

Parichay Mein Parichay

Volume 13 Number 4
Date of Publication: 8th October 2004
Registration No. 54810192

Editor
Pranoti Pimpalkhare

Executive Editor
Kalpana Gopinath

Asst. Editor
Maitri Parikh

Sub Editor
Rekha Kadam

Members
Sneha Nair
Vidya Madhusudan

Editorial Address :

NIS, 35 - B, Miniland
NriyanjaliMarg
Bhandup (W)
Mumbai 400 078
Tel :2561 7388,
2595 3606

Published by :

Dr. Tushar Guha
on behalf of
Nriyanjali
Information Service
(NIS)

Printed at :

Bidyut Art Printers
(India) Pvt. Ltd.
Miniland
Bhandup (W)
Mumbai 400 078.

Dear Readers,

Now - a - days we are constantly faced with issues which affect our lives directly or indirectly. But we cannot just remain passive bystanders. We are forced to think and act or atleast voice our opinions.

Due to the initiative of our longtime and progressive member- Mr. Samir Pingle, Nriyanjali, has started the " E - Group " for quite sometime now. The principal aim of this group is to encourage individual thinking and growth, without the fear of being judged. This also helps create better understanding and development of society at large.

Very recently, highly volatile issues are being mailed across and the Editorial Board found them very interesting and challenging. The previous issue reproduced one such exchange of mails. This issue once again reproduces another, on conversions. ***This is not for dispute but learning - learning to accept views of others, learning to rationalise, learning to be spirited.***

Nriyanjali Fest is another such platform, but for school children - to accept challenge, to showcase their talents. It encourages healthy competition which leads to acceptance, understanding and strength and ofcourse all round development.

We believe such platforms must flourish and together we can.

Pranoti Pimpalkhare

**Note expiry of your PMP Life Membership of 10 Years.
Please renew your PMP Life membership.**

Parichay Mein Parichay

Life MEMBERSHIP (10 YRS.) - Rs.500/-

Jan.'95 Vol.4 No.1	Bhanu Ulhas, Alka / Chakravarty D.N. <i>Membership expires with July 2004 issue Vol.13 No.3. Please renew.</i>
April'95 Vol.4 No.2	Goswami Himmat
Jul y '95 Vol.4 No.3	Thakkar Ashit,Sonal
Oct.'95 Vol.4 No.4	Nair Jayalaxmi / Pingle Samir / Nandan Satyen / Agarwal K.C. / Chawdhary Manju,Abhilasha,Nitasha / Mazumdar Malati,Alok
Jan'96 Vol.5 No.1	Nandi Madhuri,Rabi / Bansal J.S.
April '96 Vol.5 No.2	Saksena Shalini / Dogra Rajkumar
July'96 Vol.5 No.3	Gopalakrishnan P.R,Sitalaxmi,Kaveri / Venugopal Biju / Dabolkar Neelangi Samjiskar Charusheela / Bafna Swati / Bagool Nivedita / Raut Deepali
Oct.'96 Vol.5 No.4	Shetye Dnyanesh / Gaonkar Milind / Mehta Pratap / Chakraborty Anuradha Petigara Divya / Singh Harish,Sushma,Shardul
April'97 Vol.6 No.2	Atre M.V. / Rangnekar Sudhir / Kamble Shivanand
Jan'98 Vol.7 No.1	Srinivasan Kalyani
April '98 Vol.7 No.2	Viswanathan V.K. / Mathur Manju / Venkatraman Rajani ,Kartik,Venugopal/ Narayan Vijaya, Chandra
Oct. '98 Vol.7 No.4	Pukale Suresh,Hemangi
Jan. '99 Vol.8 No.1	Dey Swadhin
Oct '00 Vol.9 No.4	Udpa Dilip / Vaidya Manasi / Mohinder Kaur
Jan'01 Vol.10 No.1	Pimpalkhare Pranoti, Atul
April'01 Vol.10 No.2	Vashi Gunwant
Oct'01 Vol.10 No.4	Subramanian C.R,Priti,Pravesh
Jan'02 Vol.11 No.1	Jadhav L.N.
April'02 Vol/11 No.2	Easwaran C.V. / Smt. Rajee Narayan
July'02 Vol.11 No.3	Vishwanathan Sangeeta, Karthic
Jan'03 Vol.12 No.1	Mehta Poonam
April'03 Vol.12 No.2	Bakhai Suman / Banerjee Anonna,Samrat
July'03 Vol.12 No.3	Brinda Gopalakrishnan / Dalvi Girish
Jan'04 Vol.13 No.1	Parkhi Poornima / Singh Vinay Kumar
July'04 Vol.13 No.3	Bhusari Manjari / Godkar Vaishali / Singh Anil / Nankani Zenobia, Ishwar
Oct.'04 Vol.13 No.4	Guha Tushar, Radha / Bora Prakash,Aruna / Sathaye Surekha
April'05 Vol.14 No.2	Goswami Himmat

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP of PMP (Rs.90/- for 4 ISSUES)

Oct'03 Vol.12 No.4	Sason Sandeep
Oct'04 Vol.13 No.4	Kalpana Gopinath

Members are requested to please check and renew their Life membership

OCTOBER 2004

content



Vol.13 No.4

Parichay Mein Parichay

Volume 13 Number 4

Controversy Or Complacency.....

PHASE II **6**

The yahoo group members are forever exchanging their views on different areas of living - culture, economics, sociology, politics, sports, literature.

The Second round of debate among the Nrityanjali Yahoo Group members on CONVERSION created huge controversy.

Read on....and you may send in your views.

SEASON OF FESTIVALS **21**

The festive season ...
Ms. Maitri Parikh & Ms. Sreekala Babu
shares their joy

REGULAR FEATURES :

Mail Bag - 1, Nrityanjali News - 4, Poetry -
16, Khana Khazana - 31, Did U Know - 20,
Rib Tickler - 28, Happy Birthday - 32

ENCOUNTER WITH A COBBLER **17**

A Short Story - contributed by Maitri Parikh

WELLNESS **25**

Understand the concept of Wellness & how to be happy. The article by Dr. Tushar Guha was featured in Times Wellness dated 25th July 2004.

TRAVEL **29**

ASSAM - the beautiful



How about a Vacation with Wild Life!!!!!!

Also Includes : Editor's Letter, Governing Body, PMP Life Membership List

NRITYANJALI BOARD OF TRUSTEES w.e.f. 19th July 2003

Managing Trustee : Dr. Prakash Bora
Trustees : Dr. Tushar Guha (**Permanent Trustee**),
Ms. Radha Guha, Mr.Ulhas Bhanu, Ms.Anonna Banerjee,
Permanent Invitees : Mr. Girish Dalvi,Ms. Anuradha Chakraborty,
Dr. Shweta Shinde.

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

(LIBRARY)

Director : Dr. Tushar Guha

Mr. Naresh Pukale
Additional Director

Mr. Suresh Pukale
Executive Director (Admn.)

Mr. Manish Shah
Executive Director (Culture)

Mr. Girish Dalvi
Chief Administrator

Ms. Anonna Banerjee
Public Relations

Ms. Zenobia Nankani
Human Resources

EXTRA CURRICULAR DIVISION

Chairperson : Ms. Sangita Sawant
Co-ordinator : Mr. Kedar Pingle
Member : Ms. Brinda Gopalakrishnan,
Mr. Vikram Notey

**MANAGEMENT SERVICES
DIVISION**

Chairperson : *Ms. Anuradha Chakraborty*
Co-ordinator : Ms. Vasanti Anand
Ms. Kalpana Gopinath

NRITYANJALI INFORMATION SERVICES (NIS)

Chairperson : Ms. Maitri Parikh

PMP Editorial Board :
Ms.Pranoti Pimpalkhare,
Ms. Kalpana Gopinath, Ms. Maitri Parikh,
Ms. Rekha Kadam
Ms. Sneha Nair, Ms. Vidya Madhusudan

PROGRAMME DIVISION

Chairperson : Ms. Manasi Vaidya
Members :
Ms.Rekha Kadam, Ms. Avani Dodecha
Ms. Reena Kandalgaonkar

FACULTY DIVISION

Chairperson : Mr. Anil Singh
Co-ordinator : Ms. Rekha Kadam



MAIL BAG

Messages of HAPPY FOUNDATION DAY poured in on 19th July

On the occasion of the **Foundation Day**, members spontaneously visited the Institute at Bhandup and Email and telephonic messages were continuously received.

Dear Dr. Guha,

Many congratulations on reaching this milestone !!!! It is great to know that a good effort has sustained that long and it is credit to you to have made it happen. Wishing Nriyanjali to remain on the horizon for a long long long time. Best wishes,

Dr. Habbu - Chembur

Dear Tushar Sir and Nriyanjali family,

Today is Nriyanjali's Birthday. Its always a great pleasure for me to have my name connected with you and your institute. You are again coming to IIT Bombay for conducting Personality Development course for research scholars. That's a great news sir.

Your coaching and training did wonders to all my freinds who attended your earlier course. You will be happy to know that all your participants are taking active participation in social activities and they are doing well in academics too. I know there could have been lots of reasons for our performance, but I must acknowledge you , specially for spending time and energy which motivated us to make a difference in lives. Thanks , Thanks a Lot !!

Vikram Singh Nanda
Research Scholar - IIT, Bombay

Dear Sir,

Kamal & myself take pleasure in wishing you and each and every member of Nriyanjali on its 41st birthday. We further hope that Nriyanjali's SIMPLE approach is benefitted by a maximum number - be it dance, social service or personality development.

Gurdeep Kaur - Chembur

Tusharji,

Congratulations - may you and your institution have many many years of fruitful work ahead.

Sakuntala Narasimhan - Bangalore

Hello All,

Wishing you all a Happy Foundation Day!!!!!!!
A thousand salutations to this beautiful tree called Nriyanjali which has given us a new vision, a wonderful philosphy, a happy way to live and ofcourse we are fortunate to meet so many wonderful beautiful people who have over the years become an important part of our lives.....THANKS to NRITYANJALI.....without this our existence wouldn't have been so beautiful.....

love always
Anuradha Chakraborty - Powai

Happy Nriyanjali Day -

Rajani, Venkateraman, Venu, Swati - Thane
Padmaja - USA
Sangeeta KV - Kuwait
Anonna & Samrat Banerjee - Wadal, Mumbai
Zenobia Nankani - Sion, Mumbai
Kashmira- USA.
Preeti Subramanian - USA.
Pranoti Pimpalkhare - Silvasa
Nivedita Damle - Thane
Prem & Vasanti Anand - Andheri
Satyarth Bajpai - USA
Sadanand Eppaturi - Andheri
Radhika & Sandesh Kadam - Vile Parle
Vilobha Kukde - Netherlands,
Avani Dodecha, Maitri Parekh - Mulund,
Samir Pingle - Bhandup

Hello everyone in the Nriyanjali family!

Here's wishing many many more years of prosperity and wider recognition to the institute and the people who work tirelessly!!Heres also a prayer of thanks to God for showing me you all and enriching my life !

Kalpana Gopinath - Andheri

Hello Dr. Guha, Zenobia and Girish,

I felt very enriched with our interaction over the last two days and feel highly privileged to have exchanged views with those who are experts in their respective fields. My husband is looking forward to a session on meditation with me on your cassette and my children are looking forward to your next Summer Camp.

I look forward to greater interaction with all of you in the times ahead. Do keep in touch. Feel free to write to me on this email ID.

Regards,

Khurshid
Executive, Voltas Ltd
4th August 2004

Dear Sir and Girish,

I have just received a mail from my guide Dr. Mukhopadhaya. She says that our work was very well received by eminent scientists world over and the presentations at Pittsburg went very well.

I want to thank you, for had it not been for your help and guidance, the presentations wouldnt have been that good and if the presentation wasnt good, our work would get sidelined cause people wouldnt have noticed it.

Sir your idea of putting "The Concept" and "The Process" was very well received and apparently everyone appreciated the idea as it made the research comprehensible.

Thanks is a very small word and I dont want to use it, probably gratitude or something much more than that is what I feel towards you.

You are indeed a genius:):):):):):) (i know you'll say you know that already:):):):):):)

Love and regards

Anuradha Chakraborty
Research Scholar
IIT, Bombay

Dear Nriyjanali Members,

It is atypical in this consumerist world of today to come athwart an organization such as yours, I feel that though the word Nriyjanali is bare the work of the hobbyhorse is astounding. It was on 15th of August, I visited your website and found immense interest in it. The need and importance of Personality is imminent, it is the very basis of success in the world we are living in. It would be exquisite to meet people of such enormous cerebral skill un-universally, but the aloofness and distance constrain, deters me from doing so. It would be an credit of sorts for me to interact with you guys, even via the internet.

I am praising you because you do ought to have it, your website has been deliberated with awesome vista I have comprehend all possible contents and have appreciated it.

Hope to meet you when I get the chance to.

Please inform me more about the populace and the establishment.

Thank-you.

Karthik K Jaitley

PS: I am 27 yr old, I am an automobile engineer and work with Dodge- a brand of the Daimler Chrysler Group, I am in the Company as a Sr. Engg at Wisconsin, USA. Ive been away from India for

Dear Nriyjanali,

It is so very stirring and heartening to receive a message from you. I say this because the Director for an establishment as gigantic as yours can find time to answer to a someone with such sensation. I draw from this the amount of humility and benevolence Nriyjanali has in store for the sorority of man.

I am exceedingly thankful to have found a home away from home.

Regards.

Kartikh Jaitley
USA
nrityjanali_mumbai@yahoogroups.com

Dear Nrityanjali,

Thank you very much for the delightful programme we had last afternoon. Your show was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Kindly convey our gratitude to the young people who performed - May God love and bless each one of you.

Gratefully,

The Little Sisters of the Poor

Old Home for the Aged,
Andheri (East), Mumbai.
14th August 2004

Hi Nrityanjali,

It was nice being at the training - the two days 27th & 28th August at Hotel Orchid, enjoying the programme on "Role Excellence". The Faculties Mr. Vincent D'silva and Dr.Tushar Guha were too good.

They have put forward their views very beautifully with so much humor added to it which made the programme even more interesting.

I am sure all of you must have enjoyed this programme very much and must have benefited immensely. It is now important for each one of us to put into practice what we have learnt from these two great men. Affectionately,

Nancy Fernandes
Forbes Marshall Pvt. Ltd., Pune

DEAR MISS ANURADHAJI,

THANK YOU FOR YOUR MAIL TO ALL OF US. TEACHERS ARE MOST IMPORTANT PERSONS IN OUR LIFE.

IN NRITYANJALI, I FEEL SO HAPPY. I FEEL, WHY I DID NOT JOIN THREE YEARS AGO. I WOULD HAVE LEARNT MUCH MORE BY NOW. HAPPY TEACHER DAY TO U ALSO.

THANK YOU AND REGARD

DHANANJAY MAHADIK

Dear Dr. Guha,

We had an enjoyable and thought provoking session at Thane during your programme. Your comments on creating a balance and harmony between the mind and the body and demo of aids such as breathing techniques will always be cherished by me. I look forward to more such lessons of learning in future.

Pl convey my best wishes to your colleagues who aided our learning.

With warm regards,

N.S.Shenoy
Regional Manager, Voltas Ltd.
nssheno@voltas.com

Dear Sir,

I attended the subject programme on 27th-28th at Hotel Orchid.

It was a very informative & interesting. Your presentation was really very good. I would be highly thankful if you could send me soft copy of the same. Also if possible kindly send me e-mails of other participants, so that we can share our experience & learnings with one another.

I understand you have e-mails of all the participants. Best regards,

Navin K Raveshia
Sec to C.E.
nkr-nccl@nccl.ltindia.com
Narmada Cement Company Ltd.

My address is -

Navin K Raveshia
Block no C-5/2,
NCCL Housing Colony
Jafarabad - 365 540
Dist-Amreli (Gujarat)

Nrityanjali News.....

Nrityanjali's

Special Personality Development Course

- Third batch of 2004, commenced from 26th September and will end on 7th November.

Fifteen students have enrolled for the Diploma course.

The next batch of **SPDC** will commence in **20th February 2005**.

Nrityanjali

&

Times International Card

will present a cultural programme

UTSAV

- *celebration of all kinds.*

The programme will be held at Nehru Centre, Worli on 15th October 2004 at 7.15 P.M.

Gogari Mahila Mandal, Mulund invited **Ms. Zenobia Nankani** to deliver a talk on *Personality Development* on 26th July 2004.

The Giants Club International - South Mumbai invited Dr. Tushar Guha to deliver a talk on *Reality Living* on 26th July 2004

Mr. Anil Singh was invited as a judge for the preliminary round of Classical Dance Competition

Nrityanjali's Management Services have conducted various Behavioural Trainings :

July 2004

14th,15th,16th Unitech Group of Industries on Personal Effectiveness.

22nd, 23rd, 30th Welingkar Management Institute, Mumbai on Perspective Development.

27th,28th Unitech Group of Industries on Human Resources.

August 2004 :

2nd,3rd Voltas Ltd. on Train the Trainers.

7th Maharashtra State Road Development Corporation on Personal Effectiveness.

17th IBP Co. Ltd. on Conflict Management, Problem Solving and Transformational Leadership.

18th,20th Unitech Group of Industries on Personal Effectiveness.

23rd N.L.Dalmia Institute of Management, Mumbai on Perspective Development

28th Management Study Centre, Chennai on Role of Executive Assistants.

September 2004

14th,15th, 21st Unitech Group of Industries on Personal Effectiveness.

20th Welingkar Management Institute, Bangalore, on Perspective Development.

25th Baker Oil Tools, on Enhancing Self Potential.

Personality Development Course - Sr. is being conducted at Bai Kabi Bai Jr. College, Fort.

Nrityanjali News.....

WEDDING BELLS



**Ms. Charusheela Samjiskar and
Mr. Vikram Jogal**
were married on 23rd June 2004
- Congratulations

Rekha Kadam joined Delhi Public School, Nerul as a Dance Teacher - Congratulations.

Venugopal Venkatraman joins Messrs Infosys and is posted in Mysore.
- Congratulations.

Anuradha Chakarborty's research work "Stabilisation & Sterilisation of Food & Nutrition" at IIT Bombay has been patented at the University of Pittsburg, USA - Congratulations

Marriage & Alone ? - the article on harmonious marriage by Dr. Tushar Guha is featured in the **Femina** issue dated 15th August 2004.

Times Wellness dated 25th July 2004 featured Dr. Tushar Guha's article on Wellness.

Workshop on Make-UP was conducted by **Anonna Banerjee** on 22nd September 2004

Anil Singh and **Maitri Parikh** were invited to judge Folk Dance competition - P & N Ward on 15, 16th September at Mahendra Academy and Children's Academy - Malad

Brinda Gopalkrishnan, Sangita Sawant, Nitasha Chawdhary were invited as judges for Dance competitions for NES College MANTRA 2005 on 11th September

Our Personality Development Course - Sr., commenced at the Department of **Extra Mural Studies, University of Mumbai** from 28th September 2004.

On 11th September'04 Nrityanjali artistes entertained the inmates of **Terna Women's Old Home, Nerul**



Nrityanjali artistes presented a performances of Folk Dances and Songs for the inmates of the Home for the Aged, Andheri (E) on 14th August 2004, as a part of Nrityanjali's Social Service project.

Controversy or Complacency

For quite some time Nrityanjali Email Yahoo Group members have been exchanging views on current contemporary issues of Values, Ideals, Social, Economical, Political and Cultural issues. Some of them make wonderful reading but more importantly it reflects the cross section views of alert minds. The mails - knowingly or not, sound an alarm of Awakening of conscience and the need to rise in our own esteem.

We had reproduced one such exchange of views in our PMP Vol.13 No.3 Issue.

We continue to reproduce another of the mails on another such contemporary issue that have been received by us since August 2004. The theme is social and of values. We add no comments of ours but our hearts resound with the words *Let Our Country Awake, Let our Soul Awake.*

READ THIS CAREFULLY:

Among the world's religious traditions, there are those that convert and those that do not. The non-converting religious traditions, like the Hindu, Jewish and Zoroastrian, give others the freedom to practice their religion whether they agree with the others' tenets or not. They do not wish to convert. I would characterize them as non-aggressive. Religions that are committed by their theologies to convert, on the other hand, are necessarily aggressive, since conversion implies a conscious intrusion into the religious life of a person, in fact, into the religious person.

This is a very deep intrusion, as the religious person is the deepest, the most basic in any individual. When that person is disturbed, a hurt is sustained which is very deep. The religious person is violated. The depth of this hurt is attested by the fact that when a religious sentiment is violated, it can produce a martyr. People connected to a convert are deeply hurt. Even the convert will suffer some hurt underneath. He will necessarily wonder if he has done the right thing and, further, he or she has to face an inner alienation from his community, a community to which he has belonged for generations, and thus an alienation from his ancestors. I don't think that this hurt can ever be fully healed.

Religious conversion destroys centuries-old communities and incites communal violence. It is violence and it breeds violence. Thus, for any humane person, every religious sentiment has to be respected, whether it is a Muslim sentiment or a Christian sentiment, Hindu or Jewish sentiment.

Further, in many religious traditions, including the Hindu tradition, religion is woven into the fabric of the culture. So, destruction of a religion amounts to the destruction of a religious culture. Today, for instance, the ancient Greek culture is no longer living; there are only empty monuments. The Mayan, Roman and many other rich cultures are all lost forever and humanity is impoverished for it. Let us at least allow humanity to enjoy the riches of its remaining mosaic of cultures. Each one has some beauty, something to contribute to the enrichment of humanity.

In any tradition, it is wrong to strike someone who is unarmed. In the Hindu tradition, this is considered a heinous act, for which the punishment is severe. A Buddhist, a Hindu, a Jew, are all unarmed, in that they do not convert. You cannot ask them to change the genius of their traditions and begin to convert in order to combat conversion. Because it is a tradition of these religions and cultures not to convert, attempts to convert them is one-sided aggression. It is striking the unarmed. I respect the freedom of a Christian or a Muslim or Jew to practice his or her faith. I do not accept many of their beliefs,

but I want them to have the freedom to follow their religion.

You cannot ask me to respond to conversion by converting others to my religion because it is not part of my tradition. We don't believe in conversion. Thus, conversion is not merely violence against people; it is violence against people who are committed to non-violence.

I am hurt by religious conversion and many others like me are hurt. Millions are hurt. There are many issues to be discussed regarding conversion, but I want to draw your attention to only the central issue here which is this one-sided violence. Religious conversion is violence and it breeds violence. In converting, you are also converting the non-violent to violence.

Any protest against religious conversion is always branded as persecution, because it is maintained that people are not allowed to practice their religion, that their religious freedom is curbed. The truth is entirely different. The other person also has the freedom to practice his or her religion without interference. That is his/her birthright. Religious freedom does not extend to having a planned program of conversion. Such a program is to be construed as aggression against the religious freedom of others.

During the years of your papal office, you have brought about certain changes in the attitude and outlook of the church. On behalf of the non-aggressive religions of the world, the Hindu, the Parsi, the Jewish and other native religions of different countries, I request you to put a freeze on conversion and create a condition in which all religious cultures can live and let live.

This is a part of an Open Letter written by Pujya Sri Sri Swami Dayananda Saraswati to Pope John Paul II.

It saddens me that the so called Religious Heads who are supposed to be the most enlightened people are involved in this shameful deed of forceful conversion, these are the people who are HYPOCRITES, they tell the world to live in peace while they are the ones who slowly spread violence. This letter by Swamiji truly reflects his greatness and that he is the one who is truly enlightened.

I call all conversions forceful because "It is asserted that religious conversions result from a process variously called mind control and/or brainwashing". (quoted by Henry Newton Malony Religious Freedom Conference on "Religious Freedom

and the New Millenium" Tokyo, Japan May 23-25, 1998).

I do not intend to hurt anyone's beliefs but I definitely want to assert that conversions are WRONG, and we (irrespective of which religion we belong to) MUST HELP STOP CONVERSIONS, cause its only then that we can live in HARMONY.

Let our souls awaken.....

From Pdg cal <pdg_cal@yahoo.com:

Can you please avoid this religion stuff here? It can get really messy. Let me tell you that in many cases people converted because the practitioners of the "Great Hindu Tradition" did not even let them drink water from the village wells. If Christian missionaries were not there, they would have converted to Islam or adopt Buddhism. It is easy to put blame on others. Try to cleanse your own system first!! Frankly, I did not expect such utter lack of social awareness here!!

From Kalpana:

I tend to agree with this person (pdg_cal) though may be the response is strongly worded. I would like to add here that this "alarm" about conversions that is being circulated esp among the "educated and socially aware" people in my opinion is a false one. Well maybe there is some truth but definitely not in the way it is propounded. Here I wish to clarify I am a Hindu and I'm a very proud Hindu too. There is a lot to understand before we pass any judgement or declare war on those "trying to convert innocent and disarmed people" ..If one goes back in centuries in the early years of the birth of Christianity, people HAD to be told about the new religion and as is the case in any marketing technique (I am trying to draw parallel to the networking ethos of the present times as an example) this new religion had to be presented as above all the existing ones especially over Judaism. And of course the christian missionaries were formed with the intention of spreading the goodwill through their religion (a.k.a the AOL methods now employed) Well nothing wrong with that except for some overzealous missionaries who

probably overstepped their authority. Anyways that is history and we are only supposing here .As far as I am concerned if the conversions were being done at the alarming way as purported by the so called "hindu saviours" our country should be 90% of other religious followers.But that is surely not the case!Statistics show that it was the tribals (who are a religious orsans any religion) who were converted in exchange for the basic amenities and a semblance of self-respect !It is a shameful fact that we as a nation as a people have done very little or nothing except exploit the tribals of their natural resources and manual labor.Whether it is in the Far East or the Andaman and Nicobar Islands it has been the missionaries who have reached , first tended to the needs and probably THEN converted them and in most cases the people most volunatarily having embraced the new religion.A very recent example is the noted film music director Mr.A.R.Rahman nee Dilip who has repeatedly said that he liked the tenets of the Islam religion which according to him gave an individual more respect and so he converted. Well that is his perspective.

Hindu religion has no option for conversion .One has to be born a Hindu.It is one of the greatest and most exhaustive religions of the world and yet we Hindus have left the essence of the religion far behind and have confused rituals to be our religion.A recent case was the mass conversion rather reconversion of a group of tribals in Gujrat by making them take a dip in the river and giving them the sacred thread ...that was to increase the number of Hindus in the "HINDU RAJYA" .As a practising and proud Hindu I feel ashamed to say the least to read of such antics.While I do agree co-ercion and compulsion in anything is not right I also very very strongly believe religion is a very very personal issue and should be practised within the confines of one's personal life and everyone should have the freedom to select and p ractise the religion he/she chooses.While religion can be one of the best support systems in times of crisis, it can also be a crutch if misused.It is also an undeniable fact that the severe caste

atrocities were one major reason in the early years for mass conversions.And it pains me more in these recent times when the so called highly educated and emancipated people from all walks of life in all religions take up issues without full understanding and create more confusions while the need of the hour is REAL peace, REAL happiness and REAL harmony which can come about ONLY when everyone learns to live and let live. And yes I also agree that the issue of religion is extra sensitive and controversies regarding that should be avoided for discussion in a socially active multicultural and duty conscious group of people .

From Jayant

Excellent response both Kalpana and PDG-CAL.While each has his own perspective about religion we don't want such "intelligence to be shared and views asked or espoused.

What happened centureis ago happened for some reason but there is no reason to rake up dead coals.

From Anuradha

I am pleased to receive ur mail....

Let me tell you that this forum is meant for social awareness,and to debate on relevant issues,so there's nothing wrong in discussing conversion, remember ours is a democratic country and we all have the right to voice our views without mudslinging at each other...

If you read the previous mail carefully you'll realise that nowhere is it mentioned that any religion is bad,so why get defensive.....

And by the way every religion preaches selfless work without expecting anything in return, then how come when the so called missionaries helped the downtrodden they also converted them in return...

Anyways let this be a healthy discussion, and please feel free to voice your views about conversion and not specific religion.....

If you remember the previous mail said LET OUR SOULS AWAKEN nowhere was it mentioned that let our religion awaken.....

Hope to carry on the discussion on a positive unbiased note.....debates are never personal they are to represent views of the masses.....so don't take it personally

From Kalpana

Yes discussions need to be only that and not personal mudslinging matches, opinions may differ and in a healthy forum one should object or rather differ only in opinions or the way they are expressed and not attack the person holding a diverse view. However, I would like everyone to read the Times of India today the article "The speaking tree".

From PDG Cal :

I reacted sharply because this is not the first time you have posted this kind of material. On 14th June, 2004 you posted a message titled: "Are you a secularist? PLEASE READ PATIENTLY, VERY GOOD INFO".

I wonder what sort of purpose this mail fulfilled!! It is downright offensive, in fact, if you read through the message, it ends with "Can this happen anywhere, except in a HINDU NATION - BHARAT?"

Is India a HINDU NATION? I am proud that my country is a secular democratic nation and I wish it remains so. It irritates me when even educated people fail to understand the importance of India's secularism.

Secondly, you talk about "healthy discussion" and post messages which read:

Do you consider that - Sanskrit is communal and Urdu is secular, Mandir is Communal and Masjid is Secular, Sadhu is Communal and Imam is Secular, BJP is communal and Muslim league is Secular, Dr. Praveen Bhai Togadia is ANTI-NATIONAL and Bhukari is Secular, Vande Matharam is communal and Allah-O-Akbar is secular, Shriman is communal and Mian is secular, Hinduism is Communal and Islam is Secular, Hindutva is communal and Jihadism is secular, and at last, Bharat is communal and Italy is Secular?

Is this even worth a debate? Are you sure you are not targeting a specific religion here?

As a moderator of this group, you have certain responsibilities. We have many genuine socio-economic problems in our country. Address them...

I hope that in future you will have more constructive discussion in your forum.

And thanks Kalpana Gopinath for your mails.

From Kalpana

I would like to reiterate my earlier statement here that religion is a very personal issue and now the time has come where one and all should realise that it should remain so. As Mao had said religion is definitely the opiate of the masses and whips up unnecessary & avoidable confrontations. People just tend to become emotionally excited on this issue and fail to think logically in most cases. However I would request the moderator to please take up more serious and harder hitting violences faced by the innocent and hapless in our country, (for the truly downtrodden and the poor religious excesses hardly has any significance, where survival is the essence of life) especially the women of not just our country but even of the more progressive nations who are the butt of many a violent act. Create awareness especially in the present genX which is just absolutely nonchalant about everything other than their comfort and ease. Create awareness about our rich heritage and educate them about our traditions that are relevant to the present times. Create a sense of pride in the westward looking youngsters that India has a lot to offer if only they cared to look! All this and much more can be done through this medium, instead of discussing on writeups which are inflammatory to some sect or other.

I do not wish to sound sermonising, but this is what I believe in and this is what I practice hence can say it with conviction that many do think on these lines.

From Salujya

I have been going through these mails on conversion and as always I find it unfortunate that the so called educated are pseudo intellectuals. Mr / Ms. PDG's remarks about lack of awareness of social issues on the part of the

members of this group are downright callous and reeks of superiority complex.

Kalpna, you know when you talked about marketing a religion it is really quite interesting. Today marketing and packaging are very important. But i have often wondered whether advertising, media, marketing also have a moral responsibility. Do they have the right to distort culture ?

Today it has become a fad to say, Let people do their own thing. This is good, but it is also escapism. No one likes to take a stand, everyone likes to sound as if they are detached and generous.

Conversion whether it is any political party doing it forcibly to tribals or whether a religious group to downtrodden, is wrong. I believe in the goodness of the soul. If you want to help someone, do it because you are genuine and not because you want something in return. Dangling a carrot in front of downtrodden, depressed people by helping them and then suggesting means to change religion is wrong, whichever group is doing it.

Have any of you faced people of another religious community, coming to your house or meeting you at Railway stations , trying to tell you that their God is better than mine???

I HAVE. And I feel sorry for such beggar like attitude. There have been times when Professors and Lecturers have openly denounced a majority religion while teaching in class. Is that the role of a teacher to give biased extreme opinion? Making derogatory remarks about Gandhi and Tilak, now when they aren't alive to defend themselves, calling them non secular. Can you honestly tell me if this could happen in any other country? We are that democratic and secular, so lets not debate on that. While it sounds good to say we are secular, it is also extremely disrespectful to make such remarks.

This is not about belittling a particular religion, it is about making yourself aware about what is happening, not taking a stand which sounds ideal. If you want to be a Marxist be one, where no religion should matter to you. What is being

Secular? Letting all religions be. Then why do people, encroach on others areas. You want to do social service thats great, but not because you are marketing your religion. That is sad.

We belittle the caste system in Hinduism. The way the lower castes are treated is abominable no doubt. But the caste system was started for a functional role, for division of labour. Unfortunately it deteriorated and started harming society. But what is so different in the caste system that has not been happening in the whole of the world with regard to serfs, slaves, class, racial discrimination??? Such discrimination has been a part of social structure through out the world and will continue to be.

We are improving, our attitude is changing. Women in India and throughout the world were not treated equally before. They had no voting rights. But the situation is changing. Why cant we accept that we are moving ahead and be happy about that rather than discussing how badly Hinduism treated its caste members. Do you discuss how women were treated badly? If you do, what do you really do about it. Women as mothers and sisters and wives are still grossly devalued.

And what I find most ironical is that we talk about reservation for Christian SCs and Muslim SCs??? Are they a part of Hindu community??

ARRahman changed his religion voluntarily. That is his prerogative. But this is not the case in most cases.

Serving poor people and telling them that there is a particular God that looks after them is not right. Even in seminars there is a similar pseudo intellectual attitude, when people even deny that a word called conversion has any meaning !! When one keeps lying to himself it becomes the truth.

Jayant you seem to be pro secularism, which is wonderful. But one needs to be aware of the ground realities.

I don't believe in serving selfishly and emotionally making people dependent and then convincing them about another religion, which every religious community does it. It is just like the reservation system which is being unfair to people and dividing India.

Why do we talk about Christians, Muslims, Hindus et al? Why do we say Majority and minority. Unfortunately Religion is our first Identity and not being Indian. Reserve seats for people at the primary level for the backward class not on the basis of caste.

Having the nerve and guts to accept and understand and state it is tough. It is always very easy to make derogatory remarks about what happened in the past, without considering the circumstances.

If things are happening NOW, then it is our duty to stand up against it. But then again, most people lack the courage for that.

From Anuradha

Bravo!!!!!! Well written and I fully agree with Saluja.....

It's high time that each one of us identify ourselves as INDIANS rather BHARATIYA or else very soon our beautiful country will be segregated and our rich culture and heritage will be torn into parts.....

It's time we stand up and stop these fanatics from achieving their goals i.e. to divide our people on basis of religion.

And yes it is indeed true that some religious fanatics catch people in stations bus stops shops and try brainwashing you to convert to their religion, they especially target those who look emotionally stressed or upset or weak.....I have personal experience.....

Shed the shell of complacency, stop being an escapist.....

In a country if more than 50% of its population possess these two dangerous traits then the country and its people are headed towards doom, cause we then let the corrupt or incapable

political heads do as they please we allow them the audacity to play with the lives of the masses and darken our future.....Unfortunately our country is heading towards that dangerous path.....

When we talk of peace it also means letting people live, live freely with the religion they want to be with. Conversion in that sense is the exact opposite of peace, it has been proved that conversion is always forceful because it always involves brainwashing (refer 26th International Proceeding on Psychology and Religion).

"Where the head is held high, where the wind is without fear" Let us all live with this spirit burning in our hearts and soul.

From Jayant

Well that was a wonderful sermon which can be an eye opener for innocents but not for people who have a little of self esteem and self respect for themselves.

Self esteem is not what you can buy in the market place by platitudes about what you think about anything but what others think about what you say.

Conversion is a matter of choice and not a matter of chance. It's like a Brahmin like me who likes to have non-veg food everyday. No one forced me but it was a matter of taste.

Eashwar Allah Tero Naam is not just a few words but a fact. Have you ever seen Christians wearing the sacred thread and who are vegetarian. Have you seen Christian weddings where the marriage vows take place according to Hindu rituals. Have you seen Muslims come to a temple and pray for the well being of their family. Have you seen a Hindu God or for that matter have the Muslims see Allah or the Christians Christ. Why are four boys in the same home born to the same parents given different names. So why can't each person adopt a name for his God.

Anuradha is elated by your e-mail sermon. Her hooray's can be heard all the way where I live. Let me tell you that a salesman can try all his best to sell you something against competition but the

urge to buy comes from you. I don't think Kalpana is wrong in anyway about the marketing aspect. I have retired as the Senior VP of Marketing in a very large Organisation and it is a subject that I have successfully followed for 40 years. You talk about casteism and discrimination in every society but can U tolerate being in a lower caste where you cannot enter a hotel or you have to draw water from a different well. You seem to talk like a politician.

Anyway I joined Nrithyanjali as I believe that it would enhance my own life in many ways but I now have some doubt as to whether it is right or not. Let us not bring in controversial subjects into this forum. We live in a different rld and no one is an escapist. From wearing a 9 year long saree at the age of 14 Bong girls wear pants and T-shirts that don't even suit them. Conversion. Someone forced you. If you can dress as you like and eat what you like and live as you like are you not a converted person.

Please no more . I don't mind unsubscribing. But this is not the end it is the beginning.

Let me tell you that I am no spring chicken like most. I am 60 years old. I have 2 daughters of my own and who are married. One to a Nepali and another to a Coorgi and and both are delightfully happy. I never considered caste or religion as anything in this world but their happiness. Niether do I have any thing against peoople who converted or still will.

I do not expect a response to this but even if you do then the next day I will unsubscribe and I hope everyone reading this message or mail will support me that we don't need fanatics like this. I am Indian first and the religion does not matter. You did not choose the religion you were born In. You did not choose the region you were born in. You did not choose your [parents either. Lets live happily with what we have.I think this is enough. But I love this group without its groupism.

From Anuradha

Apart from sending forwards to one another I thought this forum also meant discussing issues and knowing each others views without

mudslinging at each other, I had written this even in my previous mails, but unfortunately few people took it too personally, and some probably couldnt even understand what was the actual topic of discussion.

Well the topic of conversion was not taken up for religious fights infact here all that we wanted to know is that does conversion in someway also means violence, because if you see the roman culture nothing of it is left cause due to mass conversion (mind irrespective of which religion they got converted to) the original heritage and culture got diluted, similarly in africa and so many other places, the issue was not about religion but it was about preserving each countries cultural heritage.....

Its indeed sad that people are always driven by preconceived notions and refuse to see the other side.

Do not mail if u cant keep religion away from conversion, do mail if u have thoughts about conversion without involving religion.

From Kumar Jayant

Dear Anu,

I do appreciate the spirit with which you had started this issue. Unfortunately when you want to know someone's views on conversion and whether it is passive, negative, positive or violent then that or those persons are bound to give their views. No one can understand anothers perception in as far as such a issue is concerned as you cannot only solicit mails which are to your views.

Religion and conversion have become sensitive issues today and the reason is not too far to seek. It is like stoking a fire. It may light up your surroundings or it may help you cook or it may burn you or burn your house down. It only certain that you know how to control your fire but one cannot control the fire in others.

In any case forget it and look for subjects like WTO and the Impact on Indian Jobs. Are truckers right on going on Strike, What re peoples views on Population Control. Is Indian Culture under threat from Westernisation. I am sure this will help many of us understand a perspective in better light.

I am Indian and love to be one but to me religion is not to be discussed in a Forum, where people have the Freedom to express themselves.

Thanks a lot.

From Karthik Jaitley

Conversion and Religion are irritable issues, especially when discussed in public forum, where on such topics there is more heat produced than light. I think my country faces bigger dangers from people trying to up pull out some mileage from religion, Conversion is fine, ghastly and hideous and believe me I have seen the ugliest side of conversion. I went to a village in now called "jharkhand" and factually saw people paying and getting paid for converting and conversion.

Let us all understand that religion is what we have made, Im sure the Ishwar, God, Allah, Wahe Guru, up there would not want his men to make him an apparatus of gaining something.

There should be restrains when talking about religion mainly because in our country there are a lot people who will sell even their religion for money(no offence intended). The Constitution is flexible but the qualms and social order, dogma and devout dices played by the politicians, make such topics thin-skinned.

So let us talk of betterment than push ourselves 100 years back, forget the caste and creed configuration, follow your own pattern. Our rigidity to forget, that belief and religion are to help attain precincts and bring before us an euphuism we have to retort to. Because the world still thinks of India as a meager and under developed country, devoid of the contemporary progress.

From Girish

Sorry for the delay in sending my views towards this issue. After going through the mails and the exhaustive discussion, as a youngster, I am compelled to understand the depth of the subject and its ill effects. Thank you Anuradhaji for the beginning.

For Kalpanaji, thank you madam for the broad canvassing of the subject. Yes, your mails are truly thought provoking, yet easy to understand and digest. You have been able to build a very distinctive similarity between the topic as a social issue and as a corporate affair. If it is considered to be a corporate approach, then every religion has a right to market their views, ideologies and understanding of life for a better living.

Why I called it a better living – because that's the only root cause of we discovering such words like conversion for our dictionary. However, definition of good living is totally an individuals understanding and comfort level which none of us can peep into.

For PDG, Cal – Thanks for heating up the discussion, cause we needed that, as that was the sole driving factor for the pure discussion. Thanks once again, although I differ a little with your views over the subject. There was no such thing like targeting of any specific religion (I guess), although there are few religions who do try to impose upon their beliefs, which again I would call it as a healthy debate for the two as that's where one is forced to think. After all one needs to use ones intellect (of what ever level it is) in life for better future.

I agree - Religion is part of the Culture and also the major factor of differentiation. Even today in the so-called open and broad-minded society, many such areas are the reason for creating of distance between you, and me between everybody.

Today, the reason for conversion by youngsters is merely comfort. The more comfortable you are with a religion, you prefer to be so. For Example, (nothing anti about) but Celebrity like Ms.Sushmita Sen had once stated, that she would love to marry in a christian style, is merely because of the simplicity it holds.

Similarly, considering Mr.A.R.Rehman's case – I strong feel it not to be essential that although it was his sole decision (which he is free to take), of conversion for the better (liking of some points of the religion) as being a human being, he could even accept those by being what he was. By this I mean, he actually belittled his previous religion

which was the reason for his being. Which helped him live with some kind of responsibility, may it be small or big, and be binded with the society. Anyways, one can go on finding flaws in other person, which also is to be avoided by people like us .

Salujyaji, hats off to you, for you have been very clear and to the point in writing your views, thats what most of us lack the most. I do not say that the rest haven't, but it is said, that what matters is not what you say , but how you say and that exactly happens with us.

All those who got converted had followed this saying - "We go with not what is been said, but how and at what circumstances it is been said."

Factually it could be proved that, all of us, some time or the other have failed in a conversation, only because of this very reason. Many of us fail to express and hence succumbed to and joined the gang which actually we did not want to. It just does not end here, but we take a step forward to express our reasons then for doing so only to make us feel happy. You know, we fool ourselves most of the time.

Today, we youngsters, the future of a country, are compelled hence to divert our thinking towards such thoughts, not because of discussions, but due to varied dimensions that are projected against a subject. At times, they are in our favour, but mostly not. For Ex., take this categorization, is it so very essential, to break a particular thing into so many parts and label it differently. I mean, considering the minority classification, the caste classification, why is it necessary, even today when all of us are suppose to be out of this, as we are educated. As Salujya said, yes it was for classification of labour, but now there is no such thing, then why ?

This very thing leads to difference between young blossoming individuals not to be open and broad minded. Please take care of this very fact and guess everything will fall then into places.

Conversion, although is ones own decision, but still personally, I think, one needs to think over it taking into account our forefather's who will loose their identity after so many years of death.

This death is just a physical one, but on conversion, they die completely with no one of their own to align themselves with. You may say, why talk of them, but I feel, they are the ones who made us, who gave us the power to think.

No religion is good or bad. It is a way of life for respective group of individuals and we need to honour it.

From PDG_CAL

Hi All!

It was great to be a part of the discussion group where you are taken out of the mailing list if you differ with the Mod.

I am sure we will not miss each other. Thanks.

From Tushar Guha

Dear Nriyanjali Yahoo Group Members,

I am Tushar Guha - the founder director of Nriyanjali and it is a joy for me to be mailing to our dear members of the yahoo group.

A couple of months back, at a party, Mr.Naresh Pukale the additional director of Nriyanjali casually referred to email war. The conversation ended there. However, the words email war intrigued me and I asked to read the concerned emails. While reading them, I found that the issue looked political but questioned the individual thinking.I was so full of joy and excitement that I spoke to the editorial board of Parichay mein Parichay - Nriyanjali's Quarterly House Journal, and requested if they could feature the entire so called email war content in the house journal.The April 2004 issue, featured the same under the heading - Controversy or Complacency and received tremendous appreciation.

Very recently, I learnt that another email war is on and I was tempted to ask for the hard copy of all the mails. Believe me, this time it turned out to be far more challenging and I feel so grateful to each one of you for it.

Nriyanjali was established by me years ago with one single motto that we should have awareness, for I always believed that they also serve who

stand and wait. I always felt pained that we refrain from sharing our opinions which is our birth right and this I think is our courage, our strength of mind.

Reading the emails gave me the feeling that I was not wrong even at the age of 15. There are so many like minded people and thank you for being a part of us - each one having our individual views, the right to descent, the right to agree to disagree, to respect and to understand others.

I am so overwhelmed that I thought I must convey my feelings and appreciation to each one of you. I do understand that at times, we will flare up, allege, yet I do know these are only the tools to make ourselves heard. I have noticed the immense maturity each email reflected and I have also noticed the ultimate respect and understanding that oozed out from the mails. I have also noticed that in the group we have very senior personalities, very young men & women. I would like to share with you, that our Nrityanjali actually functions with four generations working together.

When the Yahoo group was being started by Mr.Samir Pingle, one of my ardent students, I consented only because of him. Now, I am so grateful to him for the beginning and I appreciate all of you for making the Yahoo group so important, so beautiful, so challenging and so lively. I will not thank you for we are all in the family where formalities give way to understanding and acceptance. Yet, expressions and conveying feelings are important in any relationship and that is why I chose to mail all of you. We all need each other, together we grow till the end of our lives.

I wish all the members of the group voice their opinions, feelings and sentiments. This is not A TIME PASS but a contribution to individual growth of intellect and a collective growth of awareness. Please do mail and not worry about controversies. ***Controversy is Life - Complacency is not.***

Just now, as I am dictating this mail, I am informed about the mail from PDG_Cal. I am so pained.

Dear PDG _Cal - I do not know your name, but please do not ever write such a thing. In Nrityanjali, nobody is ever thrown out, even the greatest critic is loved because that's the only way we can grow. From a small beginning in 1963 today Nrityanjali has 24000 members from all over the world. Each one of us have problems, but we can always share and overcome them. People have been shocked to read the most critical letters (that we received) published in our news journal. We are not great, but we try to be simple to the best of our ability. We have nothing to offer but love, respect and understanding.

With regards and happy mailing,

From PDG_CAL

Respected Dr. Guha,

Thank you for the mail. I got your mail from kalpana gopinath's reply. I did not receive it directly. I am not sure why I am not receiving nrityanjali group mails. May be my name is taken off the list, if not, may be it is Yahoo groups fault....I don't know ...You can ask the moderator about it.

Regarding the 'email war' I apologise if I inadvertently digressed the focus of your group's discussion. But I felt that it was necessary to intervene at that point of time as some of the mails, in my view, were spreading hatred. In fact, I'd love to know your views about the 'controversy' that was created.

From Kalpana

This mail from Dr.Guha is indeed like a balm on a bad sore...pardon the example given by me as the issue was not so burning after all....as he has rightly said, each one of us respects others' rights to express and appreciate.Nrityanjali has not just survived the years but has grown from good to the best only because of such an unassuming and compassionate nature of Dr. Guha "Sir" as we would fondly like to call him. We shall strive to keep the mails pouring in and we shall all learn and grow for the better from these discussions on this forum.

Best & cheers to all in this group.Proud to be a part of nrityanjali in some small way.

NRITYANJALI ANTHEM

सत्य मंगल प्रेममय तुम्ही
 दृव ज्योती तुम अंधकार में ॥
 प्यार मुसकान सेवा में है
 संपूर्ण आत्मज्ञान ॥

नृत्यांजली है मुक्त आंगन
 नृत्य संगीत अभिनय संगम
 व्यक्तित्व विकास ही हमारा है धर्म
 सत्य शक्ति और स्विकृति ॥

My Only HOPE

The other day alone at night
 I sat besides an yellow light
 In the dark was tyhe only glow
 Which would sparkle and die was my
 fright.

I knew not why it was so hard,
 To ignore what's happening all around
 To show no tears which my heart cries,
 In the eyes where they could flow.

I wonder sometimes what makes me think
 so,
 When I know that music will not play on
 my tune,
 I still carry a sign of hope within me,
 Hoping for a morning full of dew.

I fear and fear a lot
 Of the only light which shall vanish
 A few hours of help which it gave
 I will be left alone all over again.

But I still want to live
 With the hope of a
 Better future and my pleasant part

By Kalpa Chheda**भ्रमण दूरध्वनी**

आरती पासून गणपतीच्या
 मंगलअष्टका पर्यंत लगनांच्या
 गीता पासून धार्मिक आणि देशाच्या
 गाण्यापर्यंत डोकं फिरलेल्या बाईच्या

असे बरेवाईट आवाज ऐकून घेउन
 कानात
 ठरविले मी एकदा माइयाच मनात
 ओरडून सांगावे याचे फायदे तोटे जनात

परंतू भ्रमण दूरध्वनी दिसतो सतत
 प्रत्येकाच्या कानात

कोणी बोलतात चालता-चालता
 कोणी बोलतात खाता-पीता
 ज्यांच्या हाती ही भ्रमण दूरध्वनी सत्ता
 या प्रत्येक जीवांच्या वेगळ्याच कथा
 आणि व्यथा

- दत्तात्रय शिवराम डवरी
 म.न.पा (सुरक्षा रक्षक)
 फ / उत्तर विभाग

Encounter with a Cobbler

The summer sun was blazing in the sky and mercilessly scorching people, pavements, buildings and vehicles. Anita wiped the beads of perspiration on her brows and looked impatiently at her watch. "Twenty minutes to go for the train to arrive. the heat is unbearable to put it mildly.

"Patience, my dear" said her husband, Arun. "Another half an hour and we can relax in the A/C compartment." They were awaiting the Coimbatore-Kurla express at the Bangalore railway station.

Just as Anita was heading towards a wooden bench on the platform, one of the straps of her sandals snapped, adding to her discomfort. "Where will I find a cobbler here?" She groaned. "Right at the entrance to the railway station, a little to the left, on the footpath. Perhaps he will do a quick job. I will stay here with the luggage. You go and see," Suggested Her husband."

Her bare feet burning on the oven-hot ground, Anita walked, following her husband's directions and located the cobbler, just outside the railway station. She approached him and requested him in the local language. "Baba, my train will arrive in fifteen minutes and my sandal needs mending. Can you please do it as quickly as you can?"

The cobbler asked the other customers to wait and addressed her in chaste English, "Here, Madam give me your sandal. Let me see what I can do with it." seeing a perplexed expression on her face, he continued, "Oh, you must be wondering how I speak English well, I hold a Masters Degree. I worked in the Accounts Department of a Government office I lost my job. due to a retrenchment scheme. I suffered

a setback in business and here I am, trying to make both ends meet. But I am happy because if everyone wants to be an officer, who will serve the society as a cobbler, a carpenter or a clerk? According to me, there are no menial jobs, only menial attitudes."

In the next five minutes his deft fingers worked on the broken strap. when Anita struggled to find change in her purse, the cobbler said, "That is ok, please go. your train is due and I don't want you to miss it."

Impressed and touched by the cobbler's approach, Anita enquired, "Baba, I know your name?"

You have called me Baba (father). so, then Baba is my name. Happy journey, beti (daughter)."

Recounting this experience to her husband, Anita mused, "My visit to the cobbler was a blessing in disguise. Today, I learnt two valuable lessons - affection to strangers and true dignity of labour from the most unexpected person in a most unexpected place - a cobbler on the pavement."



LOOK OUT FOR :

SARASWATI PUJA

on

SUNDAY

13th February 2005

at 6 P.M.

followed by BHOG

Did You Know !!!

When you envy someone, it's because you really like that person?

Those who appear to be very strong in heart, are real weaklings and most susceptible?

The three most difficult things to say are : I love you, Sorry and help me

PEOPLE WHO OCCUPY THEMSELVES BY KEEPING OTHERS COMPANY OR HELPING OTHERS ARE THE ONES THAT ACTUALLY NEED YOUR COMPANY AND HELP?

The people who say these are that actually need them or really feel them, and are the ones you really need to treasure, because they have said them.

When you help someone, the help is returned in two folds?

Those who dress in black, are those who want to be unnoticed and need your help and understanding?

Those who dress in red are more confident in themselves?

Those who need more of you are those that not mention it to you?

Those who spend thier time protecting others are the ones that really need some one to protect them?

If you ask for something in faith, your wishes are granted?

SEASONS OF FESTIVALS

Contributed by - Ms.Maitri Parikh & Ms. Sreekala Babu

Ganesh Chaturthi

Ganesh Chaturthi is celebrated in honour of Ganesha, the elephant-headed god who is as worshipped the remover of obstacles, on Bhadarva Sud 4th. The birth anniversary of Lord Ganesh. It's celebrated widely, but with particular enthusiasm in Maharashtra. The festival is observed for ten days, and immersions of the deity are carried out over the last twenty-four hours of the festival, and the honor of the last immersions, when immense crowds are gathered, falls to the most well-known or affluent communities. Pavilions are put up by various communities, residential blocks, streets, markets, wealthy merchants or industrialists, and organizations, and an image, usually quite lavish, of Ganesh is placed on each mandap.



Ganesh's Birth

Once Lord Shiva left his usual dwelling on Mt.Kailas in the Himalayas, to meditate in one of the caves in the same mountain. Two friends of Parvati, his consort, suggested that she should have a 'gana' - attendant of their own, since they were not too happy with Shivaji's 'ganas'. Parvati agreed. Soon after, using her divine powers, she created a son, naming him Vinayak. She instructed him to guard their home. When Shivaji returned Vinayak prevented him from entering. After some bickering, Shivaji beheaded Vinayak with his 'trishul' (trident). When Parvati heard of this she lamented intensely. Shivaji realised his error. To set things right he sent his men to the forest to fetch the head of the first living thing they met. They encountered a baby elephant and returned with its head.

With his divine power, Shivaji placed the head over his son's body. Instantly Vinayak sprung to life. Henceforth Vinayak also earned the name of Gajaanan. 'Gaja' means elephant. Shivaji blessed him with a boon that people would first worship and offer him dedication in all their auspicious activities. Those who didn't would not attain success. Bhadarva Sud 4th is the day Parvati was offering the final puja to the dead Ganeshji, when he resurrected. On this day every household in Maharashtra installs a small clay murti of Ganeshji in their homes. He is offered puja and prasada until Sud 14 - Anant Chaturthi. This is celebrated with great festivity and fervor and the murti is taken to a river or lake and submerged. A well known chant is chanted during the procession for submersion.

In this manner Ganesh is a deity of auspiciousness, wisdom and wealth. Ganesh Chaturthi is a festival inspiring devotees to inculcate redemptive virtues in their lives.

Diwali

Also known as Deepawali and Deepotsav, this festival occurs on Aso vad 15 (Amaas), the final day of the Hindu year.

Origin

There are five stories celebrating this day:

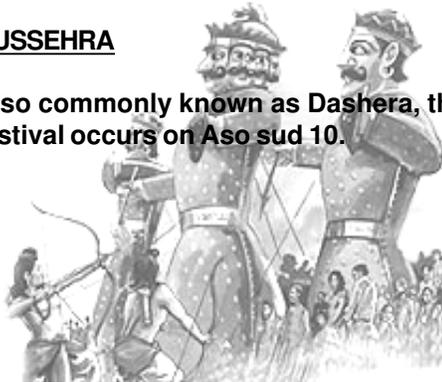
1. Lord Krishna vanquished Narkaasur, releasing people from misery.
2. Lord Pruthu extracted goodness from the earth.
3. During the Samudra Manthan, Lakshmi emerged from the ocean.
4. The Pandavs returned from their forest exile.
5. Lord Ramachandra returned to Ayodhya after his victory over Rawan in Lanka.

In essence people light divas on this day to depict their joy on being released from suffering inflicted by evil elements. This is perhaps the most well-known of the Indian festivals: it is celebrated throughout India, as well as in Indian communities throughout the diaspora.

It usually takes place eighteen days after Dusshera. It is colloquially known as the “festival of lights”, for the common practice is to light small oil lamps (called diyas) and place them around the home, in courtyards, verandahs, and gardens, as well as on rooftops and outer walls. The celebration of the festival is invariably accompanied by the exchange of sweets and the explosion of fireworks. As with other Indian festivals, Diwali signifies many different things to people across the country. In north India, Diwali celebrates Rama’s homecoming, that is his return to Ayodhya after the defeat of Ravana and his coronation as king; in Gujarat, the festival honors Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth; and in Bengal, it is associated with the goddess Kali. Everywhere, it signifies the renewal of life, and accordingly it is common to wear new clothes on the day of the festival; similarly, it heralds the approach of winter and the beginning of the sowing season.

DUSSEHRA

Also commonly known as Dasher, this festival occurs on Aso sud 10.



Origin

There are many stories related to this festival: 1) As we saw in Navratri, the Lord’s Shakti, Parvati, vanquished the demon Mahishasur on the 10th day after a 9-day battle. This is cited in the Skanda Puran. The sentiment here is that the uncontrolled indriyas are only conquered by the Lord’s Shakti. 2) On this day Lord Ram vanquished Ravan. Therefore people celebrate the Lord’s victory by burning Ravan’s effigy on this day.

Dussehra marks the victory of Ram over Ravana, & the rescue of his wife Sita. In North India gigantic effigies of the ten-headed Ravana & his brothers are set aflame with a bursting of crackers. Fairs are usually held on this occasion with lots to eat, buy & enjoy. The festival lasts ten days, and most communities celebrate it with great fanfare. During the festival, the Ramleela, or the story of Rama, is enacted by professional dance companies and amateur troupes. On the last day of the festival, young men and small boys, dressed as Rama, his brother Lakshman, Ravana, and other players in the drama, proceed through the streets of the community as part of a float that is sometimes quite elaborate. Rama and Ravana engage in battle; Ravana is defeated. Then Rama fires an arrow into the huge effigies of Meghnada and Kumbhakarna, stuffed — as is the effigy of Ravana — with crackers and explosives; finally an arrow is shot into Ravana’s effigy, to the encouraging shouts of “Ramchandra ki jai”, “Victory to Rama”, and a large explosion ripples through the sky. In Bengal, Dusshera is celebrated as Durga Puja. Idols of the goddess Durga are worshipped for nine days, and on the tenth day immersed in a body of water, such as a river or pond. In Mysore, caparisoned elephants lead a colorful procession through the streets of the city.

Navaratri

Navaratri, the Festival of Nine Nights, is celebrated in honour of the goddesses Durga, Lakshmi, and Saraswati. This occasion commemorates the homecoming of the Goddess Durga. Her return home is marked by the immersion of her idols in running water. The onset of Aso, the final month of the Hindu year, witnesses the lion’s share of festivals judiciously crammed into 30 days! The bright half, Shukla Paksh, sets off with Navaratri for 9 days and nights, celebrated especially by women. Dusshera follows on the 10th and Sharad Poonam on the 15th, the night on which

Lord Krishna played Raas with the Gopis of Vrundavan. The dark half, Vad Paksh, witnesses the festivities reaching a feverish pitch in the ongoing battle of righteousness over evil; with Dhanteras on the 13th, Kali Chaudash on the 14th and the final day of the year crowned by Diwali. Every year this festival commences on the 1st day of Aso till the 9th. Devotees celebrate the victory of Lord's shakti-power, over evil. There are several names attached to this shakti, such as Amba, Ambica, Bhavani, Chamunda and Durga.



Origin

Having pleased Brahma, the evil Mahishasur obtained a boon that he should never die by human hands. He then wrought carnage in the three worlds, thus worrying the three 'devatas' - Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. They prayed to the Lord for succor. This resulted in the manifestation of Durga. To vanquish Mahishasur, Indra gifted her his weapon, known as 'Vajra'. Vishnu gave the 'Chakra' - spinning disc and Shiva, the 'Trishul' - trident. By creating 18 arms, Durga fought for 9 days with Mahishasur, using the above weapons and many others. On the 10th day, she attained 'Vijay' - victory. Thus the 10th day is known as 'Vijaya Dashmi.' A second reference, of how Mahishasur was vanquished, appears in the Skand Purana. Once he visited Mount Arunachal. Here his eyes fell on Parvati performing austerities. Attracted to her, he assumed the guise of an old man and questioned her about the purpose of her austerities. "To please the powerful Lord Shiva and marry him," she replied. Mahishasur proffered, "I am also powerful. Marry me instead." This affront on Lord Shiva induced Parvati to challenge the

demon to a duel. A terrific battle ensued. Ultimately, being the Lord's Shakti, Parvati slew him.

Raksha Bandhan

Raksha Bandhan is an integral part of the Hindu family structure whereby a sister ties a rakhi or decorative thread on the wrist of her brother to remind him to protect her if the need arises, it is also the sign of their affection. The festival is celebrated as Coconut Day in Maharashtra as the monsoon seas are calmed by coconuts thrown to Varuna, the god of waters. Around mid-August, on Shravan Purnima, Hindus all over celebrate Raksha Bandhan. "Raksha" means protection, "bandhan" means bound or binding. The festival is also known as Balev.

The annual "festival" of Raksha Bandhan, which is meant to commemorate the abiding ties between siblings of opposite sex, usually takes place in late August, and is marked by a very simple ceremony in which a woman ties a rakhi — which may be a colorful thread, a simple bracelet, or a decorative string — around the wrist of her brother(s). The word "raksha" signifies protection, and "bandhan" is an association signifying an enduring sort of bond; and so, when a woman ties a rakhi around the waist of her brother, she signifies her loving attachment to him. He, likewise, recognizes the special bonds between them, and by extending his wrist forward, he in fact extends the hand of his protection over her. The thread-tying ceremony is sometimes preceded by the woman conducting aarti before her brother, so that the blessings of God may be showered upon him, and this is to the accompaniment of her enunciation or chanting of a mantra, which may be in Sanskrit or one of the other Indian languages. In Punjabi, for instance, the mantra says: "Suraj shakhan chhodian / Mooli chhodia beej / Behen ne rakhi bandhi / Bhai tu chir jug jee", which can be roughly translated as follows: "The sun radiates its sunlight / the radish seeds / I (the sister) tied the rakhi / brother, may you

live long.” After the conclusion of the ceremony, she places a sweet in her mouth, and he might return the gesture. The brother bestows a small gift upon his sister, generally in the form of a small sum of money, such as Rupees 51, 101, 251, or 501.

** The Bhavishya Puran cites a story that the devas once battled with the danavas (demons) for twelve years. However, the devas lost, including the mighty Indra. So they prepared to fight again. On this occasion, Indrani tied a raksha on her consort Indra, after extolling Raksha Bandhan's glory. Indra then attained victory.

** During the battle of Mahabharat, Queen Kunti tied a raksha on her grandson Abhimanyu to protect him in battle.

GURU POORNIMA

The day of full moon, Purnima, in the month of Ashadh is traditionally celebrated as Guru Purnima by Hindus. Also known as Vyas Purnima, the day is celebrated in remembrance and veneration to sage Ved Vyas. He is the Adi (original) Guru of the Hindu Dharma, who classified the Vedas, wrote the eighteen Puranas and the Mahabharat. On this day, the Guru is offered Pujan (worship) by the disciples

JANMASHTAMI

Shravan vad 8 celebrates the birth of Lord Shri Krishna, one of the most venerated incarnations in the Hindu Dharma.

- People fast on this day, usually a waterless fast.
- They spend the day immersed in Shri Krishna's glory by reading, reciting and

singing his divine leela especially in the evening in mandirs.

- At midnight, the Lord's birth hour, arti is performed.
- After arti, devotees jubilantly sing and hail kirtans extolling the Lord's incarnation.

ONAM

This festival is celebrated by the Keralites. It goes on with pomp and glory for ten days from 'Attam' to 'Tiruonam'. The houses are decorated with flower rangolis for all the ten days. Every individual is dressed in beautiful new attires. In Kerala, especially, women perform a particular dance known as 'Kaikottikali', as a part of the celebration. It includes the special boat races 'Vallamkali' for men. Onam 'Sadhya' (feast) is the most important part of the festival, where all the family members enjoy the lavish meal followed by desert i.e payasam.

There is a typical tradition of the rich landlords giving away new clothes, food, money, etc. to the labourers or farm hands.

The festival coincides with the harvesting season. Thus every house is filled with grains, fruits and vegetables. The festival is enjoyed equally by the rich and also the poor. It is also assumed that the ruler, Mahabali, of Kerala state who was pushed to the 'Patala' by Lord Maha Vishnu, comes to visit his subjects on the eve of ONAM.



WELLNESS - a complete conceptby **Dr. Tushar Guha***(The edited version of this article was published by Times Wellness dated 25th July 2004)*

*" If I am not beautiful in my own eyes, how can
I be beautiful in the eyes of others
&
Who am I to sit on a judgement of a fellow
human being."*

These are the opening lines of my 35 years of research work. *Beautiful in my own eyes* is confidence, *beautiful in the eyes of others* is comfort level and *judgement of a fellow human being* is relationship. From these lines, stem the very essence of well being of an individual - his self confidence- the truth, comfort level - the strength and his relationships - the acceptance. No individual is complete if these three elements are not balanced which is equated to body, mind and spirituality. This totality is Wellness.

Wellness

Physical Health remains a priority in life if one truly desires to live a healthy life. Physical health enhances mental peace and spiritual inclinations. But it is also the other way round ie, both mental stability and spiritual approach add to sustaining a sound physical health.

An individual comprises of Body, Mind and Spirituality. The body is the physique, the mind has intelligence, emotions, feelings, attitude etc and spirituality is compassion - understanding of others. Among the three, body is the first among equals.

However, there can never be a priority sector among the three. All the three will have to be nurtured and balanced simultaneously - may be degrees will vary. This combined effort, the balancing act has now been realised and assumed importance as WELLNESS.

In ancient India, the concept of Wellness was a very common understanding. The Hindu philosophy - the way of life - enumerated the need in various scriptures and the sages practiced the same. With time, with different influences of society, the importance got diluted. The awareness began to fade and finally took an absolute back seat.

Necessity is the mother of invention. With the growing stressful pattern of life, living began to be painful - away from any semblance of joy. Stress began to take toll on the very relationships that once brought joy and happiness. Peace of mind began to disappear. Then the realisation and the need to address this stressful situation was felt. Various ways and means to reduce stress and improve the quality of life were being looked at. Gradually the age old proven concepts were dug up as saviours. The concept of Wellness was felt, realised and accepted.

Why Wellness ?

People of all walks of life, of all ages, male / female, fall prey to undesired temptations in life. Overworking to amass wealth, over eating, over dieting, too dependent, too luxurious, too independent, ignoring small ailments leading to chronic diseases and so on. The natural fall outs of poor economic conditions, environmental hazards, inherent mental disorders, incapable of being strong to accept challenges of life and thereby suffering from depression are the other reasons why Wellness is a must.

Wellness means a complete view and acceptance of the problematic and relative issues of the sufferings. Wellness is a total concept which is concerned with every aspect of the individual. The aim and focus is on complete happiness. Happiness of body, mind and soul.

What is Wellness ? and How ?

The answer has been dealt with in the introduction of this article. Wellness is a concept that not only envisages but enhances a simultaneous development of Body, Mind and Soul ie., Physique, Mental Peace and Spirituality.

The Body - is the outside of a person. The physique that can be seen and touched by self and others. The body can be felt and used to convey the inner feelings. Naturally, then it is pertinent that the individual knows his body. Sadly, it is not so. Awareness of one's body is not only seeing but appreciating each part of the body. Feeling a sense of pride that *I Live, I Breathe*. Most of us do not know our body that is so easy to be aware of and looked at. Knowing the body begins from self. Look at every part of the body, appreciate and feel a sense of pride. This sense of pride stimulates self confidence, provides peace of mind.

Knowing the body also leads to hygienic health - cleanliness of the body, smelling good, dressing well. Awareness of body helps to avoid illnesses that are common and general in nature like breast lumps and marital relationships are free from periodic gynecological hazards.

Maintaining a firm body is crucial in that the body is agile, free of inhibition and rigidity. Physical exercises are key to an agile body.

Life on the one side has turned very complex yet on the other is far more accessible and comfortable. Today fitness centres are available to practice various exercises. Yet

certain basics which are hardly time consuming and less tedious, if practised, provides relaxation and lead to avoidance of any syndrome like - the computer syndrome of the neck, hand and body.

With stress as well as with age, the body needs care and attention. The achievement of ancient India through *Yoga* is being accepted the world over today. *Yoga* in various forms uplifts the body, cleanses the breathing and freshens up the mind.

The Mind - is the inside of the person - the abstract that cannot be seen or touched but felt. Mind is the most fragile of all, that changes every minute, every second. It is imperative to have a hold on this fragile and flickering state called the mind. The stability of the mind is important to enable to retain a peaceful and relaxed mental state which leads to effective communication resulting into a stable relationship. Mind, needs to be balanced and controlled.



For ages, different methods have been evolved to control the mind for, from the mind grows the emotions of anger, sorrow, joy, love, etc. and attitude and other unseen attributes that define a human being. Among all, meditation, has been found to be the most effective controller of a volatile mind. However, over the years, with different experiments, different methods of

meditations, have been evolved. Each of these methods, systems have finally provided the same output that of controlling the mind, peace of mind and a balanced controlled human being.

Meditation through the method of rhythm - count, followed by *sangeet* as evolved by me has proved to be effective and enjoyable. The counts rise to tones with various emotional moods and rising in a crescendo with *slokas* (enumerating the ideals that should guide life coupled with a spontaneous flow of activity) sung with soothing tunes. The effects have proved to be soothing and a feeling of contentment, thereby allowing an individual to be objective in his approach to life because of the calmness derived out of the *sangeetmay dhyan chintan*.

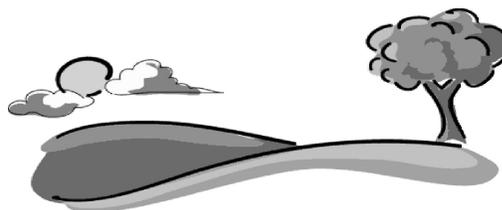
The method of meditation through rhythm and count also has a psychological angle. Our mind is filled with lot of negatives as from infancy we are advocated to more *don'ts* than *do's*. Most of the *don'ts* have never been logically accepted and have settled deep within. This, periodically gives way to outburst and robs us of peace of mind and relationships. The counts with tones of various emotional moods, direct, this very negative feelings that are not logically accepted. In the process activating and emitting the same from deep within, thereby relieving the individual of the negatives within. Singing of the *slokas* later, soothes the activated nerves, providing a feeling of relaxation and contentment.

The mind also needs other approaches - such as interactions with people, ability to understand self (methods available) and others. This brings us to the next requirement.

The Spirituality - Spirituality and religion are two different concepts all together. Spirituality, essentially is compassion while religion is belief coupled with rituals that need to be followed. Compassion means the desire and the ability to understand others - the fellow human beings. Compassion could be weakness if not supported by objectivity. Compassion is a strength if directed with determination towards constructive and result oriented activity.

Every individual has a soul which is equated by every society, every community, every religion as GOD. Through spirituality, one understands the equality of individuals because of the equality of God - one soul is not inferior to the other, one God is not inferior to the other. Ineffect, *no person is superior or inferior to others. We happen to be senior or junior by virtue of being born early or later.* Understanding of this basic essence brings solace to self. Understanding the soul - the God within self, leads to contentment and strengthens one's being.

Spirituality can be cherished through reading objectively different articles, participating in non biased discussions, listening to logically delivered talks and ability to raise logical questions.



Combined Effect - Wellness

The three prone approach, as explained above, assures complete fitness that can be termed as wellness. None of the three aspects should be isolated and made independent of each other. The flow from the body should spill over to the mind and then spirituality should take over.

In the process of wellness, persons involved in providing such services, need to pay particular attention to every individual's frame of mind, frame of emotion and logic. The family orientation, the relationships and the psyche are of prime importance. A constant vigil on all these aspects of the individual along with the nessesary medical assistance is a must. The most important, however, is to monitor the frame of mind of the individual.

The other areas that will have to be catered to are :

- Exercises of laughter, screaming and loud wailing.
- Long and relaxed walk
- Sound sleep and rest.
- Physical exercises to be monitored.
- Enjoyable food.
- Entertainment as per choice - Games, Sports, Music, Dance, Singing, Film viewing, Trekking, Swimming etc.

Wellness, depends on environment - natural, family, social etc. But, above all, pleasant words, a smile, a hug, a little concern, a little interest, a little enquiry, a little touch - all of

which means expression, understanding and compassion, are the basics of true *Wellness*. *Wellness*, necessarily, does not need to have a huge Retreat, Resort, Hospital. Yes! medical support is needed, but, the humane approach is far more needed.

Ultimately, one has to be true to self, learn to love self which also directs towards appreciating and loving inanimate objects that contribute to the growth of an individual. This might appear as being materialistic but in effect it is acceptance of one's belonging. After all, every individual is *alone in this world, but this aloneness is not loneliness, but a strong and firm aloneness from which we derive our strength*. *Wellness* enumerates this total philosophy with total acceptability.

RIB-TICKLER'S

Read this. It is a challenge that u wont have an answer to the question asked in the passage.

All of you must have seen the Dev Anand mega hit film 'Guide'. In the film there is a famous song 'gaata rahe mera dil...' in which Waheeda Rehman wears a pink saree and throughout the song. So, when we have a trend of heroines changing clothes in every sequence, the big question is: Why doesn't Waheeda Rehman change her saree in the entire song? The answer to this is simply amazing and no amount of head scratching will help you:

----- Answer !!!! -----

Because in the first stanza of the song, Dev Anand sings the following lines:

'O mere humrahi,
meri bah thamen chalna,
badle duniya 'SAREE',
tum na badalna...

ONE LINERS

1. Never argue with an idiot. They drag you down to their level then beat you with experience!
2. Accept that some days you're the pigeon, and some days you're the statue.
3. If you're too open minded, your brains will fall out.
4. Age is a very high price to pay for maturity.
5. Going to church doesn't make you a Christian any more than going to a garage makes you a mechanic.
6. Artificial intelligence is no match for natural stupidity.
7. My idea of housework is to sweep the room with a glance.
8. It is easier to get forgiveness than permission.

HOW ABOUT A VACATION WITH WILDLIFE!!!!!!

Contributed By : Ms.Maitri Parikh

It is claimed that no other region in the world has as diverse an existence of wild life species as found in Assam. Three national parks and 12 wildlife sanctuaries safely house everything from huge mammals to feathered beauties. So, other than its beautiful landscape and wonderful tea (which is definitely an added bonus), Assam promises great wild life. Kaziranga National Park, the oldest national park in Assam, covers an area of 430 sq kms and is best known for the great one-horned rhinoceros.

One rhino experience in life is a must because the poor things are slowly going extinct. Some other species you are likely to encounter at Kaziranga are elephants, Indian bisons, swamp deer, sambars, hog deer, sloth bears, tigers, leopards, leopard cats, jungle cats, hog badgers, capped langurs, hoolock gibbons, jackals, geese, hornbills, cormorants, egrets, herons, and fishing eagles, to name a few.

The tourism department of Assam organises a conducted tour of Kaziranga every Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday. Reservations for these tours can be made at the tourism office in Guwahati. Due to the presence of elephant grass, tourism officials suggest that Kaziranga National Park is best seen from the elephant's back. The best season to visit Kaziranga is between November to April.

This is the period when the park is full of greenery, the monsoon has just ended and the animals wake up from their slumber. Being moderately cold then, animals are mainly basking and lazing in the sun and are thus easily spotted. We should not forget to carry woolens in winters and light cotton clothes in summers. A wild life vacation in Assam is quite safe for women.

Joining an organised tour is preferable, though, in order to get the most out of your wild-life experience. Plenty of tours are available, depending on how much time you have. Asian Adventures Travel Organisation is one which offers a longer and more extensive tour starting from Delhi and landing up eventually at Sunderbans National Park for an interlude with the mangrove tigers. The tour even includes some river rafting.

Dudhwa National Park or Tiger Reserve in UP abounds with tigers and the barasingha or swamp deer. We can spot storks and rhinos and it is also a bird-lovers' paradise.

The following are the means by which we can get there. The nearest town Palia is 10 kms away from the reserve and approximately 400 kms from Delhi. Board a train from Delhi to Shahjahanpur and then proceed by road to Palia. Dudhwa is also connected to Lucknow and Nainital via Mailani. It is well connected by road to Lucknow, Delhi and Palia.

The best time to visit is between November and June. We should check out the opening and closing dates of the park with the Uttar Pradesh tourism office.

Assam is the only region in the world which has diverse existence of wild life species



Like most reserves and sanctuaries, we have options ranging from forest huts to rest houses like the Dudhwa forest home, (for which we need to book in advance). We have dormitory accommodation and



log houses or alternately, we can stay at Palia.

For information on this, we can contact :

The Field Director

*Dudhwa National Park,
Lakhimpur-Kheri, Uttar Pradesh-262701.
Contact No.: 2106*

*Cuisine: There are local eateries in Palia.
Dining facilities are available at Dudhwa.*

Keoladeo National Park - Rajasthan

Birds - Keoladeo houses nearly 400 different kinds of birds. We don't need to be an expert bird-watcher or ornithologist to appreciate this beautiful bird sanctuary. With a guide and binoculars we can have a great holiday here.

Glimpse a white-tailed eagle and a Eurasian Wryneck. From spoonbills and egrets to herons and kingfishers, some of the greatest waterbirds can be seen in Keoladeo. There are also partridges and quails, hornbills and woodpeckers. Each year, many birds begin to arrive in August to begin their nesting. From winter to March, many migratory birds make Keoladeo their transitory home as they escape the cold.

As we cycle along the quiet shady path of the park, we can also glimpse blackbucks and wildboar, hyenas and blue bulls (nilgai), Sambar, Spotted deer (chital), jackals, mongoose, monkeys and pythons.

To get there: *Bharatpur is just a 2 hour drive*

from Agra (55kms). Keoladeo is 3 kms from Bharatpur town.

By bus: We can take a bus from Fatehpur Sikri to the Bharatpur bus stand.

By train: Fast trains operate to Agra (2hrs) and Amritsar (14hrs).

Near the Bharatpur bus stand is a well-equipped tourist office, which can provide us with maps and travel brochures.

Cuisine - Options are restricted to the hotels in and around the park area. One of the best restaurants in town is Eagles Nest near the main highway. Serves North-Indian specialties, which are very popular. We can also get chilled beer here.

At Evergreen, try the mouthwatering "missi rotis" at breakfast. The small family guesthouses serve you simple homely food.

Information you can use

* If you are planning a trip to Rajasthan, devote atleast 2 days to visit Keoladeo.

* Park timings are from 6am to 6.30pm and the entry fee is Rs 100.

* Fees are charged for taking your cameras.

* You get a free map at the park entrance, which is very useful. You can hire a guide for your group since most of them are aware of the nesting areas.

* You can also take a boat ride during the winters in true gondola style (non-motorized) and view the beautiful scenery and wildlife. Boats can take upto 8 people.

* Best time to visit is between October to February. It is cool and chilly at this time. If you are planning a summer vacation, then April to June and July to August are relatively warm.

* If traveling during winter, carry woolens. Carry cotton clothing during summers. Sunhats and insect repellants.

* Carry your binoculars.

.....

Khana Khazana

Spinach Pulao with Paneer

Method:

Ingredients:

2 cups rice, 1 Tbsp ghee,
1 tsp jeera, salt to taste,
1 big onion chopped,
1 big bunch of spinach (make paste like
chutney), 4 green chillies chopped,
1 ginger chopped, salt to taste,
cashewnuts – few fried.

Method:

1. Wash rice and soak in water for half an hour.
2. Take ghee in a flat vessel.
3. Add jeera and onions. Fry onions till brown.
4. Add raw spinach paste, chopped green chilli, ginger and salt. Stir for some time.
5. Then add hot water twice the amount of rice to cook rice.
6. When water boils add rice. Cook rice.
7. When it is almost cooked add paneer pieces.
8. Cover, add water on the lid also. Keep till the water is absorbed.
9. Serve hot with fried cashewnuts.

1. In 2 Tbsp oil splutter mustard seeds and add udad dal, chana dal and cashewnuts.
2. When it is light brown, add chopped chillies, ginger and curry leaves.
3. Mix rava and roast for 5 mins. on a slow flame. This gives a nice flavour.
4. Remove from the fire and allow it to cool.
5. When cool, mix curds and salt. Allow it to ferment for 4 – 5 hrs. Then add few coriander leaves.
6. Grease the idli plates and fill it with the batter. Steam for 6 – 8 mins.

Rava Idli

Ingredients:

1 cup roasted rava, 1 cup curd,
2 green chillies, ½ piece ginger,
1 tsp chana dal, 1 tsp udad dal,
1 Tbsp cashewnut, 2 Tbsp oil,
½ tsp mustard seeds,
curry and coriander leaves.

Disney Delight (Welcome Drink)

Ingredients:

1 small cup melted vanilla icecream,
8 big spoons pineapple juice,
1 big spoon honey,
4 big spoons banana puree,
Few ice crumbs.

Method:

1. Put all the ingredients along with ice crumbs in a blender and mix well.
2. Serve it in a long glass.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

October

3rd Naresh Pukale (32945207)
 11th Khushvi Pukale (27608069)
 12th Divya Petigara (9820354998)
 15th Zenobia Nankani (9821252221)
 16th Deepali Raut
 18th Aruna Bora (25163590)
 25th Manju Pukale (9820418357)
 29th Vikram Notey (25643667)

December

4th Malati Majumdar (25684700)
 14th Brinda Gopalkrishnan (9820603996)
 19th Ashit Thakkar (9821076549)
 21st Sonal Thakkar (25604552)
 21st Samir Pingle (9820543398)
 21st C R Subramanian

November

3rd Chitra Thaker (25648905)
 5th Nilangi Bandarkar (9819099521)
 7th Kaveri Gopalkrishnan (25420523)
 7th Kalyani Srinivasan
 8th Manish Shah (9820053755)
 12th Satish Bhalgat
 12th Trupti Pukale (95251 2404498)
 13th Kedar Pingle (25914501)
 13th Sandesh Kadam
 14th Swati Kartik
 17th Radhika Kadam
 23rd Jaya Nair (25602627)
 24th Sachin Kandalgaonkar

January

2nd Manju Chawdhary (25677219)
 6th Puloma Pukale (27608069)
 10th Sneha Nair (275673904)
 10th Archana Menon
 18th Prakash Bora (25163590)
 27th Sanjay Pillai (25617388)

Please SEND to PMP Editorial Board :
Articles / Poems / Pictures
Original or Contributions
Pictures / Sketches in black and white only.

e-mail - nrityanjali@vsnl.com