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Chirantana Newsletter



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]éÐ]h jÖMÔÐ, Ô\$áóAeÑ, 2004, 12th Issue, February 2004

<http://www.jogaworld.org>

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Lord Krishna told Arjuna in Chapter 12 of Bhakti Joga that the person who worships the Lord with utmost love, belief and devotion, he or she is the true devotee. Those who work with devotion, their work is always being guided by the Lord.

Life Goes On:

This will be our sixth year of Holi celebration. Bhajan program started just as a congregation and get-together for the prayer and in six years the activities have grown through its institutional identity as JOGA. It is our great pleasure to bring the twelfth issue of this religious newsletter CHIRANTANA. This issue contains various articles, and news since the last issue published in August 2003.

Our special thanks to temple priest Mahasakti prabhu and his wife for all the helps they have rendered for the success of the bhajan program every month. We also thank Nrusingha Chaitanya prabhu and other temple priests for

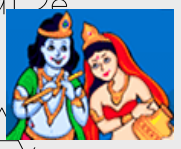
their good vibes and encouragement.

CHIRANTANA is a biannual religious newsletter published in the month of February and August. You can view this newsletter at our above JOGA webpage. We invite your active participation by sending the religious and educational articles to obhajan@yahoo.com by the end of January and July to be published in the February and August issues respectively.

What's New:

We started Oriya lessons as an experiment on the ability of the children to accept the language and create a feeling inside them. As the children are growing up, their activity numbers are increasing. These children take violin lessons, dance lessons, gymnastics, piano, soccer etc. outside of the school. Inside the school, together with higher level academic courses, these kids also participate in music, drama, chorus, Math-team, Academic team, Volley ball, Table Tennis and so on. Where is the time for Oriya? Although they don't have time, still they listen and engage themselves as much they can to keep up contact with their heritage. This year the kids wanted to take the challenge, to do a drama where they can get the opportunity to talk in Oriya. This is just a beginning. Let's hope next year they can speak more Oriya words and the trend should continue.

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**(March 6th, at Murugan Temple)
 Hori announcement in back side**

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| Dola Purnima (Holi): | Rasananda Behera |
| Minati: | Sulochana Patnaik |
| Human Being is not a body,
but just a soul: | Nrusingha Mishra |
| Trichhakare Mu: | Shashadhar Mahapatra |
| Teacher's Refresher Course and
merit Scholarship: | Naresh Das, Dharendra
Kar and Hemant Biswal |

**DOLA PURNIMA (HOLI)
 Rasanand Behera, Germantown, MD**

*The weather is most pleasant
 The spring flowers are in full bloom.
 Sky is clear
 Days are warm and nights are full moon.
 But look at here
 In Washington DC we are
 With full of breezy winter
 The hill like white powder
 Full of Snow and snow
 Indians are not in India but, Indian American we are
 Let's celebrate holi by memorizing our culture
 History is History look at the Future...*

Among our native land India's innumerable festivals, Holi ranks as the most colorful. It celebrates the arrival of spring. It is a celebration of joy and hope. Holi continues to be celebrated with great vigor throughout India. Holi provides a refreshing respite from the mundane norms as people from all walks of life enjoy themselves. But some say it is the day of the death of demoness Holika. In a tight knit community, it also provides a good excuse for letting off some steam and settling old scores, without causing physical injury. Indians all over the world eagerly await the Festival of Colors, as bonfires are lit to banish the cold dark nights of winter and usher in warmer spring. Dhuleti, day after Holi, is the actual festival of colors, when everything in sight is covered in a riot of colors.

A stanza of a poem comes to my mind: "Fagune Fagu KheLare ...
 Kanhei Thaei Gopi meLare ...

The twin towns of Nandagow (where Lord ShreeKrishna, Kanha grew up) and Barsana near Mathura (where Radhika grew up), are the epicenters of the celebrations. Lord ShreeKrishna, while growing up in Vraj, popularized the festival with his ingenious pranks. Role reversal, feminism are accepted customs for the duration of the festival. Both men and women of Vraj clash in a colorful display of battle of the sexes. Gopies of Vraj responded with equal enthusiasm and the festivities have continued ever since. Celebrations start a week earlier than rest of India.

In the East (mainly our native place in Orissa) we all know how all the five days we used to have different Bimanas (where Lord Radha and

Krishna) visit from different palaces (Chacheri) and then get together in one particular place. The chanting of Hare Krishna Maha Mantras, Jananas, Bhajans are all over the places. The Gopals used to play the lauDibaDi and other katagharas with full fledge. Cow is worshiped in each and everybody's house. Some used to enjoy the Tali Geeta in the verse of Lord Shree Krishna. People play Colour Game (Abira and Pichkari) during all the days of the week. This is the starting that can not be completed here.

The men of Nandagow raid Barsana with hopes of raising their flag over Shri Radhikaji's temple. They receive a thunderous welcome as the women of Barsana greet them with long wooden sticks. The men are soundly beaten as they attempt to rush through town to reach the relative safety of Shri Radhikaji's temple. Men are well padded, as they are not allowed to retaliate. In this mock battle the men try their best not to be captured. Unlucky captives can be forcefully lead away, thrashed and dressed in female attire before being made to dance. Famous poets like Surdas, Nand-das, Kumbhan-das and others, have written beautifully as to how Lord Krishna was similarly received and forced to wear a sari, forced to wear make-up and made to dance before being released by the gopies of Vraj. The next day, the temples in Brindavan celebrate the festival with great gusto. The renowned temple of Banka-Bihari, the beloved Lord of the 15th century saint Haridas, is at the centre of the festivities. Clouds of pink and white descend upon the pilgrims, as the Lord of Brindavan plays holi with all his beloved visitors.

The men of Barsana reciprocate by invading Nandagow on the very next day. Clouds of pink and white powder mark the frenzy of activity taking place in its narrow streets. A naturally occurring orange-red dye, Kesudo, is used to drench all participants. Today, the women of Nandagow beat the invaders from Barsana. It is a colorful site. In the interest of tourism and safety, the state tourist board has set up excellent vantage points for the public. A large open ground, on the outskirts of the town is specially set aside for the most magnificent display of the festivities.

The festival moves on to other parts of Vraj. Entire India celebrates the joys of spring as the "festival of color". Gulal-Kund in Vraj is a beautiful little lake, set in a delightful grove near the mountain Gobardhan, in the Mathura district. Here the festival is commemorated on a more regular basis. Pilgrims, who visit the holy land of Vraj, can see the re-enactments of Holi throughout the year at

this lake. There are local boys those are acting in the Krishna-Lila drama troupes re-enact the scenes of holi for the pilgrims.

Let's see the Royal courts in North India: It refined the festival in to an art form of its own disdain. Rajput warriors of the Rajasthani courts used to show off their equestrian skills during the festival. Rajput men would ride their steeds through the white and pink clouds of color, throwing color powders on each other. Even the members of the royal families were not immune from being drenched by color. The entire court would be drenched in saffron water and an orange-red dye of the "kasuda" flowers.

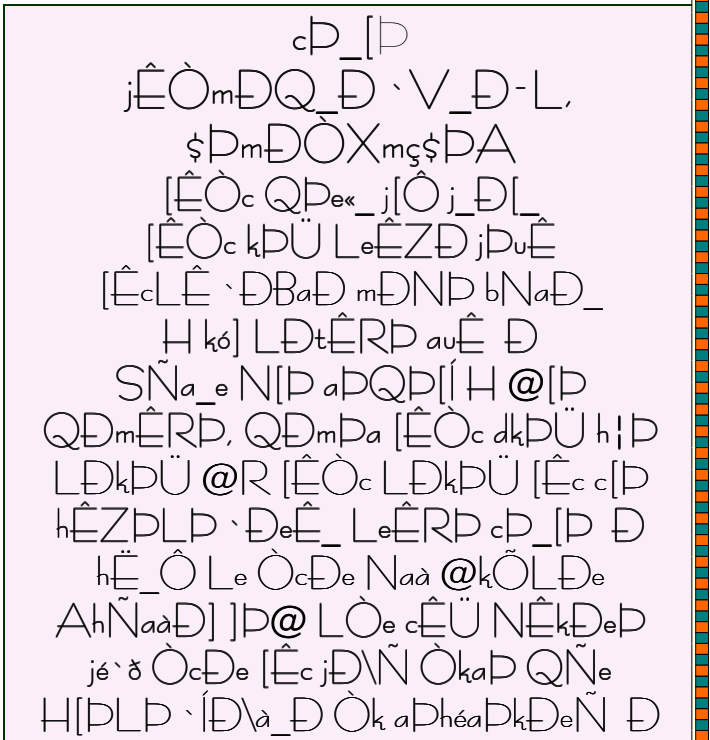
Temples, spread throughout North and Western States of India, celebrate the festival in a way reminiscent of rajput courts. The Deity, and the laity, are liberally sprinkled with perfumes, saffron water, kesudo, and covered in sandalwood as well as the white and pink powder (abira), abil and gulal. Joyous celebration is accompanied by classical music, poetry and folk songs appropriate for the occasion. Deity's white clothes' are soon transformed into a mass of color as gold and silver syringes spray (PichakAri) colorful water on all participants. The celebrations officially usher in the pleasant season of love, spring. In the Pushti-Marga temples, the festivities last for almost a month. Beginning on the day of Vasant-Panchami, the festivals last till the day after Holi. This helps prolong the season of joy – Dola Purnima.

POEMS/STORIES/ESSAYS:

HUMAN BEING IS NOT A BODY, BUT A SOUL

by Nrusingha Charan Mishra, Germantown, MD

Among all the creations of the Supreme that we know as God, human being is at the highest level. None other than the human being has the potential to realize that the Supreme is manifested without in various forms and is well within the self in the form of the soul. All the living objects like humans, animals and plants go through a normal cycle of birth, growth, decay and death. Humans are certainly not the mightiest creation from physical point of view. There are creatures like lion, tiger, and elephant more powerful than human beings. The difference between these two classes is that human being is endowed with a rare gift of self-realization and discrimination power, whereas animal does not have that power. Human is capable of realizing the individual self or soul within as an expression of the Divine. The divinity is expressed in Nature in various outward forms with hidden meaning and is evident in various acts of love, kindness and compassion among different creations. All these have been spelt out by many Rishis and Munis in the Vedas and Upanishads. A blind poet in Orissa named Bhima Bhoi many centuries ago wrote, Olata Brukhe Kheluchi Lotani Para. He compared this human body to an inverted tree, where the roots are upwards and the branches are downwards and the pigeon is playing in the branches of the tree. The pigeon is the metaphor for the soul in the human body. In the case of plants, the nutrients from the soil, essential for the survival, are absorbed by the roots and then sent upwards to different parts by osmotic and capillary action of forces. For the human being the nutrients are needed for the nourishment of both the body and the mind. They can be derived from the foods that human being engulfs or can be derived as creative forces generated in the human mind by virtue of mediation, or chanting, or Yoga. These constant nourishment to the body and the mind keep open the doors to the heart, abode of the soul. Human being is composed of physical body, and mind or intellect which, are constantly changing, but in the heart there is soul which remains unchanged, untouched. Lamp of the soul is always on, never gets extinguished. Physical body and mind in



the forms of desires through senses control the human being oblivious of the presence of divinity within in the form of the soul. In the "Autobiography of a Yogi" Paramahansa Yogananda writes, the tree of life is the human body, the essential knowledge given to him by his own Guru. The spinal cord is like an upside down tree with human being's hair as the roots and afferent nerves are the branches. The tree of the nervous system bears many enjoyable fruits or five sensations such as sight, smell, sound, taste and touch. In these human being may rightfully indulge, not being overpowered from the effects of all the action of the senses. Human being is uniquely given the power of the Divine Consciousness of the soul within. Human body is rather a temple of the Divine self or soul.

Teachers' Refresher Course and merit scholarship

Naresh Das, Dharendra Kar and Hemant Biswal

JOGA is involved in many projects for quality education in Orissa. Among these "Teacher's Refresher Course" for high school science teachers is one of the high priority projects. We have already organized the Refresher Courses in nine districts (Kendrapara, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Khurda, Sundargarh, Jagatsingpur, Dhenkanal, Bolangir and Sambalpur). The summary of the courses held is given in following table.

District	# of Teachers	Place	Dates
Sundargarh	87	Municipality Hall, Rourkela	Aug 16-18, 2002
Khurdha	93	R. D Women's College	June 21-22, 2002
Jajpur	72	Jajpur Highschool	Dec 28-29, 2001
Bhadrak	85	Bhadrak High school	Dec 26-28, 2001
Kendrapada	78	Kendrapada college	May 10-11, 2001
Jagatsingpur	80	SVM College	Dec. 20-22, 2002
Dhenkanal	67	Dhenkanal College	Dec. 21-23, 2002
Bolangir	49	Patitapaban Sikhya Kendra	Oct. 28-30, 2003
Sambalpur	93	Town High School, Sambalpur	Feb. 6-8, 2004

We request all the members to consider of supporting JOGA educational projects with at least \$100.00 annually.

Merit Scholarship for talented and needy students:

JOGA is also involved in other educational projects like scholarship for needy and talented students. On January 26th, 2004, fifteen tenth grade students from Bhadrak district were awarded Rs. 1000.00 each as merit scholarship. The students were selected based on the written objective type test held on January 4th, 2004. Total 80 students participated in the test. Picture shows here the student receiving the award.



Please visit our webpage www.jogaworld.org and let us know if you would like to support any of these projects. As always we appreciate constructive comments and suggestions. We hope you will support this noble effort for quality education through your tax deductible donation payable to "JOGA" and send to: **JOGA, 9535 Ridgeview Dr., Columbia, MD 21046**

JOGA is a non-profit tax-exempt organization and hence all the donations are tax deductible. Here is the additional list of donors for JOGA educational fund for the year 2003, since we last reported in August, 2003 issue of **Chirantan**.

- Mr. Dabaki and Anjana Choudhury, Germantown, MD*
- Drs. Naresh and Bigyani Das, Columbia, MD*
- Mr. Dharendra and Madhumita Kar, Boston, MA*

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Picture of student receiving

Food For thought:

"If money helps a man to do good to others, it is of some value, but if not, it is simply a mass of evil and the sooner it is get rid of better."

- Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902)

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Bhajan Program sponsors:

Thanks to all the families for their participation and contribution for the success of the bhajan program. Our heartfelt thanks to the following families for sponsoring feasts on different months:

- Anjana and Debaki Choudhury, MD*
- Jhunu and Indu Mishra, MD*
- Meera and Shashadhar Mohapatra, MD*
- Urmila Mohapatra, VA*
- Mausumi and Sandeep Pattnaik, MD*
- Meena and Kailash Sahu, MD*

HOLI FESTIVAL

193 exit towards GREENBELT/NASA GODDARD. Keep LEFT at the fork in the ramp, Turn LEFT onto MD-193 E/GREENBELT RD. Turn RIGHT onto Hanover Pkwy which will become PRINCESS GARDEN PKWY.



Organized by

Jagannatha Organization for Global Awareness (JOGA)

www.jogaworld.org

6th March 2004 (Dola Purnima Day),
Saturday, 4:00 PM - 9:00 PM
Murugan Temple Auditorium
6300 Princes Garden Parkway, Lanham, MD 20706,
Ph. (301) 552-4889

Program:

- ❖ Holi procession of Deities
- ❖ Arati and Bhajan
- ❖ Cultural: Songs, Dances (*Bharat Natyam, Kathak, Odissi, Manipuri, Sambalpuri*), Children's Drama "Odialand", Play by Adults, Talent shows, and Pala "Prabhasa Jajnya" by Pratap Dash, MD and group.
- ❖ Prasad/Dinner

Contacts:

Please confirm your participation by Feb. 25, 2004 to any of the following volunteers.

Bigyani Das (301) 498 3729; Meera Mohapatra (301) 879 8188; Dharendra Kar (781) 762 1878; Munmaya Mishra (804) 364 2807; Urmila Sahu (301) 540 5920; Bandita Mishra (301) 540-4641; Sikha Sen (410) 531 1943; Padmanava Pradhan (732) 572 3055; Arun Ojha (410) 997 7502; Hosensu Sahoo (703) 793 8764

Donations: Family-\$20, Single-\$10 (If you confirm by February 28th); Family-\$25, Single-\$15 (After February 28th)

Balabhadra Sponsorship: \$200.00

Subhadra Sponsorship: \$150.00,

Jagannatha Sponsorship: \$100.00

(All donations are tax deductible)

Direction to the temple: From I-95/I-495 CAPITAL BELTWAY, take BALTIMORE-WASHINGTON PKWY exit, exit number 22A, towards BALTIMORE. Take MD-