



Purity

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The Riddle of Creation Current and Original State of Life

The riddle of which came first, the chicken or the egg, is one of the fundamental problems facing science.

There were highly developed civilizations like ancient Bharat and ancient Greece, and there is ample evidence to show that the societies were autonomous and prosperous. There is also abundant evidence to show how degraded and poverty-stricken much of the world is today, and that these conditions have evolved at an ever-increasing rate.

We lack accurate information about early human history. Various scientific and historical disciplines have attempted to piece it together.

Rather than search for the origin of life, we may examine the 'current state of life' and the 'original state of life'. Both of these aspects reveal that life at the moment for most people is not pleasant (poverty, homelessness etc.) and also that humanity has the potential to live on a better level.

Philosophers have described the beauty of the human mind and its ability to address the social and moral issues of the time. Likewise, great spiritual leaders reveal the immense capacity of the human soul to attain purity and divinity. Spiritual attainment, social perfection and advancement in science have occurred at different times according to our knowledge of history. This does not mean, however, that all three are not possible together.

The theory of evolution surmises that there has been gradual development over a very long period of time, yet we do not see this evident in our own history. What we see is the emergence and submergence of societies and religions over time, with an overall fall in the morality and spirituality and general conditions of society, along with pollution of matter.

Army Chief visits Brahma Kumaris Mount Abu



Mount Abu: General Bipin Rawat, Chief of Army Staff, and his spouse, Mrs. Madhulika Rawat, Head of Army Wives Welfare Association, visited Brahma Kumaris world headquarters at Mt. Abu, and Shantivan, Abu Road, on December 30, 2018. They had personal audience with and got blessings from Dadi Janki, Chief of Brahma Kumaris. A commemoration ceremony for soldiers who sacrificed their lives for the nation was organized by the Brahma Kumaris in Diamond Hall, Shantivan.

Speaking to an audience of more than 20,000 people from all over India, General Rawat said that patriotism was a great feat and giving one's life for the motherland had been equated with going to heaven. Acknowledging the contribution to peace made by the non-violent spiritual salvation army of Brahma Kumaris, he said the roles of Indian Army and Brahma Kumaris were complementary.

Newton's law of motion equates with the law of entropy. The law of karma equates with the second law of thermodynamics, that is, that action and reaction are equal and opposite. The instability in nature created through explosions, mining, chemicals etc. exemplify this law.

This also applies to the human soul. The loss of spiritual power of purity is reflected in the loss of peace and happiness and degeneration of character. Both soul and matter are eternal. However, matter is divisible, whereas the soul is not.

The cycles within nature strengthen the assumption that both spiritual and physical laws follow a cycle. This mode of thinking opens new approaches to our understanding of the evolution of life and the course of human history. We may presume that the 'original state of life' of both, the

universe and humankind, was perfect, i.e. an entropy-free state or a state free from the bondages of karma i.e. action.

The current state of sorrow of human beings and animals alike and the disharmony in nature must be that point before the state of perfection. It may be that neither annihilation nor creation as such occur.

Einstein's demonstration that matter is neither created nor destroyed is widely accepted by the scientific community. The community of religious people also understand that the soul is eternal and immortal. The soul always has the capacity for perfection and the influence of the soul determines the state of society and the state of matter, including its own body, at any point of time. The soul does not transmigrate from one species to another. There is no evidence of any bridge indicating that

intelligent human life could have evolved from amoeba.

We must acknowledge that the world is not highly evolved: nations are at war and the elements are disturbed. We must recognize that the thinking of man is directed towards destruction and warfare, and is not addressing the issues of individual peace and happiness and the terrible poverty and famine that exist on earth today. We need to revolutionize our thoughts such that we no longer harbour fear and enmity, greed and selfishness, and disregard for nature. If we tune in to the Almighty, the external intelligence or source of spiritual energy, then indeed our lives may be recreated as happy, peaceful and loving. God the Creator is the One who gives the plan and the power to create beauty and order within the soul and its universe. ■

(Purity Features)

NEWS IN PHOTOS



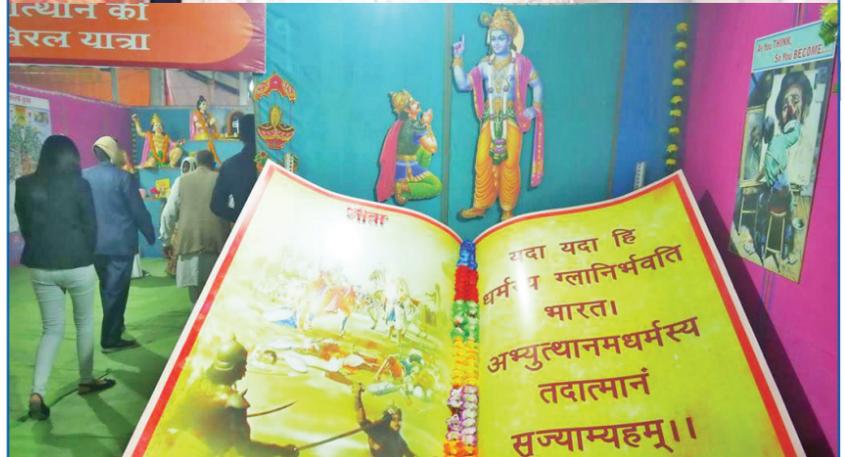
Panaji, Goa : Ms. Mridula Sinha, Hon'ble Governor being given spiritual literature by BK Sister Shobha.



Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh : Dadi Janki inaugurating new Brahma Kumaris centre 'Sukh Shanti Bhawan' at Neelbad along with BK Sister Neeta.



Vadodara, Gujarat : Mr. Vijay R. Rupani, Hon'ble Chief Minister, being presented Godly gift by BK Sister Aruna of Atladara.



At 'Prayagraj Kumbh 2019' Brahma Kumaris organized 'Satyam Shivam Sundaram' spiritual festival. Speaking at the programme is UP Minister Hon'ble Suresh Rana. To his left are BK Asha Didi from New Delhi, BK Manorama Didi, Director, Brahma Kumaris Centres in Allahabad. Pic. above shows an exhibit on Bhagavad Gita.



Puri, Odisha : Inaugurating Jurists' Wing programme are Justice V. Eswaraiah, former Acting Chief Justice of Andhra Pradesh, BK Pushpa Didi from New Delhi, BK Sister Lata from Mt. Abu and BK Dr. Nirupama, sub-zone incharge.



Shimoga (Shivamogga), Karnataka : At 1059th Jubilee celebrations of Adi Jagadguru Shivarathrieshwara are Dr. BK Basavraj Rajrushi, Director, Hubli sub-zone, Mr. B S Yedeyurappa, former Chief Minister, Jagadguru Dr. Sri Mallikarjuna Murugharejendra and Jagadguru Sri Shivarathri Mahaswami.



Mysore, Karnataka : Group photo of participants in seminar on 'Stress Management for Security Forces'. Seated in front row are BK Shukla Didi, BK Laxmi Didi, BK Ashok Gaba, BK Sister Deepa, BK Ranganath and others.

Every sinner has a future

We know what it feels like when we have something weighing on our mind. It might be regret over something we have done, or not done, a missed opportunity, or an unpleasant experience.

Memories of painful incidents of the past haunt our present, making us feel heavy, low and, perhaps, unworthy.

Such memories and the unhappy feelings they bring are just one way in which our past impinges on our present. They are the fruit produced by the seeds we had planted in the form of past actions. The consequences of what we have done in the past, whether in the present life or in previous ones, are unavoidable, be they to our liking or not. When faced with them, we need to learn our lesson from them and move on.

However, if we are burdened by the past and it stops us from doing what we need to do in the present, we are setting ourselves up for further sorrow and disappointment. Guilt, regret, fear and grief cannot undo what has happened. We can try to mitigate the consequences of our actions, but the actions cannot be erased – they have become an indelible part of our karmic record and will bear fruit sooner or later.

If the past cannot be changed and there is no escape from its repercussions, how can one make amends for one's mistakes? Is there no way to make up for one's errors, or is one condemned to suffer for every transgression, even if it was committed in ignorance?

Once we take control of the present, we are no longer hostage to the past, which will rear its head now and then, but eventually vanish.

The effect of past wrongs can be neutralised by doing good deeds. Just as misdeeds eventually cause suffering to the doer, charitable and noble actions bring joy, contentment, and an elevated sense of self-worth. If we busy ourselves with doing good deeds, we will constantly experience their happy consequences. As with a pair of scales, in which when one side becomes heavy and moves down, the other automatically becomes lighter and rises, when our stock of good deeds increases, the burden of past errors becomes proportionately smaller. As we keep doing good, the past soon becomes insignificant, and no longer weighs on us.

This process not only makes us feel good, it also brings about deeper change. Good actions performed repeatedly create the tendency, or 'sanskar', of doing good, and this 'sanskar' keeps impelling us to do more

good. Any past traits of wrongdoing become dormant and no longer influence us. This is the process by which self-transformation occurs.

This fact is recognised even in legal systems where the punishment of convicts is commuted following good behaviour.

The key is to focus on the present and make the best use of it, instead of constantly looking back at the past and feeling regret over something that cannot be changed. The better our present, the lighter the burden of the past becomes. Soon, a time comes when no trace of the past remains, and the person experiences a new life. This has been the life story of many a saint. Today, those saints are remembered for their saintliness, not what they were before. They realised the error of their ways, decided to change and went about it with sincerity and determination, sometimes in the face of great challenges and temptations. In the end, those souls overcame their inner demons to become revered figures.

No matter what our life has been like until now, we can put it on another track and make it elevated by starting to think and act nobly from the present moment. Once we take control of the present, we are no longer hostage to the past, which will rear its head now and then, but eventually vanish when we keep looking ahead and chart a new course for our life. ■

(Purity Features)



Mount Abu : Indian Army Chief, General Bipin Rawat, being applied tilak by BK Shukla Didi during his visit to International headquarters of Brahma Kumaris.

Humour

"Did you get my cheque?" enquired Rahul of Mukesh.
 "Yes twice," replied Mukesh.
 "Once from you and once from the Bank."

Visitor to an art exhibition: "Why did they hang that picture?"
 Attendant: "Probably couldn't find the artist."

Patient: Doctor, are you sure it is jaundice? I have heard to cases when a doctor treated the patient of jaundice, and he ended up dying of something else.
 Doctor: Don't worry. When I treat a patient for jaundice he dies of jaundice.

A wealthy old man, dictating his last will and testament from his bed, stipulated that A.R. Rehman orchestra should play at his funeral.
 "Very good, sir," said the attorney. "And what tune would you like to hear?"

Good advice to Internalize

A human can look within. He can also look at the world. Both ways he will see movement and change. He will see happiness and sorrow, disaster and triumphs. So, do not just look, for in mere looking you are victim. Instead look and create. For when you create you earn the right to be quiet. And quietness is the greatest gift there is for a spirit that seeks freedom.

Go out towards the world and create good feelings. Create it in the place you work, the people you work with, the tasks you are set. Make everything you touch lovely so that others find your footsteps comfortable and safe and dear.

Go inwards into your mind and create peace. Settle your worries as you settle a room untidied by intruders. Restore and cherish your inner world. And when you learn something special, imprint it on that inner world so that it is there to return to at the end of the day.

So do not ask anymore: Where do I belong? Do I belong out in the world or quietly away from it? You belong in both places—but both places in a special way. Not out in the world as a stranger, there only to gather a few pennies and then leave. But as a friend to it. And not just inwards as a recluse, there only to enjoy your own treasure.

Instead live in both worlds. But live with love and understanding of time. Time is the secret. Just as the tide turns on the exact moment it is meant to, so too set those moments in advance when your tide should turn from out to in.

And for that you need to be very pure. Purity means you are stuck to nothing. If the sea were stuck to the stand it could not turn. If your mind is fixed on anything too hard, it cannot turn either. If you are pure, you can live in many worlds at once. And that is mastery. ■

Power of Change in Times of Uncertainty

The evolving view on managing change is that it is not always possible to manage the external environment. The view of change rests on inner management and developing inner powers and skills to move through a world of chaotic external change.

Change works best from the inside out and the present time calls especially for inner development to find the right inner powers for the time.

Our age has been dubbed 'the Age of Uncertainty', and there is little doubt that many of the old certainties about family, gender, work, finances, class, culture and politics have been pushed aside.

With such rapid changes come stress, insecurity and anxiety. People are going through a whole range of emotions, from shock to denial to anger to retreat.

It has been a time of significant revaluation for people. The traditional supports are falling away.

Pause on your path, because "music is the space between the notes!"

Happiness is your decision. What you become is more important than what you get. Knowledge is the essential nourishment for the intellect.

Society, work and families are no longer stable and this has caused people to look inwards for answers. Some people respond by trying to preserve the past, and they hang on to old values and traditions. In times of fast change, preservation is not an option! Would you go to the ocean and say, 'Hey waves, don't come in such big waves'?

It is not the strongest of the species nor is it the most intelligent, but rather it is the most adaptable that survives.

- Charles Darwin

Events are what one makes of them. How one construes events determines whether or not they will be stressful. Stress occurs when the demands of the environment in a person's eyes exceed his resources. How do you see the present time? Is it a war zone? Is it survival of the fittest? Or is it a game... a play? Do you see yourself as a traveller on the journey to your completeness? It makes a lot of difference how you see the present time. Consider the consequences of your different views towards this period for your behaviour. Events are what you make of them. How you look at change determines how you cope with change!

The best results come not from large-scale efforts but from well-focused higher-level changes.

Efficiency is doing things right, effectiveness is doing the right things.

- Peter Drucker

Much of our action is guided by assumptions and beliefs about the way things are. Powerful beliefs will provide you with

Apple Cart

- We suppose a doctor lists a good apple crop as an occupational hazard.
- If you ate two apples a day, would you keep two doctors away?
- What do you do if an apple a day costs more than the doctor?

We simply assume that the way we see things is the way things are, or the way things should be.

a sense of certainty and are empowering. Limiting beliefs can cause you to feel helpless. The key in times of unpredictable change is to develop beliefs that will give you a sense of certainty—beliefs that allow you to grow as a person and beliefs that enable you to become more effective. What really matters is whether the beliefs that you have empower or disempower you.

Resistance is the first reaction. Most of the reasons centre around the feelings of loss and grief that have been experienced from past changes. For the most part it has been shown that human beings do not resist positive changes... would you resist winning the lottery?

It is not so much change that is resisted, rather the place in between.

- William Bridges

People resist when they are uncertain about the outcome or fear loss out of the change. They would much rather go with 'the devil they know' than the uncertainty of transition. Elizabeth Kubler Ross explains the grief cycle... showing how people react to loss and change. They go through a cycle of shock, anger, denial, retreat and finally through to acceptance.

The challenge of the time is to move powerfully and confidently through change. When you are in a powerful awareness, no upheaval in the atmosphere, people or circumstances can affect you. They are like side scenes. Who are these powerful people? What are their signs?

They are:

Open: they are not fixed in old ways but open to new ways of learning and change.



Responsive: they are comfortable in a world of ambiguity and surprise.

Proactive: they change beforehand, saving themselves from being forced into painful adjustments.

Focused: they know what they stand for and where they are headed, and focus on the things that are important.

Convinced: they are confident about their outcome and certain about their ability to handle challenges.

Serene: they keep their inner calm in the face of upheavals.

Believers: they believe in themselves and they learn the art of change, and how to enjoy the journey.

Apart from emotional resistance there are major barriers to change that come from some of our old views.

Each one of us has a lens through which we see the world. It has been shaped by external influences and conditioning. We interpret everything we see through this lens. We seldom question its accuracy and we are even unaware that we have it. We simply assume that the way we see things is the way things are or the way things should be. You can see how external influences have shaped our views... for example:

The prevailing cultural norms... consider the difference in how death is viewed in the east and in the west.

The dominant educational paradigm... a focus on content rather than process.

Advertising and media... how they have shaped views on women... for example:

It is not surprising that strong barriers to change occur because of past views that blind us to present realities. Many old views are no longer effective in a new world. The way to overcome the limitations of old views is to expand your perspective and work with your purpose, vision and values. ■

(Purity Bureau)

Greatest Paradox

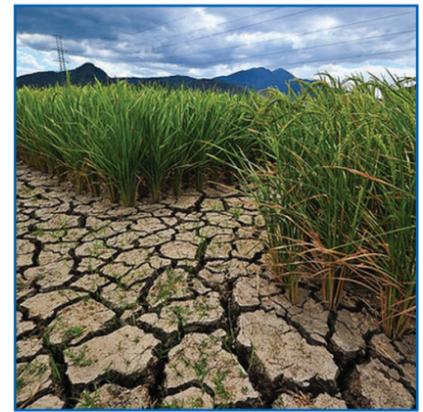
A few centuries ago, a law teacher came across a student who was willing to learn but was unable to pay the fee. The student struck a deal, saying, "I will pay your fee the day I win my first case in court". The teacher agreed and proceeded with the law course. When the course was finished and the teacher started pestering the student to pay the fee, the student reminded him of the deal and pushed the days. Fed up with this, the teacher decided to sue the student in a court of law and both of them decided to argue for themselves.

The teacher put forward his argument, saying: "If I win this case, as per the court of law, the student has to pay me. And if I lose the case, the student will still pay me because he would have won his first case. So, either way I will have to get the money".

Equally brilliant, the student argued back, saying: "If I win the case, as per the court of law, I don't have to pay anything to the teacher. And if I lose the case, I don't have to pay him because I haven't won my first case yet. So, either way, I am not going to pay the teacher anything".

This is one of the greatest paradoxes ever recorded in history. ■

Spiritual Response to Environmental Crises



The environment of the planet we all live in is a complex system that is balanced by natural forces. But over the last century human activities have drastically impacted the global environment and today we live in a world that is grappling with huge crises of climate change, global warming, air pollution, ozone layer depletion, deforestation, loss of biodiversity and many more ecological imbalances that are affecting every nation, people, animals and plants. To embrace the full scope of the environmental crisis, it is necessary to understand the quality of human consciousness that defines the quality of change we want to bring in the world.

At a deeper level, the problem of environmental degradation is related to the decline of spiritual values. It is not just a debate of depleting natural resources and non-renewable energy. It stems from the core of human life, the soul, which has been polluted with vices like greed, ego and anger.

Nature reflects human nature. The violation of the innate qualities of the human soul such as truth, purity, peace, love and respect has led to the violation of natural law and order. As the harmony within the soul got disrupted, the harmony between nature's forces also got disturbed. There is so much violence and discord in human minds that nature too has started striking discordant notes in the form of storms, earthquakes, hurricanes and famine. Poisoned

Nature reflects
human nature.
Poisoned feelings
in human hearts
have poisoned
the air, water
and soil on earth.

to be like varnish on cracked surface. We need to look deeper and remedy the cause of pollution.

About the difficult situation the world is in, theoretical physicist David Bohm has said: "People have been dealing with this piecemeal-looking at symptoms, saying that we've got to solve this problem or that problem or that problem. But there is something deeper, which people haven't been considering, that is constantly generating these problems. We can use the analogy of a stream, where people are pouring pollution upstream at the same time they are trying to remove it downstream. But as they remove it, they may be adding more pollution of a different kind. What is the source of all this trouble? The source is basically in thought".

on growth, profit, technology and industry has disregarded the holistic view of earth as a complex, integrated system in which all elements of nature and creatures are co-existing in a symbiotic harmonious, sustainable and resilient way that supports the well-being of all. Local and indigenous communities have long understood the delicate balance between human life and natural systems.

Spirituality has always played a vital role in environmental sustainability. All ancient societies in India supported their environment with lifestyles that were based on values like respect for nature, simplicity and harmony. If we live simply and in harmony with our inner and outer nature, it will create a sustainable world.

Our behaviours, lifestyle choices and attitudes are accountable for the crisis we are facing. We create boundaries in order to define rules, regulations, systems and customs, and laws that support social protocols. However, in terms of nature, all of us exist in this world as a family free of boundaries and borders. Birds, fish, air, ecosystems, people, even our bodies, do not have distinct boundaries. We breathe the same air as each other.

Spirituality by its nature is integrative. Spirituality enables us to strike a balance in being as well as doing. Spirituality views life at the level of awareness, intention and attitude. It views things as part

gratitude and compassion for all people and nature around us. Our entire way of managing resources, our methods of production, marketing and consumption will be accountable towards the well-being of all creatures and nature.

Soul consciousness is a practice of being aware of the self and other people as spiritual beings enacting their roles in physical bodies. Meditation is a tool to further this awareness by belonging in mind and heart to one infinite source of all wisdom, purity and love – the Supreme Soul. Such awareness will enable us to go beyond our egocentric worldview that has disintegrated and fragmented our relationships with the self, others and nature.

Spirituality guides people to reconnect with their inner self through reflection, silence and introverted observation. When we become aligned with our original nature of peace and love, we feel connected with all and support the wellbeing of the world around us. The answers to environmental crisis will come from a change in our attitude and lifestyle aimed at promoting energy-efficiency, moderate consumption and holistic development through cooperation instead of competition. ■

(Purity Bureau)

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feelings in human hearts have also poisoned the air, water and soil on earth.

Even though environment-friendly initiatives have been high on global and national agendas for some time now, there is a long way to go in upgrading our environmental awareness. Enforcing green laws and integrating eco-friendly technologies are good steps to contain pollution, but they appear

The global environmental crisis is a complex phenomenon impacted by social development over time. The structures of our societies, their lifestyles, economy and demography – all these are formed by the attitudes of the people. We say that environmental problems affect us, but we fail to take responsibility for how we have created this crisis. Our skewed vision of development focused

of a greater whole, it acknowledges the intricate harmony and balance that exists among the diversities we see in the material and human world. When we identify ourselves in the limited sense of our social, cultural or religious boundaries, we tend to neglect the needs of those who exist on the other side of these boundaries. When we see ourselves as part of a whole world family, we have respect,

In Lighter Vein

- The green light is the signal for the man behind you to blow his horn.
- If you are trying to kill time, always make sure it is your own.
- You see, the fellow has a lot of potential. Hmm, I suppose he has. He's certainly never used up any of it!
- Don't eat fast, haste makes waist.
- What is it that you must keep if you give it? Your word.
- Every loss is a gain, when you are dieting.
- If ignorance is bliss, why are so many people unhappy?



Silver Lining in the Sky

Editorial—

To recognise and value time is great wisdom. Understanding the cycle of change, foreseeing upcoming phases, and attuning oneself to them constitute this wisdom. The agriculturalist knows the seasons. To receive a good yield, he sows and harvests on time, and so must we. Riding the wave of time is a guarantee for receiving exponential returns with minimal efforts. When the current is against us, there is much toil and the results do not match expectations.

Also comes with these lessons the realisation of the potential of the present. In this precious moment lies the extraordinary power to spur a momentum, to create, to plant, begin, act, shape, and bring something to life. If you miss the present, waste it, it's gone forever. If you mess it up, there are no retakes. Time keeps ticking. Time and tide, it is said, wait for none. So we must gear up and make the most of it. Till a person imbibes this wisdom, his actions and investments are of little value.

Let us look at the world today. What times are we living in? What do most of our experiences feel like? The answer is unanimous – our age is one of bitterness, sadness and anxiety. There is conflict and violence everywhere; criminal acts are at their peak these days. All this reflects the chaos in our inner world. As human souls are not one with their pure and true core, and are acting under the influence of body consciousness, there is disharmony between their own mind and intellect, their thoughts and conscience, their commitments and actions. That is why our world is full of falsity, uncertainty and suffering.

What is the way out? Observe the pattern of time – it tells us that nothing lasts forever. Everything is bound to change and the state of things gradually oscillates from one extreme to the other. Even if the winter is harsh, summer does ultimately arrive, shines its brightest, and then passes away. Similarly, when the night is the darkest, it is a sign that a new day is in the offing; it is certain.

Taking a cue from these patterns, we can conclude that our present times of extreme distress are a signal that a new world order, very different from today, is on its way. The present dark night of immorality is now on its way out as the silver lining of a new tomorrow is already peeking out. Hold on to this hope patiently and eventually peace and harmony will become the reality of human life. Good times are coming.

It is important to recognise our present times as the 'most auspicious transition'. The awareness that we are currently living in an extraordinary period where the world is changing from its worst to the best brings along great hope and joy. It also brings an awakening – that it is neither time to be sad, nor to wait and watch, but to actively prepare ourselves for what lies ahead. When winter is due, we stock our wardrobe with woollens and put away our summer wear. Similarly, when evil makes a departure from our inner and outer world, goodness has to replace it. So now is the time to accumulate our stock of goodness.

The collective change in the world will come about through sustained individual efforts. The process of cleansing ourselves of vices and weaknesses, and of refining our virtues has to take place within each one of us now. We cannot wait for good times to come, but must draw them closer by directing every thought, word and action in that direction. We must be the catalysts that kindle this spiritual revolution, draw more souls to it, and let the positive momentum take over. Like those early birds that make music to break the dawn, we must be one with time. ■

Gleanings from the press

Global Govt. debt has grown sharply in 10 years



The world has never had as much debt as it has right now — nearly \$250 trillion. That figure is thrice of what it was two decades ago, according to a Citigroup analysis of data from the Institute of International Finance. The biggest borrowers – the US, China, the Eurozone and Japan – have more than two-thirds of the world's household debt, three-quarters of corporate debt and nearly 80 per cent of government debt.

(Times of India)

Our body may cure itself of diabetes in future

Researchers have identified glucagon-producing cells in the pancreas that can mimic functions of damaged or missing insulin-producing cells, an advance that may lead to cures for diabetes. (PTI)

Want to lose weight? Pick diet over exercise



For those planning to hit the gym to lose weight, take note. A study suggests that diet is more important than physical activity, including walking and exercise.

(IANS)

Antarctica losing ice six times faster

Antarctica is melting more than six times faster than it did in the 1880s. Since 2009, Antarctica has lost almost 278 billion tonnes (252 billion metric tonnes) of ice per year, a new study has found. East Antarctica's melting "increases the risk of multiple metre (more than 10 feet) sea level rise over the next century or so," the study says. (AP)



Scientists 'sew' thread with sound waves

Scientists have successfully used sound waves to levitate and manipulate multiple objects simultaneously for the first time, using the system to "sew" a thread into a piece of fabric. The system could be used to acoustically stitch up internal injuries or deliver drugs to target organs. (News Report)

A 'superfood' that lowers blood pressure



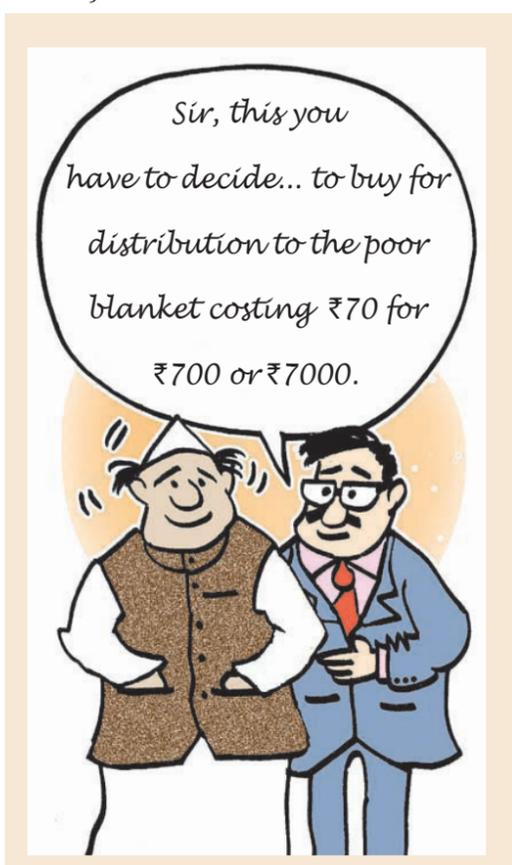
Italian researchers have identified spirulina, a "superfood" made from algae, that could help reduce blood pressure. The superfood, described as the "most complete food source in the world", contains a specific protein, SP6, which was found to relax arteries in animals. This study was detailed in the

journal *Hypertension*. (News Item)

Bhoola Bhai

And our friend Bhoola Bhai on Temple Street says inner power does not come from book-study, nor from mere knowledge, but from the practice of altruism in thought, word and deed, for that practice purifies the mind from sense-perception, and the truest way to do this is by combining knowledge with the highest outward and inward virtue.

Let God always be in your heart and soul.



Meditation Experience

The roots of deep character change

“Inner change awakens meaning to life.”

“I need to find in my job the peace and harmony, I find in meditation.”

“I recognize that I am creator of my present and future.”

If the dialogue was stimulating and inspiring, the four-day retreat gave us space and opportunity to explore and chart our inner territory, to make deep connections with those reservoir energies needed by all ‘world servers’ if they are to stand firm against the unsettling forces of the modern world.

Under the guidance of senior brothers and sisters of the Brahma Kumaris University, we were steered gently through the serene and ordered days. The combined effects of group meditations, wise discourses, light entertainment, the regular dispensing of goodwill and *tolis* (sweets) by the Dadis, informal get-togethers in the sunlit main courtyard, drew us into a rich and timeless space where undisturbed contentment prevailed.

At sunset on the first day, we were taken to Baba’s Rock at Mt. Abu. After a steep climb we came to a rounded precipice which overhung valleys too deep to fathom. Because you felt as though you were sitting atop the world, it became the most natural thing to contemplate the world and the role you might be playing in

its mending.

“Feel your soul-essence”, we had been briefed before setting out, “and imagine that ‘lovely’ force reaching out into the hearts and minds of every being on earth.”

Yes, from this transcendent place, with the focused goodwill of over a hundred meditators, you felt sure the thoughts would find their mark.

The second day, with the discourses on ‘Experiencing the Relationship with God’, ‘The Art of Meditation’ and a panel discussion on ‘Spirituality in Daily Life’ was really a lead—into the following ‘Day of Silence’.

On this day, after some relevant words on the nature of our innermost being and the silent exploration thereof, we were left to pursue our inner dialogue. For eight hours, the quiet was broken only by the sounds of breezes, birds and monkeys in the trees, the crunch of footsteps as we walked round the nearby lake and, every two hours or so, the intercommunicated music and words of one of the recorded songs giving us a three-minute brief on how to stay focused. (This is called ‘traffic control’ and is designed to keep the thoughts on the right track).

Early afternoon found the author on one of the little terraced gardens which overlooked the Universal Peace Hall. As I idly drank in the sweet fragrance of the alyssum border, I was feeling, more than thinking. Suddenly, inexplicably, it was there — a barely perceptible

thrill ran through the right side of my head — I was replete. A long-forgotten connection was restored. Just like that. I could go back now to my world, knowing that this was what really mattered — the soul connection. This is what we lose in the world: this is what we come here to re-find. And having found it again, we must strive to hold on to it.

How does one do this?

The final discourse offers some ways in which the retreat experience can be sustained: Give it way.

Build meditation into your life.

Cultivate perfect relationships.

Understand the nature of true perception.

Cultivate virtue. Assess your performance at the end of each day.

Keep good company.

‘Retreat’ often to your centre.

Be careful with your food.

Be quiet at every level and...

Come back to Madhuban, Mt. Abu next year!

Somehow the journey back down the mountain to the dusty mundane world seems a lot easier than the trip up. Again, the symbolism speaks—everything comes ‘easy’ to the soul, even in the most difficult situations.

Who was it—one of the Dadis?—said, “Never worry about small things—but then, everything’s a small thing.”

If there is a ‘big thing’ anywhere, it’s in me and in every other human being on the planet. Perhaps it would be more correct to say, it moves through us, so long as we remain connected to the Source and keep the channels open.

From this point, dialogue at any level will always be clear-eyed, significant and constructive.

Madhuban, Mt. Abu may be a ‘little candle burning in the night’ but what a blaze of goodwill it’s igniting across the globe!

Why would leaders in the fields of business, health, commerce, the arts, education, science, politics and the media take time out from their busy schedules the converge on a mountaintop in Rajasthan, India? ■

(Purity Bureau)

Contentment Crest jewel of virtues

Contentment means to accept any of life’s predicaments as they are. The contented being lives in peace with all. Happiness is always with him. He does not make himself dependent on external things. He does not get caught up in others’ defects. Personal peace and peace with others is most important to him. He does not see what he does not possess, but what he does possess. One recognizes him as the one who always has a cheerful face. He does not complain about his own life, nor does he complain about others; he lives a pleasant life. Because the things he has to say about others are always nice, others remain content with him. Wherever he is, he creates peace. Even when he has only little material wealth, his happiness is not put to an end. He is economical.

If someone is discontented, anything is not enough for him. He criticizes constantly, no matter how much others care for him. Through that he loses all his friends as they do not find any success in their efforts. The discontented person will sooner or later sit alone. The discontentment urges him into greed and over-activity. But because he is not happy with that which he receives in return, at some stage or other he will be exhausted and listless. This is when bitterness comes.

If contentment is exaggerated, then one becomes passive and uncreative. If one is very contented with the self, one will not progress further. It can make one blind to one’s own defects as discrimination towards the self is lacking.

In order to build up contentment in the self, one should put a stop to criticizing others. One needs to put an end to verbalizing discontentment in regard to others. Of course, one can express positive criticism in order to improve things. But one should be attentive to mention the good things which are already active. To overcome greed, one should take note of what one needs, not what one desires (wishes). One also needs to be free from the discontentment which results in not being able to fill the bill in regard to one’s self-progress by accepting one’s limitations. ■

*Every day
is little life.*

Bidar, Karnataka:
Rajyogini Dadi Janki,
Chief of Brahma
Kumaris, performing
foundation laying
ceremony of Global
Peace Village along
with BK Santosh Didi,
BK Hansa,
BK Sumangala and
others at Yadlapur
Village. ▼





Shantivan, Abu Road : Dadi Ratan Mohini, BK Nirwair Bhai, BK Bharat and others inaugurating a large 'Rangoli' at programme on Youth organized on the occasion of Swami Vivekananda Jayanti.



Malaysia : BK Amirchand Bhai from Chandigarh and BK Sister Meera after giving a talk on "Brahma Baba - A Visionary Leader" at Harmony House, Bangsar.



Kadappa, Andhra Pradesh : BK Usha Didi from Mt. Abu inaugurating 'Inner Peace in Chaos' programme. Others in pic include BK Geetha, Mr. A.Ravi, ZP Chairman, Mr. Ramachandra Reddy, Vice Chancellor, Yogi Vemana University.

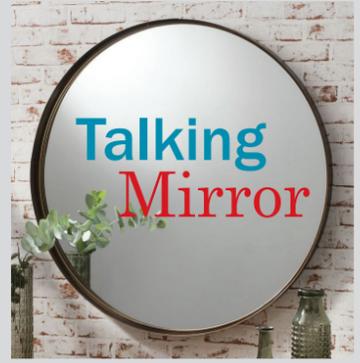


China, Shanghai : BK Sapna with participants from Indian Association at Consulate General of India after giving a talk on 'Harmony in Relationships'.

	1065	678
	497	640

Shanvitan, Abu Road : Artists performing on the occasion of 8th Annual Day of Radio Madhuban 90.4 FM.

Don't Take Sorrow



Gautam Buddha was sitting under a banyan tree. One day, a furious Brahmin came to him and started abusing him.

The Brahmin thought that Gautam Buddha would reciprocate in the same manner, but to his utter surprise, there was not the slightest change in the expression on his face.

Now, the Brahmin became more furious. He hurled more and more abuses at Buddha. However, Gautam Buddha was completely unmoved. Actually there was a look of compassion on his face. Ultimately the Brahmin was tired of abusing him. He asked, "I have been abusing you like anything, but why are you not angry at all?"

Gautam Buddha calmly replied, "My dear brother, I have not accepted a single abuse from you." "But you heard all of them, didn't you?" The Brahmin argued half-heartedly. Buddha said, "I do not need the abuses, so why should I even hear them?"

Now the Brahmin was even more puzzled. He could not understand the calm reply from Gautam Buddha. Looking at his disturbed face, Buddha further explained, "All those abuses remain with you."

"It cannot be possible. I have hurled all of them at you," the Brahmin persisted.

Buddha calmly repeated his reply, "But I have not accepted even a single abuse from you! Dear brother, suppose you give some coins to somebody, and if he does not accept them, with whom will those coins remain?"

The Brahmin replied, "If I have given the coins and not needed by someone, then naturally they would remain with me."

With a meaningful smile on his face, Buddha said, "Now you are right. The same has happened with your abuses. You came here and hurled abuses at me, but I have not accepted a single abuse from you. Hence, all those abuses remain with you only. So there is no reason to be angry with you."

The Brahmin remained speechless. He was ashamed of his behaviour and begged for Buddha's forgiveness. ■



New Delhi : BK Dr. Satish Gupta from Mt. Abu and Sister Sangeeta giving talk on '3D Health Care' to a group of doctors.



Dadi Janki at 103 - Oldest woman head of an international spiritual organisation

'May you live a 100 years' is a blessing given in many cultures. Living a hundred years, having survived all the vicissitudes that life can bring, is a remarkable feat and centenarians stand out from the rest of the population by virtue of their longevity.

But even more notable are those who have lived an exemplary life and become a source of inspiration to others.

One such person is Dadi Janki, the head of the Brahma Kumaris who, at the age of 103, is the oldest woman to lead an international spiritual organisation.

Brahma Kumaris is a worldwide spiritual movement dedicated to personal transformation and world renewal. Founded in India in 1937, it has spread to 137 countries on all continents and has had an extensive



Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh : Dadi Janki inaugurating Harmony House. Also in pic are BK Santosh Didi, BK Sister Hansa, BK Kuldeep Behn, BK Sister Shashikala and others.

impact in many sectors as an international NGO. However, its real commitment is to helping individuals transform their perspective of the world from material to spiritual. It supports the cultivation of a deep collective consciousness of peace and of the individual dignity of each soul.

Born in 1916, Dadi Janki

has unshakeable conviction and refuses to set limitations for herself through her tireless service to others. She has been thus engaged since 1937, and spent 40 years based in London from 1974. She has inspired individuals of all cultures and professions to live according to a higher sense of purpose and to contribute to the creation of a better world. Deep and insightful, she is an absolute joy to listen to and observe.

No stranger to health crises, Dadi Janki attributes her long life to the fact that she

Dadi Janki - flying angel at 103.



does not think more than is necessary. Excessive thinking drains the energy of the soul, so 'stop thinking', and 'never look back at the past', are mantras she frequently offers to others.

Her words of wisdom give deep insights into the working of the mind and how one can master it to live a peaceful, purposeful and happy life. ■

Old is Gold

Old age should not be added to our fears, wanting to tuck loose skin under our ears. It should be approached with serenity befitting of one with real dignity.

An older person is not a used car, at retirement sent to the junk yard. They are examples of living values inspiring others with divine virtues.

Elders keep children in their canopy nurturing them to be well and happy. In turn, it is children's loving duty to nurture the parent's prosperity.

When you grow old and feel you've retired be busy with zeal and don't get tired. There's a lot to do to serve society, this is one's true priority.

An older one should be an instrument to give the child spiritual nourishment. Through patience and love the bond will be firm and through their company, children quickly learn.

Our elders should not be dismissed outright they have much to offer and much insight. They can be living examples and guides. Being transparent, credible and wise.

One moves ahead with respect for others seeing all elders like elder brothers. Elders inspire enthusiasm and hope and receive it in turn which helps them cope.

Both older and younger have to transform. Thus we should call to both for reform.

(Purity Bureau)

Short Story

An atheist was taking a walk through the woods. "What majestic trees! What powerful rivers! What beautiful animals!" he said to himself.

As he continued walking alongside the river, he heard a rustling in the bushes.

Turning to look, he saw a 7-foot grizzly charging towards him. He ran as fast as he could up the path. Looking over his shoulder he saw that the bear was closing in on him. His heart was pumping frantically and he tried to run even faster.

He tripped and fell on the ground. He rolled over to pick himself up but saw the bear raising his paw to take a swipe at him. At that instant the Atheist cried out: "Oh my God!"

Time stopped. The bear froze. The forest was silent. It was then that a bright light shone upon the man and a voice came out of the sky saying, "You deny my existence for all of these years, teach others that I don't exist, and even credit creation to a cosmic accident. Do you expect me to help you out of this predicament? Am I to count you as a believer?"

The atheist looked directly into the light, "It would be hypocritical of me to suddenly ask you to treat me as a Christian now, but perhaps could you make the bear a Christian?"

"Very well," said the voice. The light went out. And the sounds of the forest resumed. And then the bear lowered his paw, bowed his head and spoke,

"Lord, bless this food which I am about to receive and for which I am truly thankful." ■



Loving Tribute Rajyogini Dadi Rukmani

The Brahma Kumaris family pays loving tributes to Rajyogini Dadi Rukmani, Additional Zone In-charge of Delhi. She went into Bapdada's lap on January 17, 2019 just months after her centenary celebrations.

One of the original jewels of the family, Dadi Rukmani served as Shiv Baba's right hand and worthy instrument from the beginning of the institution in 1937. Some in the Brahmīn family lovingly called her "headmaster" because she was a strict disciplinarian and custodian of Brahmīn disciplines.

Anybody who received personal training from Dadi could never falter because she was an exemplary spiritual student herself who churned Godly knowledge deeply, and demonstrated those values in her own life. She was a powerful speaker, could explain and clarify any point of knowledge and strengthen others' faith in Baba. Under her guidance, over a hundred young sisters dedicated their life to Godly service.

Dadi was a former schoolteacher. Her dedication to her work was visible even during her younger days, when she graduated from high school as a gold medallist.

Apart from teaching, Dadi had also worked as a journalist. She was courageous, fearless, objective and impartial. Brahma Baba, the founding father of Brahma Kumaris, recognised her outstanding qualities, and often sent her to different cities to prepare the base and lay a strong foundation for spiritual services there. Once the centres there would become self-sufficient, he would ask her to let go of that service and move on to another place.

Dadi was completely detached from the outside world, a true and dedicated trustee. She shared a relationship of loyalty with other Dadis and could go to any lengths to serve and safeguard the institution. As a great economiser, she barely spent on her personal needs and made the most of every resource invested in spiritual services.

Though in her final years she had almost lost her eyesight and could not walk without assistance, Dadi's memory was sharper than any youth's. She could recall her last conversation with people without having met them for long. Her grit was matchless, her spirit strong and unshakable.

Dadi was a person of principles and was known for taking the right decisions. She was a person who would touch the heart of each soul she met. Dadi was cremated at 'Mukti Dham', Abu Road. Her funeral procession of thousands included hundreds of BK teachers and admirers from Delhi zone.

Here, we pay our final respectful tribute to our spiritual mother. ■



Pitashri ascension day in photos

Pitashri Brahma, fondly called 'Baba', was an embodiment of compassion and forgiveness. Anyone who sat in his presence experienced deep peace and withdrawal from his physical body. Born to a school headmaster in Hyderabad, Sindh (now in Pakistan), and given the name Lekhraj, he grew up as a deeply spiritual person. When he was about 60 years of age, Pitashri suddenly got visions of devastating destruction and star-like brilliant entities taking the form of divine princes and princesses. As Adidev, he laid the foundation of the forthcoming deity world and became the corporeal founder of the Brahma Kumaris organisation. On 18th January, 1969, Brahma Baba left his mortal coil to become subtle Brahma in order to complete his task of world transformation with greater speed.



Baba's Room in Pandav Bhawan, Mount Abu



Tower of Peace, Pandav Bhawan, Mount Abu



Auditorium of Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, New Delhi



Kathmandu, Nepal



Patna, Bihar



Pokhara, Nepal



Ranchi, Jharkhand



Malaysia: Group photo of participants in 'Disaster Preparedness' programme held at Asia Retreat Centre.



'Ten thousand saw I at a glance...'

-Wordsworth (Daffodils)



Guyana, Georgetown: Mr. Moses Nagamootoo, Hon'ble Prime Minister of Guyana, being presented a picture of 'Shiva' by Sister BK Usha during his visit to Brahma Kumaris Raja Yoga Centre along with his spouse.



Om Shanti Retreat Centre, Gurugram: Group photo of participants in 'As the Beginning, So the End' International BK Youth Retreat. Sister Vedanti from Nairobi, Africa (Faculty) is seen (L) in front row along with BK Brij Mohan and BK Asha Didi.



Bali, Indonesia: Mr. R.O. Sunil Babu, Consul General of India in Bali, giving a certificate of appreciation to Brother BK Anom during Vishwa Hindi Divas celebrations.

Tailpiece

The pilot on a small plane announced that the plane was going to crash and it was every man for himself. The pilot and co-pilot then grabbed two parachutes and jumped out of the plane. The four passengers, an old priest, a 10-year-old boy, a brain surgeon and an attorney, ran to the storage area for the remaining parachutes. There were only three left.

The brain surgeon said, "There is only one other doctor in the world that can perform the type of surgery I do, and I can save thousands of lives, I'm too needed to die" — so he grabbed a pack and jumped.

The attorney then pushed aside the priest and the 10-year-old, grabbed a pack and explained, "Since I am an attorney, my life should be saved because I have superior knowledge and intelligence and am very much needed to advise all the thousands of people less brilliant than me," and then he jumped.

The old priest turned to the young boy and said, "Son, take the last parachute. I have had a full life and am at peace with my Maker. You have your whole life to live yet".

The young boy was shaking his head. "No, don't worry Father", he said, "we both will be OK — you know, that guy who said he had superior knowledge and intelligence — well, instead of grabbing a parachute pack, he grabbed my backpack!"

◆◆◆◆◆

When two psychic friends met, one said: "You are fine. How am I?"

