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VASANTH BHAT

Quarterly Newsletter
for circulation to
Members of
KONKANI SABHA

**PRESIDENT'S
PAGE**

Vol V No.2

Apr., May , Jun., 1982

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*** Views expressed in this
Newsletter do not necessarily
reflect the views of the Konkani
Sabha.

Dear Friends

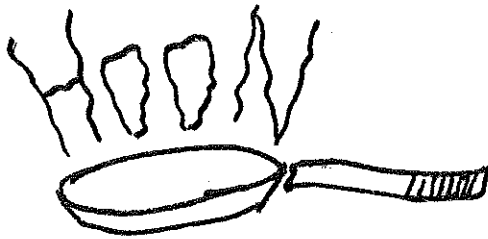
Last month, the elections for Office Bearers for the 1982-83 year were held. It was heartening to note that members were eager to volunteer for the various offices. A special thanks to last year's Committee members who worked hard to make all the functions a great success.

We owe a debt of gratitude to Mr.Damodar Baliga who served untiringly as the President of the Sabha for the last two years. He has graciously agreed to serve on the Committee as our FIA representative. We will continue to rely on Dammu for his counsel and encouragement.

This year we plan to have 3 functions: a picnic in July, a Diwali function in November and another indoor function in May. If there is sufficient response, we may have a second picnic. Please let us know any suggestions you may have regarding the Sabha's activities. We will do our best to implement them.

One of our goals this year is to qualify our Sabha as a Non-Profit Organization. If you can help in any way, please come forward.

Gopi K. Pai



Khabbar

CONGRATULATIONS

Dr. Ganesh Bhat M.D., opened the office for the practice of Internal Medicine and Nephrology with Dr. P.S. Murthy at Bayside, NY. The Sabha wishes them all the success.

Dr. Maitreya Padukone D.D.S., opened his dental practice office at Manhattan, NY. The Sabha wishes him all the success.

WEDDING BELLS

S. KRISHNANDA KAMATH and S. PREMANANDA KAMATH, nephews of Mr. Vinayak Kudva, recently celebrated their marriages in India. The Sabha wishes the newly marrieds all the happiness. For further details of the wedding, watch for the next issue of the Khabbar.

NEW ARRIVAL

NIKHIL, a baby boy to Ravi and Vidya Nayak of Flanders, NJ. Visiting Nikhil are his paternal grand parents, Rangappa and Sumitra Nayak, from Bombay, India.

OBITUARY

SRI K. VASUDEVA BHAT, father of Vasanth Bhat and Mrs. Vidya Nayak, expired on May 10, 1982 in Mangalore. The Sabha expresses the condolences to the bereaved families.

HINDUISM and the VEDAS

by Dr. Vasudev Nayak

Hinduism owes its uniqueness to the fact that it has no founder nor does it conform to the patterns of an institutionalized religion. The origins of Hinduism is shrouded in the mists of antiquity. Hinduism is not merely one of the oldest religions of the world, but the most complex of them, too. It has grown through time. Like a mountain it has weathered many a storm. Like the sea it has allowed a few rivers to mingle with itself. Ideas that sprang forth from within in protest against Hinduism at different periods, ultimately faded away. Faiths that came from outside to invade its domain, in turn preferred to coexist with it.

HINDUISM THROUGH AGES

The religio-philosophic culture in India has been historically traced by one of the authors on a book on Hinduism as follows:

1. The Pre-Aryan period (3000-2000 B.C.) when religion and culture were widely spread in Sind, Baluchistan and parts of the Punjab. Mohenjodaro belongs to that era.

2. The Vedic period (2000-600 B.C.) when the sacred books collectively known as the Vedas were composed, providing for the philosophical thought and religious practices of the early Aryans.

3. The Age of Revolt (600 B.C. thru A.D. 300) when religious thinking and activity preceded in different directions to build up different systems of belief. Among the chief landmarks of this period were: (a) the formulation of the six systems of philosophy, namely: Nyaya, Vaishesika, Samkhya, Yoga, Purva Mimamsa and Uttara Mimamsa (b) development of sectarianism in the forms of Saivism, Vaishnavism and Saktism, (c) composition of the two great epics, namely, Ramayana and Mahabharata and (d) the rise of Jainism and Buddhism, of which the founders were real historical persons.

4. The Pauranic Age (A.D. 300 thru 1200) of which the important features were (a) the gradual dominance of Brahmanism (b) the downfall of Buddhism (c) decline of Jainism; (d) the reconciliation of Vedic faith with sectarianism and (e) the evolution of synthetic Hinduism.

5. The Muslim period (1200 A.D. thru 1757) when Hinduism was confronted with an alien faith, Islam which was fundamentally different in character. The impact of Islam led to, among other things, (i) weakening of the caste system and (ii) the rise of a new monotheistic faith viz., Sikhism.

6. The Modern Age (1757 A.D. thru present day) marked by the spread of western education and culture and reformist movements in Hindu Society.

SCRIPTURES

The Shastras or religious scriptures of the Hindus fall under two broad groups - SRUTIS and SMRITIS. The former mean those that are 'heard' and comprise the Vedas. The latter represent that are 'remembered' and include the Epics, the Puranas and the Codes. The SRUTIS are not considered a product of man, but represent the voice of God Himself; they had existed from time immemorial. They were considered to have been revealed to certain exceptionally gifted persons called Rishis (sages) who intuited them and handed them down through a succession of disciples. Even after the introduction of the alphabets, the preservation of the Vedas in written form was not encouraged, and even prohibited.

The word 'Veda' means to know. The Vedas generally signify supreme knowledge. The Vedas constitute the most sacred and authoritative literature of the Hindus. To them they owe the

origin not only of many of the religious doctrines, but also of their ritualistic practices. The Vedic gods have been largely abandoned, and some of the vedic sacrifices have become obsolete. But still the Vedas continue to be adored and followed in many important ceremonies and rituals. Even civic conduct, social relations and natural life which are guided by some of the smritis are based upon the sacred sanction of Vedic authority. Even today, all the obligatory duties of the Hindus at birth, marriage, death and so on are performed according to the Vedic ritual. The four Vedas are Rig veda, Yajur veda, Sama veda and Atharva veda. The contents of each of these can be divided into two main divisions : Samhitas and Brahmanas. The Samhitas are Mantras or prayers and praises presented in metrical hymns. The Brahmanas are ritualistic precepts and illustrations given in prose. Besides, the principal Upanishads are included in the four Brahmanas. Upanishads are mystical or secret doctrines, appended in prose or occasional verse form in later times to Vedas.

The Samhita part of Rigveda contains some 1028 lyrics, prayers and praises addressed to some 76 different objects, mostly personalised or deified forces of nature. The Yajurveda, is a priestly handbook, arranged in the liturgical form for the performance of Yajna or sacrifices. It embodies sacrificial formulas in their entirety, rules for construction of altars for various rituals, the rajasuya, the aswamedha and the soma sacrifices. The Atharva Veda also contains many non-Vedic references such as the prayer of Vratyas (outcastes) who offered sacrifices. The Sama Veda consists of 1549 hymns, which were used for singing in connection with sacrifices. It even indicates the tunes to which the sacred hymns are to be sung.

The Vedas, as already pointed out, were amplified subsequently by lengthy supplementary manuals called Brahmanas. These Brahmanas covered eight classes of topics, namely: itihasa(history), purana(old stories), vidya(esoteric knowledge), Upanishad(supreme knowledge), sloka(verses), sutras(aphorisms), vyakhyana(explanations) and anuvyakhyanas(elaborations).

The principal features of the early Hindu religion(Vedic Religion, as it is known), originating from the Vedas were four: adoration of the universe, polytheism, Mantras and sacrifice. Although in the early stages, Vedic religion seemed to have been polytheistic , gradually the idea of monotheism came to hold sway. In their search for the ultimate principle, the Rishis conceived of an absolute power as the prime cause of all creation, and called it Tad Ekam (That One). The foundation of monotheism is already there in the 46th verse of the Rig Veda. Mantras are used extensively in the whole life of a Hindu, right from conception upto the last funeral rite. Mantras are not mere verbal manifestations. They have got inner meanings, though they are not easy to comprehend, and overgrowth of rituals and festivals has tended to obscure them.

The external elements of the early religion, especially the various costly and ritualistic sacrifices and the dominance of the priestly class gave rise to reaction in course of time. The minds of men finding no rest in mere traditional revelation and no satisfaction in mere external rites, turned inwards, each thinker endeavouring to think out the great problems of life for himself by the aid of his own reason. Hence were composed those vague, mystical, rationalistic speculations called the Upanishads. These treatises were not regarded as antagonistic to revelation but rather as complimentary to it, and so they were absorbed as part of the Vedas. The Sruti part of the Hindu scriptures, namely, the Vedas, were in later ages written down and are available these days as individual Vedas or Upanishads. These books give the original sanskrit verses with translations and sometimes commentaries.

MEET YOUR NEW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

PRESIDENT

GOPI PAI, born and raised in Bombay, came to USA in 1968. He did his MS from the University of Wisconsin. He works for International Paper Products. Gopi loves Tennis and eating gourmet food. He has played active role in the Sabha. He lives in Westport, Conn. with wife, Sheila and kids, Sanjay and Seema.

SECRETARY

SHANTHI PAI, lives in NJ with husband Gopal. She is a Data Processing Manager for A.T. & T. She likes tennis and gardening. Her kids, Suhas and Meetha, are away at school at Rochester, NY and Columbus, OH respectively.

TREASURER

PRABHAKER NAYAK, lives in Wanaque, NJ with wife, Sumana and kids, Vandana, Vinay & Vaishali. He has a Ph.D. from NYU, MBA and MA from Indiana University, and a law degree from Bombay Bar. He is a Professor of Marketing in International Business at W.P. State College, NJ. He was a Corporate Executive for Exxon in India and has been a Consultant to Multinational Companies.

FOOD

SHARDA SHENOY, lives in Towaco, NJ with husband, Ravi and kids, Swapneal and Shilpa. She was educated in Bombay. She loves arts and cooking. She owns "SHARDA CORALS", a precious stone business.

NANDINI MALLYA, lives in Wanaque, NJ with husband, Sudhaker and kids, Aarti and Sharad. Her favorite hobbies are movies, gardening, cooking and arts. She got her education in Bombay.

ENTERTAINMENT

GEETHA GANGOLI, lives in Flanders, NJ with husband, Naren and son, Gaurav. She was educated in New Delhi. She is a talented artist proficient in Indian dance and music. She was the Secretary of Konkani Association in Delhi.

SUMANA NAYAK, wife of Prof. Nayak, has been active in Sabha for a long time. She is presently studying for a degree in Computer Science.

SPORTS

SHANTHA KAMATH, lives in Edison, NJ with husband, Narasimha and kids, Shuba and Vivek. Educated in Mangalore, she came to USA in 1971. She is currently studying Computer Programming..br

F.I.A.REP.

DAMODAR BALIGA, has taken most active part in the Sabha since it's creation. He is a C.A. from India and has a MBA from L.I. University. He is an active member of Rotary Club in Queens, NY. He lives in Jackson Hts. with wife, Shobha and kids, Priti and Sameer.

K I D ' S K O R N E R

DINESH P. SHENOY, of Edison, NJ has an idea of making your own "FALOFAL".

All you need: Two or three sheets, some pillows, three blankets, ten to fifteen clean socks.

How to build it : Lay one blanket and sheet down on the floor. Put a pillow on the top. Add five socks. Do this over and over until you run out of material.

Take a deep breath and J U M P !!!!!!!!!!!!!

Hey kids! Do you want share your ideas? Wanna have your Riddles and Puzzles published? Send them to!

The Editor, KHABBAR, 33 Quail Run, LONG VALLEY, NJ 07853.

A P P E A L S

MEMBERSHIP

Our KHABBAR is reaching nearly 200 Konkani speaking families all over USA and Canada. We are aware that there are many more families whom we have not reached so far, and we depend on you to introduce KHABBAR to them. If you know of any family that donot receive KHABBAR, please let any of Executive Committee members know and a copy will be send to them with pleasure. Thanks!

If you have not paid your dues yet for 82-83 year, please send a check to:
The Treasurer, 136 Crescent Rd., WANAQUE, NJ 07645 or
The Editor, 33 Quail Run, LONG VALLEY, NJ 07853

LIBRARY

The Hindu Temple Society of North America has decided to have a LIBRARY of books on INDIAN RELIGION AND CULTURE in the Temple at Bowne St., Flushing, NY. The books and bookcases are being collected purely from donation.

The LIBRARY is expected to be extremely useful to all members of the Community to get acquainted with the culture of India. The LIBRARY plans to have an exclusive reading room and lending services.

The project has been drawn up in close coordination with ORIENT BOOK DISTRIBUTORS, who has plans to build this library with MINIMUM EXPENDITURE(*) to the donating members. Please come forward with your donations and contact Dr. Vasudev Nayak Tel: 201-992-6992.

(*) Your contribution to the LIBRARY is Tax deductible. In addition, ORIENT BOOK will give substantial discount on the books. Hence, your cost will be MINIMAL.