

धर्मसन्देश Dharma Sandesh

a quarterly newsletter of Bharatiya Mandir, Middletown, NY

आ नो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वतः। Let noble thoughts come to us from everywhere. RigVeda 1.89.1

नमस्ते Namaste

ॐ – OM. We are fortunate to usher in the new issue of Bharatiya Mandir's quarterly newsletter "Dharma Sandesh" amidst the string of festivals. We start September with Sri Krishna Janmashtami, the celebration of the birth of Lord Krishna, the Lord who constantly reminds us that He is always looking out for us. He will reincarnate every Yuga (era) to vanquish the evil forces, protect the good forces, and reinstate Dharma on this earth.

Soon after, we will be celebrating Sri Ganesh Chaturthee. The Lord of obstacles and the remover of hindrances, the bestower of boons, and the easily appeased Lord Ganapati will be welcomed and worshipped with great pomp and devotion.

Can you just imagine the joy and fervor that accompany the celebration of the Mother Goddess in all Her glory during Sri Devi Navaratri? With the beautiful colors of autumn all around us, nine nights (Navaratri) and ten days (Dussehra) of bhajans, Puja, singing, dancing and Raas Garba to scintillating music should bring down the Heavens on this earth!! The Mother Goddess Durga (माँ दुर्गा) assumes the forms of Mahakali (महाकाली), Mahalakshmi (महालक्ष्मी) and Mahasaraswati (महासरस्वती) to accept the prayers and Puja of Her children and bless them with untold happiness.

Soon after Navaratri comes Deepavali. With fondness, we remember the various types of fire crackers we used to burst back home and the different sweets we used to enjoy for so many days!! By that time, we will be ready for winter and another issue of the newsletter.

In this issue of Dharma Sandesh, we present an article on Lord Ganapati, the elephant-faced Lord who

bestows upon his devotees true knowledge, prosperity, happiness and well-being. We also bring an article on Devi Rukmini (देवी रुक्मिणी), the consort of Lord Krishna and the queen of Dwaraka.

Let us all pray to the Paramaatma (परमात्मा – Supreme Lord) to shower His blessings upon all His children!!

Sincerely,
Your Editorial Board
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सुभाषिता Subhaashitaa

In this section, we present a Sanskrit quotation and its interpretation/meaning.

सुखार्थी त्यजते विद्यां विद्यार्थी त्यजते सुखम् ।
सुखार्थिनः कुतो विद्या कुतो विद्यार्थिनः सुखम् ॥

sukhaarthi-tyajate-vidyaam-vidyaarthi-tyajate-sukham
sukhaarthinah-kuto-vidyaa-kuto-vidyaarthinah-
sukham ॥

People desiring luxury and comfort will have to abandon education. People desiring an education (students) have to abandon luxury and comfort. How can education come to be for the ones always desiring comfort and how can comfort come to be for the ones always desiring a good education?

A student has to work hard in order to get a good education. If the student prefers comfort and luxury, then he/she will not be able to study well and come up in life. If the goal of the student is a good education, then he/she must abandon the luxuries and comforts of life and engage in serious and hard studies. Only then will he/she be able to succeed.

Contributed by Dr. Narasim Banavara

साई प्रेरणा Baba's Teachings

In this section, we present a teaching of Sri Sai Baba.

Sri Sai Baba spoke thus – “Knowledge was compared to light and ignorance to darkness by the ancients. *Vid* is the root of the word *Vidya*. *Vid* means light, *Ya* means what. So, the meaning of the term ‘*Vidya*’ is that which gives light. From this term, it is evident that *Brahma Vidya* (knowledge of the Self) alone deserves to be known as *Vidya*, as it illumines our minds. Just as light and darkness cannot co-exist in the same place at the same time, *Vidya* and *Avidya* (ignorance) cannot be together. So, when you journey along the path of progress, you must purify your *Vidya*.” - *Vidya Vahini, Chapter 12.*

Contributed by Dr. Vijaya Dasari

ज्ञानविहार JnanaVihara

In this section, we present articles on Hinduism, Vedas, Puranas, Upanishads, and related philosophy.

Lord Ganapati भगवान् गणपति

Lord Ganapati (भगवान् गणपति), or Ganesha (गणेश), is one of the most popular, most easily recognizable, and most widely venerated deities in the Hindu tradition. He is adored and worshipped by most Hindus, irrespective of affiliations or denominations (Smartha, Vaishnava, Shaiva, Shaaktha, or any other) all over the world.



Known by several names such as Gajaanana (गजानन - the elephant-faced One), Lambodara (लम्बोदर - the big-bellied One or the hanging-bellied

One), Vinayaka (विनायक - the Lord or Leader of the World) and many other names, Lord Ganapati enjoys

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the honor of being adored and worshipped at the beginning of any ritual or ceremony. People worship Lord Ganapati and pray to Him to remove any and all obstacles in their paths. Lord Ganapati is known as Vighneshwara (विघ्नेश्वर - the Lord of Obstacles).

Lord Ganapati is also the Lord of Learning, Knowledge and Wisdom. He is Siddhi-Buddhi-Priya (सिद्धिबुद्धिप्रिय - Lord of Siddhi - achievement and Buddhi - intellect). He is worshipped as the Lord of Letters in any ritual associated with learning, arts and sciences. He is also the Lord of good fortune. People worship Lord Ganapati before undertaking any venture - business, travel, job search, or any such endeavor. It is strongly believed that if one worships Lord Ganapati at the beginning of one's undertaking, then one will attain success in that undertaking.

In many images, one can see Lord Ganapati with Goddess Lakshmi, the Goddess of Wealth, and Goddess Saraswati, the Goddess of Learning. People worship Lord Ganapati in order to overcome obstacles in the path of good fortune and learning, and attain both wealth and knowledge.



Lord Ganapati is the son of Lord Shiva and Parvati. In fact, Lord Ganapati represents the primordial sound OM (ॐ). When Shakti (Energy - represented by Goddess Parvati) and Shiva (Matter) meet, both Ganesha (Sound) and Skanda (Light) are born. The latter (Skanda) is the second son of the Divine Couple and is also known as Subrahmanya, Kartikeya, Kumara or Murugan.

Story of Lord Ganapati's birth: According to the Shiva Purana, once Devi Parvati had to go for her ritual bath. The gates of her palace were always guarded by Lord Shiva's attendants Nandi and Bhringi. Devi Parvati's female attendants told her “Devi, these two guards are Lord Shiva's attendants. You need to have a guard who is answerable to you, not to Lord Shiva. It is, after all, your palace. Devi Parvati thought about it and decided that they were

right. After all, Lord Shiva would walk into the palace anytime He wished and Nandi and Bhiringi would never stop Him. She decided that She should have Her privacy protected.

Devi Parvati had applied turmeric and sandalwood paste on Her body before Her bath. Turmeric paste forms an antiseptic for the body and sandalwood paste enhances beauty and radiance for the body. Devi Parvati took some of the turmeric and sandalwood paste from Her body and formed a human figure from that paste. Using Her divine powers She breathed life into that figure. The figure transformed into a radiant young boy. He immediately bowed down to Devi Parvati and said, "You gave me life. You are my mother. Order me. I will obey your order."

Devi Parvati was overjoyed. She brought nice silk clothes for Her son and dressed him. She adorned him with nice ornaments. She gave him lots of delicious snacks to eat. She then said to him, "Son, you guard my palace here. I am going for my ritual bath. Do not allow anyone to come inside."

Ganapati took a rod and stood guard at the gates of the palace. Devi Parvati went inside for Her bath. After a little while, Lord Shiva arrived at the palace and proceeded to go inside. Ganapati stopped Him. He said "you cannot go inside. My mother is taking Her bath."

Lord Shiva said, "I am Shiva. I can go inside" and proceeded to go inside. Ganapati said, "I do not know of any Shiva. It is my mother Parvati's order not to allow anyone inside." Lord Shiva ignored Ganapati's words and tried to walk inside, but Ganapati hit Him with the rod in his hand. Lord Shiva became angry. He ordered His attendants (called the Ganas) to remove the boy from the place. Lord Shiva's attendants came to remove Ganapati from his post, but then Ganapati beat all of them.

Meanwhile, all the Gods and sages arrived there to see what the commotion was all about. Lord Shiva said to Lord Brahma, "you try and pacify this boy". Lord Brahma came forward to reason with Ganapati, but since he did not know Lord Brahma, Ganapati thought that he was Lord Shiva's companion. So he tugged at Lord Brahma's beard and pulled some off. Lord Brahma fled in pain.

The argument had turned into a full battle. Seeing the way in which the whole army of the Gods and Lord Shiva's Ganas were attacking one boy, Devi Parvati and the other female Goddesses who had arrived there began supplying Ganapati with weapons so that he could fight the army single-handedly. Ganapati drove all the Gods back.

Lord Vishnu approached Lord Shiva and said, "this boy seems invincible. The only way to defeat him is by trickery." Both the Gods agreed to trick Ganapati. Lord Vishnu attacked Ganapati with His Sudarshana Chakra (discus) and Ganapati countered that with his Gada (mace). While this duel was going on, Lord Shiva struck Ganapati with His Trishula (trident) severing the boy's head and flinging it far, far away.

When She heard of the boy's death, Devi Parvati became furious. Her anger knew no bounds and She got ready to destroy the entire universe as the Ferocious Kali. Everybody was alarmed. The Gods sent Sage Narada as a messenger to pacify and appease Devi Parvati.

Devi Parvati relented with two conditions – (1) that Her son Ganapati be brought back to life, and (2) that he be made a God with all divine rights and privileges that the other Gods enjoyed. Lord Shiva and the other Gods accepted the conditions.

Ganapati's headless body was bathed and cleaned. But the head could not be found as it had been flung far, far away and lost in the heat of the battle. So, Lord Shiva asked His attendants to go and bring the head of the first living creature they saw lying down with its head turned to the north. The attendants went right away and found an elephant sleeping with its head to the north. They cut its head and brought it back to Lord Shiva.



Lord Shiva placed the elephant's head on Ganapati's body and infused life into the boy by doing Prana Pratishthapana (प्राण प्रतिष्ठापन). Ganapati came back to life.

Lord Shiva embraced Ganapati and accepted him as His son. He also granted the divine Godly status to Ganapati. He made Ganapati the leader and Lord of

all His companions and attendants (the Ganas). Ganapati thus got his name Gana + Pati, meaning the Lord of the attendants of Lord Shiva. गणानाम् पतिः इति गणपतिः, (a compound word). The same meaning is derived for his name Ganesha = Gana + Isha, गणेश = गण + ईश, meaning Lord of the Ganas.

Furthermore, Lord Shiva decreed that Lord Ganapati would receive the first worship (AgraPuja – अग्रपूजा) by each and every one in all the worlds when anyone would perform any ritual or ceremony. He stated that unless Ganapati was propitiated first, worship to any God would be useless. He stated, “you will be the Lord of obstacles (Vighneshwara – विघ्नेश्वर). Become the remover of obstacles (Vighnaharta - विघ्नहर्ता) for those who pray to you with sincere devotion; become the creator of obstacles (Vighnakarta - विघ्नकर्ता) for those who do not.”

There are other stories of the birth and rebirth of Lord Ganapati, but the version from the Shiva Purana remains the most popular.

Form of Lord Ganapati: Sri Ganapati Atharva-Sheersha (श्री गणपति अथर्वशीर्षोपनिषद् – an Upanishad extolling Lord Ganapati as the embodiment of the



Supreme Spirit Parabrahman) states that Lord Ganapati has an elephant face, a curved trunk (Vakratunda – वक्रतुण्ड), one tusk (Ekadanta – एकदन्त), a huge hanging belly (Lambodara – लम्बोदर), and four arms (Chaturhasta – चतुर्हस्त). He holds a noose (Pasha – पाश) in his upper left hand and a goad (Ankusha – अङ्कुश) in the upper right hand. In the lower

left hand he holds a sweet – Modaka (मोदक) (the Lord is exhibiting his Varada Mudra (वरद मुद्रा) here), and the fourth hand (lower right) is in the Abhaya Mudra (अभय मुद्रा) stating that he will protect his devotees.

He also has a mouse (Mooshaka or Aakhu) as his vehicle (Mooshakavahana – मूषकवाहन) and as his emblem on his flag (Mooshakadhwaaja – मूषकध्वज).

The Ganapati Atharva-Sheersha further states that Lord Ganapati is reddish (Raktam – रक्तम्) in color. In some other texts, his color is given as reddish-brown (Kapila - कपिल). He has large fan-like ears (Shoorpakarna – शूर्पकर्ण), he wears red clothes, is smeared with red sandalwood paste and likes to be worshipped with red flowers.

Lord Ganapati has a serpent as his waist-belt. Some texts state that the serpent is also his sacred thread (Yagnopavitha – यज्ञोपवीत) across his torso over his left shoulder. He is therefore known as Naga-Yagnopavithin (नागयज्ञोपवीतिन्).

Each attribute of Lord Ganesha is rich in symbolism and is significant. There are many interpretations of his attributes. Some of them are as follows:

- **Elephant-Head** – indicates auspiciousness, strength, fidelity, intelligence and discriminative power. A big head also indicates “think big”.
- **Large Ears** – indicate the power to winnow out unwanted information and assimilate good and useful information. They indicate wisdom and the importance of listening in the process of attaining knowledge. They hear everything, but retain only good information.
- **Small Eyes** – indicate the need to concentrate in order to gain knowledge.
- **Single Tusk** – indicates that Lord Ganapati can overcome all forms of dualism. It also indicates that one should always retain the good and get rid of the bad in everything.
- **Curved Trunk** – indicates high efficiency and adaptability. The elephant uses its trunk to pick up heavy logs of wood as well as small blades of grass. It uses its trunk to knock down massive trees, and it uses the same trunk break a hard coconut and eat the sweet kernel inside. This indicates the intellectual potential and wisdom that is needed to adapt to changing circumstances and succeed in life.
- **Pasha (noose)** – in Lord Ganapati’s upper left hand indicates that worldly attachments and desires are the noose that bind us to sorrow and to this Samsara (bondage of births and rebirths).

- **Ankusha (goad)** – in Lord Ganapati's upper right hand indicates the need to prod human beings towards spirituality and the path of righteousness and truth. With this goad, Lord Ganesha can both repel and strike obstacles.
- **Modaka** – in Lord Ganesha's lower left hand is symbolic of the sweetness of the realized inner self. On the path of spirituality and enlightenment, the human being strives all along. Once he/she realizes the true self (Paramaatma), then that person is in true bliss.
- **Abhaya Mudra** – Lord Ganapati exhibits the Abhaya Mudra in his lower right hand symbolizing protection, refuge and blessings for his devotees.
- **Large Stomach** – Lord Ganapati's large and hanging belly (stomach) signifies the bounty of nature and equanimity, the ability of Ganesha to swallow the sorrows of the world and protect the world. It also indicates that one should equally accept and swallow both the good and bad in life.
- **Position of his legs** – one leg of Lord Ganesha is resting on the ground and another leg is raised symbolizing the importance of living and participating in the material world as well as in the spiritual world, the ability of being in the world without being of the world.



Lord Ganapati has a mouse for his vehicle as well as his emblem on his flag. It seems strange that the big Lord Ganesha has such a small animal as his vehicle. But the small mouse has deep symbolism. For one, the mouse represents the ego, the mind

with all its desires, and the pride of the individual. Lord Ganesha, riding atop the mouse, becomes the Master (not the slave) of these tendencies, thus indicating the power that intellect and discriminative faculties have over the mind.

The mouse is also voracious by nature. It is shown sitting next to a plate of Modakas, but it is not eating the Modakas. It is holding a piece of the Modaka in its hand and it is looking towards Lord Ganapati as if it is asking permission from the Lord to eat the Modaka. This represents the mind that has been completely subordinated to the superior power of the intellect.

Lord Ganesha is usually represented with four arms signifying divinity. In some instances, however, he is represented with six arms, eight arms, ten arms, twelve arms, or even fourteen arms, each hand carrying a symbol that is different from the symbols in the other hands, for a total of fifty-seven different symbols, according to research scholars.

Similarly, in some images, the Lord is represented with five faces, especially in the form of Heramba Ganapati (हेरम्ब गणपति).

Names of Lord Ganapati: There are numerous names to extol Lord Ganapati. He is worshipped with twelve names (Dwadasha Nama), sixteen names (Shodasha Nama), one hundred and eight names (Ashtottara Shata Nama) and one thousand names (Sahasranama). The most common sixteen names of the Lord are as follows:

- Sumukha – सुमुख – Auspicious-faced Lord
- Ekadanta – एकदन्त – One-tusked Lord
- Kapila – कपिल – Reddish-brown Lord
- Gajakarnaka – गजकर्णक – Elephant-eared Lord
- Lambodara – लम्बोदर – Hanging-bellied Lord
- Vikata – विकट – Gigantic Lord (also Lord with jovial disposition)
- Vighnaraja – विघ्नराज – Lord of Obstacles
- Ganadhira – गणाधिप – Leader of the Ganas
- Dhumraketu – धूम्रकेतु – Smoke-hued Lord
- Ganaadhyaksha – गणाध्यक्ष – Lord of the Ganas
- Phaalachandra – फालचन्द्र – Moon-crested Lord
- Gajanana – गजानन – Elephant-faced Lord
- Vakratunda – वक्रतुण्ड – Curved-trunked Lord
- Shoorpakarna – शूर्पकर्ण – Large-fan-eared Lord
- Heramba – हेरम्ब – Mother's Beloved Son
- Skandapurvaja – स्कन्दपूर्वज – Elder brother of Skanda (Lord Subrahmanya)

The Mudgala Purana describes thirty-two forms of Lord Ganapati. Some of the common forms are Bala Ganapati (Lord as a baby), Natya Ganapati (the dancing Lord), Dhundi Ganapati or Dhundi Vinayaka



(the Lord most sought after), Maha-Ganapati (the Great Lord) and Sankatahara Ganapati (the dispeller of troubles).

The Ganapati Atharva Sheersha extols Lord Ganapati as the Supreme Lord (Paramaatma) and the primordial sound OM (ॐ). It

also states that Lord Ganesha resides in the human being in the Mulaadhaara Chakra (मूलाधार चक्र). This chakra is at the base of the spine and is the basis of all the other chakras of life. Lord Ganapati holds, supports, and guides all the other chakras, thus governing the forces that propel the wheel of life. This chakra is also associated with conservation, survival, procreation and well-being of the individual.

Association with Mahabharata: When Maharshi Veda Vyasa wanted to write the Mahabharata, he looked for a suitable scribe to write down the epic as he dictated it. Unable to find someone suitable to write it, he prayed to Lord Brahma, who appeared and suggested that Vyasa pray to Lord Ganapati for that job as he was most suitable. Vyasa prayed to Lord Ganapati who agreed to write the epic for him on the condition that Vyasa recite the poem without any interruptions. If he paused, then Lord Ganapati would stop writing. Veda Vyasa agreed, but put another condition that Lord Ganapati should understand every word of every verse before writing.

Thus, the recitation and the writing of the Mahabharata began. In the rush of writing fast, Lord Ganapati's pen broke. In order not to interrupt the writing, the Lord broke off his own tusk, made it into a pen, and continued writing (another text states that when Vyasa asked Lord Ganapati to write the

Mahabharata, the Lord realized the enormity of the task and the inadequacy of an ordinary pen. So he broke his own tusk and used it as a pen). This indicates that no sacrifice is too big in the pursuit of knowledge.

Lord Ganapati remains forever the most popular and most approachable God for all Hindus. He is thus a uniting factor for all. Let us all pray to Lord Ganapati to remove obstacles in our respective paths to knowledge, prosperity and happiness.

Sources: Sri Ganesha Puranam; Sri Shiva Puranam; Sri Ganapati Atharvasheersha; www.wikipedia.org; www.crystalinks.com; www.godandguru.com/shiv-puran/index.html; and other sources.

Contributed by Dr. Narasim Banavara

Consorts of Lord MahaVishnu – Part 2

Everyone in the Hindu Religion worships Lord Vishnu by one name or another, like Vishnu, Krishna, Rama, Ranganatha, Venkateshwara, and so on. With every name and incarnation, He has a consort by a different name. There is a mythological story behind each one of them. In each issue, I will try to give you a bird's eye view of these stories.

RUKMINI

Devi Rukmini (देवी रुक्मिणी) is believed to be the incarnation of Sri Lakshmi in Sri Krishnavatara – when Lord Vishnu incarnated as Sri Krishna. She bore all the divine qualities of Sri Lakshmi in human form.

Rukmini was born as the daughter of King Bishmaka of Vidarbha. Rukmini had seen Lord Krishna when they were both very young. She was so enamored by Lord Krishna's grace and beauty that she started



imagining herself to be his wife. She was also extremely devoted to Lord Krishna. She dreamt of Him all day and all night. Bishmaka and his wife also wanted Krishna to be their son-in-law.

King Bishmaka had a son by name Rukmi. He had been a great friend of King Kamsa, the former king of Mathura. As Krishna had killed Kamsa earlier, Rukmi

had begun to hate Krishna. He wanted Rukmini to marry Shishupala, the son of his friend and a very powerful king Jarasandha. Rukmi persuaded his father to give Rukmini in marriage to Shishupala, and King Bismaka reluctantly agreed.

Rukmini was totally against this marriage. But her brother was adamant for the marriage. So the marriage was arranged against Rukmini's wishes. Her only recourse was to write to her beloved Krishna. So she wrote a letter to Krishna lamenting about her forthcoming wedding and sent it through a trusted messenger. When Krishna read the letter full of love and devotion, he wrote back to her promising to save her from the marriage. Krishna wrote in the letter that he would take her away from the temple where Rukmini went to pray daily.

Lord Krishna devised a plan so that he would not have to take the blame for kidnapping Rukmini. He went to Vidarbha alone in a chariot and asked his elder brother Balarama to bring his army towards Vidarbha. As Rukmini was coming out of the temple Krishna appeared in his chariot. He then asked Rukmini to get on the chariot and drive away. For onlookers it seemed as if Rukmini was driving and she went with Krishna on her own accord.

Meanwhile, the news of Krishna taking Rukmini away reached Crown Prince Rukmi. He came with his army to fight Krishna. Of course, he was defeated by Krishna. When Krishna was about to kill him, Rukmini pleaded with him to spare her brother's life.



Krishna took pity on him and spared him. After a few days, Krishna and Rukmini were married in Dwaraka with all pomp and glory. Rukmini was Krishna's favorite wife and the queen of Dwaraka.

It is said in Skanda Purana that Rukmini was to Dwaraka what Radha was to Vrindavan. There is a temple for Lord Krishna and Rukmini in Pandarapur in the state of Maharashtra. There Lord Krishna is in the form of Vitthala (Vittobha).

It is said that the messenger who took Rukmini's letter to Krishna was born as Vadiraja Thirtha in the year 1480. He has been described as a great saint in the Madhwa tradition. He has written Rukminisa Vijaya – a famous work of 1240 verses in 19 chapters describing the love and devotion of Rukmini for Lord Krishna. In South India, Rukmini Kalyanam (marriage of Rukmini) is a very famous dance-drama.

Sources: Sri Vishnu Purana, Srimad Bhagavatam, and Krishnavatara by K.M.Munshi

Contributed by Dr. Padma Sundaram.

समाचार Community News

Kid's and Senior's Summer Weekend Camp

Kids' Camp is one of the most widely anticipated events of the year. This year's camp on August 21 and 22 was coordinated by volunteers and students. Their purpose was to engage the young children with religious and cultural values. Thirty campers ranging in age from 6 to 16 collected under one roof.



As always, this year's camp was packed with exciting indoor activities, outdoor games and religion classes. Campers were introduced to all the deities in the temple.

They recited shlokas and bhajans. They participated in two-days of fun-filled activities like arts and crafts, coloring contest, religion BINGO, musical chairs, Kho-kho, steal-the-bear, and many outdoor games. Additionally, they enjoyed delicious breakfast, snacks and lunch donated by many volunteers.

This year, along with children, the first Golden Camp for seniors was held. Each senior was responsible for 4 to 5 kids. The interaction between the grandmothers and the children was amazing. Language was never a barrier. Some children took it upon themselves to translate for them. Together they practiced the Indian national anthem, played religious BINGO and shared their hobbies and interests.

On both days, the golden campers performed modified yoga and participated in arts and crafts, coloring contest and in Raas-garba. They learned about healthy diet habits from registered dietician Damini Radhakrishnan. They also had an opportunity to write

a letter to their children/grandchildren in English, something they always wanted to do, but couldn't. Watching seniors write with enthusiasm got some adult volunteers teary-eyed. Seniors were overjoyed with the camp and are looking forward to next year.



At end of the second day, a short demonstration was presented for the parents, who also joined the Dandia Raas. The camp concluded with a pizza and soda party for children and parents. Overall, the two-day camp was a grand success for all children and adults.
Submitted by Priti Shah

Children's Classes at the Mandir

Some parents have expressed their desire to resume the Children's Sunday School. At this time we are asking the parents to sign up if they think their children may join. The classes will be open to children from age 7 to 17. Younger children will also be considered if one of the parents will stay with the child till he/she is used to the program. Classes will be held **every other week**. The day and time of the classes will be decided with the consent of parents.

A meeting of the interested parents will be held on Sunday, September 12, 2010 at 2 pm (immediately after the Sri Ganesh Chaturthee celebrations). If for any reason you cannot attend the meeting and are interested in the children's classes, please call Om Arora at 692-0467 or call the Mandir at 361-3055.

Geeta Study Group

Bharatiya Mandir is planning to start **Geeta Study Group** soon. If you are interested please call the Temple at 361-3055 or email at bmandir@bharatiyamandir.org and someone will get in touch with you.

Dr. Satish Rohatgi has generously sponsored the printing of copies of this issue of Dharma Sandesh. Devotees may note that all the writing of the content and the editing of the newsletter are strictly voluntary.

Some Upcoming Special Mandir Events:

Sri Krishna Janmashtami	Thursday, Sept 2
Sri Nand Mahotsav	Monday, Sept 6
Sri Ganesh Chaturthee	Sunday, Sept 12
Pitru Paksh (Shraadh)	Thursday, Sept 23 to Thursday, Oct 7
Sri Devi Navaratri	Friday, Oct 8 to Sunday, Oct 17
Sri Devi Ghata Sthapan	Friday, Oct 8
Raas Garba	Saturday, Oct 9
Navachandi Yajna	Saturday, Oct 16
Mata ki Chowki	Sunday, Oct 17
Vijaya Dashami (Dussehra or Dasara)	Sunday, Oct 17
Sharad Purnima	Friday, Oct 22
Karva Chauth	Tuesday, Oct 26
Deepavali (Sri Maha Lakshmi Puja)	Friday, Nov 5
Nutan Varsh	Sunday, Nov 7
Sri Tulasi Vivah	Sunday, Nov 21

Shradhaanjali श्रद्धाञ्जली

With deepest sadness and heartfelt grief, we inform the community of the untimely demise of our close friend, Mr. Atulbhai Shah, on Monday, August 2, 2010, in Ahmedabad, India. Atulbhai was one of the trustee members of India Temple Foundation. He will be missed by one and all. May God bestow eternal peace to the departed soul and grant courage to the family to bear this irreparable loss. – India Temple Foundation, Inc.

Our quarterly newsletter is called "**Dharma Sandesh**" (धर्मसन्देश). "Dharma", in simple terms, refers to righteousness, conduct, a sense of duty, virtue, and the ultimate truth. "Sandesh" means a message or news. So, Dharma Sandesh refers to a message of Dharma.

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