranyaksha, Sati, Dhruva, King Bharata, Prahlada, and Vamana and Matsya Avatar</li> <li>Part II: Kamsa, Birth of Sri Krishna, Raas Lila, Mathura, Vrindavana, Sudama, Narada, Death of Kamsa, Parikshit Moksha, and glory of Hari Nama</li> </ul>
⇒ Saraswati	Grade 4 - Mahabharata - Part 5 (Purna Vidya) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction to Mahabharata, Adi Parva, Sabha Parva, Vana Parva, Virata Parva, Udyoga Parva, Bhishma Parva, Drona Parva, Karana Parva, Salya Parva, and After the War</li> </ul>
⇒ Krishna	Grade 5 & 6 - Values – Part 6 (Purna Vidya) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction to Values, Truthfulness, Purity, Friendship, Desire, Anger, Greed, Delusion, Pride, Jealousy, Straightforwardness, Absence of Ego, Respect, Attitude towards Food, Respect, Charity, and Environmental Awareness</li> </ul>
⇒ Godavari	Grade 7-12 - Geeta for Children (Chinmaya Mission) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The dejection of Arjuna, Samkhya Yoga, Karma Yoga, Gnyana Karma Yoga, Karma Sannyasa Yoga, Dhyana Yoga, Gnyana Vignana Yoga, Akshara Para Brahma Yoga, Raja Vidya, Vibhuti Yoga, Viswaroopa Sandarshana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Kshetra Kshetrajna Vibhaga Yoga, The Supreme Self, Divine and Undivine Types, The Three Fold Faith Types, and The Path of Renunciation</li> </ul>
⇒ Other Reference Books:	My Prayers, Hinduism, Solitude, Why do we... & Introduction to Bhagavad Geeta
⇒ Resources include reference books from Bharatiya Vidyalaya Library:	
Class	Resources
Ganga, Kaveri, Narmada, Yamuna	Books & Class Room Activity
Saraswati, Krishna, Godavari	Books, BV Web Site, Home Work
⇒ Other Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prayers and Bhajans</li> <li>Presentations after prayers</li> <li>Bhagavad Geeta (Shlokas &amp; Meanings)</li> </ul>

Religion Teachers use other reference books from Chinmaya Mission and Arsha Vidya Gurukulam.

## Jain Religion (Arhat Touch)

Arhat Touch takes the youngsters on a journey through the Jain Philosophy, Rituals, Traditions, Mythology and other self development activities

Arhat means :

**A** Awakening love for Philosophy  
**R** Rituals means of communication with God  
**H** Holy in those come  
**A** Angels of love we will be  
**T** Tirthankar Bhagawan whom we experience

⇒ Level 1

- Philosophy
  - Navkar Mantra, Dev Tattva, Jiva Vichar
- Rituals
  - Performing- Temple, Festivals, Pilgrimage
  - Memorising- Chaityavandan Sutras, Stutis, Others
- Mythology-Tirthankar, Sadhu /Sadhvi, Shravak /Shravika
- Self Development- Values

⇒ Level 2

- Philosophy
  - Guru Tattva, 18 Paapsthanak, 6 Leshya, Aaharshudhi
- Rituals
  - Performing- Temple, Festivals, Pilgrimage
  - Memorising- Chaityavandan Sutras, Stutis, Others
- Mythology-Tirthankar, Sadhu /Sadhvi, Shravak /Shravika
- Self Development- Values

⇒ Level 3

- Philosophy
  - Dharma Tattva, Samyag Darshan, Samyag Gnan, Samyag Charitra, 6 Avashyak
- Rituals
  - Performing- Temple, Festivals, Pilgrimage
  - Memorising- Chaityavandan Sutras, Stutis, Others
- Mythology-Tirthankar, Sadhu /Sadhvi, Shravak /Shravika
- Self Development- Values

⇒ Level 4

- Philosophy- Theory of Karma, 12 Bhavna, 9 Tattva
- Rituals
  - Performing- Temple, Festivals, Pilgrimage
  - Memorising- Chaityavandan Sutras, Stutis, Others
- Mythology-Tirthankar, Sadhu /Sadhvi, Shravak /Shravika
- Self Development- Values

## Language

### ⇒ Beginners (Level I)

- Recognize, Read, Pronounce, and write all Alphabets (Must)
- Read and Write Numbers up to 20
- Write own first and last name
- Pronounce and memorize following:
  - ◆ Days of the week, Body parts , Name of common Animals
  - ◆ Name of common things in the room and Common conversation words
  - ◆ Read and write simple words of 2 to 4 letters [without using Matras (Vowels)]
  - ◆ Pronounce, read, recognize and write Numbers up to 20
- Learn to speak simple sentences \* General talking (Must) Common useful words (Good manners, greetings, daily chores, etc)
- Make following as project, show and tell etc  
Learn to recognize Family relationship  
Colors and shapes \* Name of common Animals, fruits and vegetable which we use daily

(After two years child must move in the Intermediate class Level II)

### ⇒ Intermediate (Level II)

- Reinforcing the skills Learned in the LEVEL I or Beginners class
- Recite Bhajan and Poetry □ Recognize and Write Numbers up to 30 (Must)
- Introduction of the place of Matras (Vowels and Consonants) and their use. (Must)
- Introduction to Vocabulary and basic tenses, Genders, Singular/ Plural (Must)
  - \* General talking (Good manners, greeting, daily chores, games etc)
  - \* Make project, show and tell etc per student's interest.
- Read first and write general use words – days, months, address, hobbies etc.
- Read and write name of common animals, birds, plants, fruits and vegetable

### ⇒ Advanced (Level III)

- Reinforcing the skills Learned in the LEVEL II or Intermediate class
- Read and write larger words with Matras
- Master Sentence construction and Translation with Tenses – Written and Verbal
- Learn to Speak and read small simple stories and write stories (if you travel to India, asking for direction or when buying something talking to the vendor or telephone conversation with friends and family etc)
- Pronounce, read, recognize and write Numbers up to 50

## Culture

### ⇒ Ganga and Kaveri

(Classes - KG and Grade 1)

- Identity: Kids need to know who they are in social context
- Indian Festivals & Holidays
- Indian leaders & stars
- Indian foods & other special cuisines
- Indian Music & instruments
- India geography & borders
- Play Indian Sports
- Indian Movies & Cartoons
- Indian Gods & other religions
- Hindu traditions, customs and their relevance
- Indian folk music, art, dances & costumes
- Indian transportation
- Life in India -- Village, Town, Cities
- Indian cities and special places of interest
- Connecting with India and Indians
- Identity -- Understanding how kids connected themselves to the social settings

### ⇒ Yamuna, Saraswati and Krishna

(Classes - Grade 3, 4, 5 and 6)

- Gandhiji and other leaders
- Diwali and other festivals
- Places of Interest in India
- Religions of India
- Music, Dance in India
- Indian Geography - Physical
- National Holidays. Indian Sports, Foods of India
- Poets and Writers of India
- Languages, States and Constitution of India
- Monuments of India, Scientists of India
- Traditional Dress of India, National Symbols

### ⇒ Godavari Classes

(Classes - Grade 7-12)

- Heroes of Indian Independence war
- Indian Religions (Jainism, Sikhism, Buddhism, Islam, Christianity, Zoroastrianism, Judism etc)
- Origin of Indians, Architects of modern India
- Indian Geography and Neighbors of India
- Indian Poets
- Various Indian Languages and their origin
- Elections and formation of functions of Government in India
- Social Issues in India, Indian Cinema
- Performing Arts of India
- Indian literature and Authors
- Modern India Yoga and Meditation Indian Sports and Games
- Indian Food - Recipes, Spices etc

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ब्राह्मण समाज आफ नार्थ अमेरिका

देव ब्रह्मा हे पितामह, विश्व स्रष्टा देव जय जय ।  
मंगलं भगवान विष्णु, विश्व पालक देव जय जय ।  
देव शंकर प्रलयकारी, शंभु शिव नटराज जय जय ।  
शारदा संगीत रूपा, देवि वीणा वादिनी जय ।  
देवि लक्ष्मी लोक माता, सर्व मंगल कारिणी जय ।  
देवि दुर्गा शक्ति रूपा, सर्व संकट हारिणी जय ।  
सत्य पर विश्वास की जय, जय धरा आकाश की जय ।  
ब्रह्म की संतान हैं हम, धर्म का वरदान हैं हम ।  
हम अहिंसा के पुजारी, ज्ञान विद्या के उपासक ।  
हे परम कल्याण कारी, हो अमर संस्कृति हमारी ।  
देव ब्रह्मा हे पितामह, विश्व स्रष्टा देव जय जय ।  
मंगलं भगवान विष्णु, विश्व पालक देव जय जय ।

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

## Vandana

**Brahman Samaj of North America**

Dev Brahma Hey Pitaamah  
Vishva Shrashta Dev Jay Jay.  
Mangalam Bhagvaan Vishnu  
Vishva Palak Dev Jay Jay.  
Dev Shankar Pralayakaari  
Shambhu Shiv Nataraaj Jay Jay.  
Sharada Sangeet Roopa  
Devi Veena Vadini Jay.  
Devi Lakshmi Lok Mata  
Sarva Mangal Kaarini Jay.  
Devi Durga Shakti Roopa  
Sarva Sankat Harini Jay.  
Satya par Vishvaas ki Jay  
Jay Dhara Aakash ki Jay.  
Brahm Ki Santan Hain Hum  
Dharm Ka Vardaan Hain Hum.  
Ham Ahinsa Ke Pujari  
Gyan Vidya Ke Upaasak.  
Hey Param Kalyaan Kaari  
Ho Amar Sanskriti Hamaari.  
Dev Brahma Hey Pitaamah  
Vishva Shrashta Dev Jay Jay.  
Mangalam Bhagvaan Vishnu  
Vishva Palak Dev Jay Jay.

**Aum Shantih Shantih Shantih**

## No Beef Please

*By Priyanka Goswami, Katy, Texas*



No beef pleas. This is a common phrase that not only I but also many Hindu youth hear from a very early age. A small seed of doubt harbors in the mind – do we really worship cows? The brave ones go on and ask their parents, but the ones who are shy do not. While it is a privilege to be raised in America, there are obstacles that we must overcome to properly assimilate. While assimilating with Americans, it is vital that the youths do not forget their roots.

Waking up Sunday mornings always felt like punishment. As kids, it was always thought – why can't I sleep on one day? Sitting in havan, I remember just blindly reciting the mantras by memory – never understanding what these words meant. Luckily, I went to Sunday school classes where the meaning of each mantra and shloka was translated. Looking back at it now, I admire that I was given the chance to learn that from an early age. Being an adult, I can go to any mandir – the same mantras and shlokas are recited – but I feel a sense of connection now. Aside from the spiritual aspect, youths are able to learn how to be completely fluent in Hindi, be it speaking, reading, or writing. The benefits for this are abundant. We are able to communicate with our loved ones from India. We are able to communicate eloquently in a language other than English.

From elementary to junior high to high school, we are surrounded by American kids. We are considered a minority. Going to mandir and family parties allowed us to interact with fellow Indian youths. This gave us comfort. The comfort that it's fine that we are different. It's okay to have a different culture that's unlike the norm. We are blessed to have a culture with such diverse music – ranging from classical to folk to Bollywood. The most pure songs known to Indian culture is the bhajans. With the calming beats and simplicity of the lyrics, anyone can join in; one does not have to be a singer. There is a nice calming feeling when you are sitting in a mandir, eyes closed, meditating.

Living in today's world, it is important that we have an open mind. With Hinduism, we have been taught to always respect people. Going into college, we interact with people from many different backgrounds, culture, and religion. Rather than discriminating against these people, I was able to keep an open mind and learn about their culture and understand the meaning behind it. Besides people with different religions and culture, India is full of people from such different backgrounds. College gave me the opportunity to meet Indian Christians and Indian Muslims. Sure, our religions were different, but we all shared the same love for our culture.

Like much of today's youth I too found myself to be the odd one out, because of my Indian background. However after educating myself about my Hindu background, as well as embracing it, I not only felt proud of my diverse heritage but also found it simple to answer the reoccurring question of "Why do you not eat beef". With more confidence and knowledge, I can respond with the fact that we Hindus do not want to hurt an animal that provides the human race with an immense amounts of nutrients through its milk. We can proudly say: no beef please.

**About the Author:** Priyanka Goswami is an Engineer by profession and she is the daughter of Mr. Prakash Goswami and Mrs. Vibha Goswami, Life members of BSNA.



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Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

To furnish more information please add a page with your name written at the top.

*"Brahman Samaj of North America (BSNA), founded in 1994 and incorporated in the state of New York, is an independent, not-for-profit, tax exempt 501 (c) (3) and volunteer based charitable organization serving the needs of Brahman community and Hindu Community at large in North America".*

**Donations to BSNA are Tax Deductible in USA under the IRS Code of USA. You can also pay the membership fee online and request to send the filled form to the above emails.**

**Thank you for your support to BSNA ([www.bsna.org](http://www.bsna.org))**

## Post 2016 Convention of BSNA and GBC

It's our great pleasure to thank you all who attended and sponsored the 21<sup>st</sup> BSNA and 6<sup>th</sup> GBC convention held in San Diego on August 26 – 28, 2016. We had an amazing time in San Diego and enjoyed our stay, especially the superb convention activities. We thank you for all of the great connections made, memories created, and laughs shared. Some highlights of the convention are detailed below.

Friday's session on August 26<sup>th</sup> kicked off with Executive and BOT meeting followed by children's talent show which showcased Ganesh Stotram, Bansuri, Kathak, Bharatnatyam, Bollywood Dance. Then after dinner, we had a diverse cultural program including piano, Bollywood songs, dances, violin, bhajans, and a brilliant fusion band. The night concluded with a hearty Kavi Sammelan of many excited participants.

Saturday August 27<sup>th</sup> commenced with a yoga session and Bhajans in early morning. After breakfast, the convention was inaugurated with Vedic Mantras, lamp lighting and Brahm Vandana. Welcome speech was delivered by Convention Director, Dr. Sanjay K. Pandey who was followed by welcome speeches by the President of GBC, Dr. Shrikant Mishra, and President of BSNA, Dr. Keshav Shukla. Then came the Keynote Speech by the charismatic speaker Mr. Vibhuti Jha. Guest of Honor Acharya Shri Roopchandrajji Maharaj delivered his inspiring spiritual speech.

Panel discussion ("Frankly Speaking") was an attractive idea with participation from youth and seniors alike on religious and cultural issues. The coordinator of the panel was Mr. Abhay Dube and participants included, Ms. Rashi Mishra, Mr. Vineet Pandey, Dr. Vipin Chaturvedi, Mr. Vibhuti Jha, and Mr. Dwijendra Tiwari. Many thought provoking questions were asked and answered.

The Saturday night followed with speeches on general topics by Mr. Lalan Mishra on "Ancient Yoga", Dr. Sen Pathak on "Vedic Dharma and Human Happiness" and with Dr. Sukrit Mukherjee on "A Scientific look at some Indian values".

The breakout session was also a well-organized and fun filled effort by our youths. Children took part enjoying Indian Jeopardy and ice-breakers. Participants included- Abhay Dube, Vineet Pandey, Rahul Pandey, Nitin Chatlani, Arya Mishra, Nish Chatlani, Anjali Sharma, Varun and Som Chaturvedi, Eshaan Pathak, Aseem Trivedi, Shivangi and Shefali Chaubey, Rashi and Ridhi Mishra, Deepak Sharma, Shreya Kumar, Saurabh Pandey, Ila Dwivedi, Sanchan Modi, Shailendra Tiwari, Ishita Vasishtha, Aryan Pandey, Harsh Pandey, Varun Pothamsetti, Shiva Razdan, Ram Razdan, Jayesha Mukherjee, Bhavika Vasishtha, Stuti Pandey.

Lunch break was an opportunity for family introductions. We were very grateful to Tandoori Xpress (contact: Rishi Behal) for providing all our snack and meals.

Afternoon session of Saturday was mostly spent on presentations in the areas of Health, Yoga and Dharma Management. Dr. Vipin Chaturvedi on 'Ayurveda to the Supreme Yoga and everything in between', Dr. Minu Razdan on 'Diabetes: Role of Ayurveda in Modern Medicine' and Dr. Kalyani Tripathi on 'Overview of Yoga Therapy for Common Medical Conditions'. Another interesting area of presentation was Business and IT Forum with presentations from Dr. Sarvajna Dwivedi on 'From

Varanasi to Valley', Dr. Ved Pathak on 'Wall street 101' and Nishith Chaubey and John Chatlani on 'Wireless trends, past and future'.

There was a question and answer session in 'Open forum for medical issues' with a panel of physicians including Dr. Shrikant Mishra, Dr. Sudhakar Dixit, Dr. Minu Razdan and moderated by Dr. Vinod Mishra.

There were some more presentations from 3 youths including Nitin Chatlani on 'Internet of things (IoT)', Aryan Pandey on 'Unravelling Brahman values' and Varun Chaturvedi on Neuroeconomics: Finding Judgement Under Uncertainty.

Dinner was followed by some exceptional presentation of Indian melodies consisting of mix of Indian Ghazals, Bhajans, Classical, Contemporary and Film Songs by eminent Indian Singer from Kolkata Pt. Girish Chatterjee with accompaniment on tabla by Dr. Sukrit Mukherjee.

Sunday morning on August 28<sup>th</sup> started with Bhajans by Sanjay Joshi. The morning session started with the prayers followed by the General Body Meeting chaired by Dr. Keshav Shukla, President of BSNA with Dr. Shiva Bajpai and Dr. Shrikant Mishra present as the Chair of BOT and as the President of GBC, respectively. The Executive Committee Members of BSNA and GBC present were Dr. Lakshmi Shankar Dube, Mr. Gopal Chaturvedi, Dr. Sanjay Pandey, Dr. Ashok Sarawat, Dr. Sukrit Mukherjee, Mrs. Neeru Birly, and Mr. Subhash Tiwary. Dr. Keshav Shukla presented a brief account of the current and future planned BSNA activities.

The members of the BSNA constitution amendment committee (CAC), Dr. Shrikant Mishra (chairman), Dr. Sen Pathak, Dr. Akkaraju Sarma and Mr. KV Kumar were in attendance while Mr. Mahendra Misra could not be there. The BSNA members voted in favor of a BSNA Constitution Amendment which will be detailed soon.

Then followed some quick speeches by Mr. Shashikiran Vaze on 'Vastushastra - a perfect result oriented Vedic Science' and Mr. Dwijendra Tiwari on 'Global Dharma in Bharat - plans and policies that sustain and project growth'.

The award ceremony and youth recognition were the next items, where contributions of all the volunteers was acknowledged with plaques and certificates. Luncheon and the vote of thanks were the last items on the agenda before the adjournment of the 3<sup>rd</sup> day convention.

Dr. Sanjay and Mrs. Archana Pandey along with the San Diego volunteers and convention committee members did a phenomenal job in organizing the convention with the help and support from other BSNA Executives and GBC Executives such as Dr. Shrikant Mishra and Mrs. Archana Mishra, and Mr. Subhash and Mrs. Priyambada Tiwary.

Some videos from the convention have been posted on [www.bsna.org](http://www.bsna.org) website and more to follow.

Thank you again for enjoying the great weekend in San Diego! We'll be announcing next year's convention location and date as soon as possible!

Wishing You all, your family and friends good Health, Happiness and Prosperity for New Year Regards,

Dr. Keshav Shukla  
President, BSNA

P.S. Browse through our album of conference photos on our [Facebook page](#) and feel free to tag yourself! Send us any convention photos you may have at [admin@bsna.org](mailto:admin@bsna.org). We'll share more professional pictures and videos as soon as possible.

*"Brahman Samaj of North America (BSNA), founded in 1994, is a not-for-profit, cultural, educational, religious and charitable organization approved under the Tax Exempt Code of US IRS Section 501 (c) (3), serving the needs of Brahman Community and Hindu Community at large in North America. BSNA is not a caste based organization and does not discriminate against anybody. BSNA believes in Vedic culture and aims to preserve, promote, protect and advance Brahmanic values, culture and heritage, and build a dynamic and vibrant society rooted in the eternal values of Dharma and Vedic Culture to benefit the entire Hindu society and humanity via education, learning, service, networking, exchange of ideas, and imparting knowledge to our youth and younger generation to improve the value system of the society."*



Picture: San Diego Convention Highlight

Pictures: San Diego Convention Highlight



***The Convention Committee Welcomes All Delegates of BSNA & GBC Convention, San Diego, California***

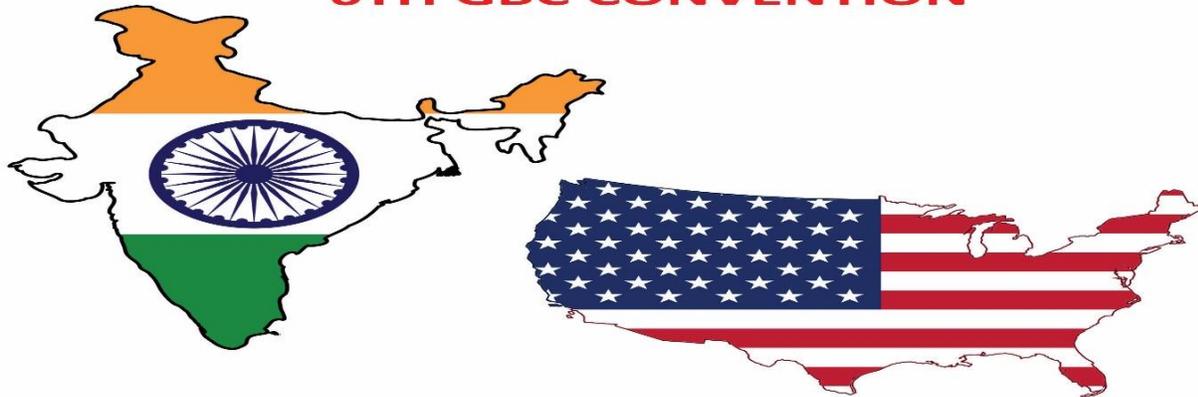


***Convention Director Dr. Sanjay Pandey and Convention Team, San Diego, California***



***The Convention Team Youth Group, San Diego, California***

**WELCOME ALL DELEGATES TO THE  
21ST BSNA AND  
6TH GBC CONVENTION**



**SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA  
AUGUST 26-28, 2016**

**Hemant Dahyabhai Chhatrala and Family**

**San Diego, California**

