



# BALABHAVAN NEWSLETTER

SHIVA VISHNU TEMPLE, SAN DIEGO

July 2010



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## **SWAMI DAYANAND SARASWATHI**

Swami Dayanand Saraswathi was a great scholar. He was born on Feb. 12, 1824 and died on Oct. 21, 1883 at age 59. His guru's name was Swami Virjananda. He was born in a village called Tankara near Morvi. He was praying to God one night when his family was sleeping and saw a mouse eating the God's offerings. He thought about if the God couldn't protect his own offerings how he could help the humanity. He urged his father to stop praying to this helpless God in the form of idols. He started asking questions that frightened his mom and dad.

He was disappointed with classic Hinduism and became a wandering monk. He learned Panini's grammar to understand Sanskrit text. He learned from them that God can be found. He searched for God for 2 decades. He found swami Virjanada near Mathura who became his guru. Dayanand stayed under Virjanada tutelage for two and a half years.

Virjanada wanted Dayanand to spread the knowledge of the Vedas. He decided to please his guru so he did it. He set out on the difficult task and remained dedicated despite attempts on his life. He challenged scholars and priests and won every time. He believed that Hinduism was corrupted by divergence from the founding principles of the Vedas. Hindu priest discouraged common folk from reading Vedas. He started a Hindu reform movement called the Arya Samaj on 10th April 1875.

Arya Samaj condemns practices such as polytheism, idolatry, animal sacrifice, ancestor worship, pilgrimage, priest craft, the belief in avatars or incarnations of God, the hereditary caste system, unsociability and child marriage on the grounds that all these lack Vedic sanction.

*By Sarthak Madan*

## **BBC Announcements:**

2010 is halfway through. What a busy time it has been with weekly classes, presentations by parent volunteers and children, the pujas led by Panditjis and the family picnic. Photographs taken during any of the events may be forwarded to us.

Regular classes are suspended during the months of July and August for summer break. Instead, we will have field trips to Buddha Monastery in Escondido on July 3<sup>rd</sup> and the Self Realization Fellowship in Encinitas on July 24<sup>th</sup>. Details will be sent about this soon. Families are encouraged to participate in this field trip.

Families are encouraged to use this summer break to help the children organize their material, download bhajans, print copies to put in their binders. Please let us know if you would like us to order the Shloka books.

We will be assigning parent volunteers to teach either a story, shloka or Bhajans during the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 2010 as we update the calendar. Please review the calendar online and let us know if you are interested in teaching any topic. Thank you for your participation which makes this program a huge success.

BBC Team



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## JHELUM RIVER

The five main rivers of the Himalayas are the Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas, and Sutlej. The Himalayas is the birthplace of many important rivers. The rivers of the Himalayas give a new dimension to the beautiful scenic beauty of the Himalayan region. The rivers are the main source of life in those areas. It helps in the formation of the forest belt and irrigation process in these regions.

The river Jhelum originates shooting out from a spring called Verinag which is 80 km south of Srinagar. Verinag is located in the Kothar district, south-east of Srinagar. It is known worldwide for its pictorial beauty and nine bridges. It is a very wide river and has muddy water. It flows through Srinagar.

One of the few rivers that have their origin in Kashmir itself, **Jhelum River** is a beauty in itself. The river originates in Verinag, shooting out from a spring. The River Jhelum starts from Kashmir, flows through a long stretch of Jammu before finally surrendering itself to the Indus River.

The Jhelum River is the most westerly of the five rivers that traverse Punjab and flow into the Indus River in Pakistan. Ancient Greeks called the river Hydaspes. It arises in the Himalayas south of Srinagar, flows northwest through Srinagar and the Vale of Kashmir and joins with the River Chenab.

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## SRI RAMANA MAHARISHI

Sri Ramana Maharishi was born as Venkatraman Iyer on December 30, 1879 in Tiruchuli in Tamil Nadu. At the age of sixteen (16) he left home to Arunachala, a mountain considered sacred by Hindus, at Tiruvannamalai. He lived there for the rest of his life. Even though he was born as a brahmin, he declared himself as an Atiasrami, state of unattachment to anything in life.

Venkatraman was a normal child. He was popular at school, good at sports, very intelligent but was lazy at school. He was nicknamed "Thangakai", which means golden hand because whichever team he was on in sports, the team always won. When he was 11, his father sent him to live with his uncle in Dindigul so he could go learn English and he would be able to get good job with the government.

Venkatraman was in middle school when his father died. After his father's death he thought about his dad's body and his soul. One day when he going to school, a relative said the word "Arunachala". His heart was filled with joy. A month later he came upon some books and started visiting the Meenakshi Temple in Madurai and started to show more bhakti.

One day when he was 16, he had a fear about his death. He pretended like he was dead and thought about "is he really dead". He was fascinated by the spirit, body, life and "I". After this event he lost interest in school, studies, friends and relationships.

He was a silent teacher. Devotees asked him questions and he would answer in his own unique way. Some of teachings are: Happiness is what everyone wants. For you to be happy, you need to know yourself. You know yourself by asking "who am I?". His earliest teachings are in the book "Naan Yar" (who am I) in Tamil.

*Bv Ananva Madabushi*

## CHENAB RIVER

One of the five tributaries of the Indus River, the Chenab River runs through dramatic gorges and stunning mountain scenery on its 1,087 km journey to the Arabian ocean.



Chenab River is formed as the glacial melt of the snow topped *Himalayas* at Himachal Pradesh and flows in a southwesterly direction in Jammu and Kashmir region of India. Two rivers Chandra and Bhaga Rivers meet at Tandi forming Chandrabhaga or Chenab River. The Chenab River was known to Indians in Vedic period as *Asikni* and the Greeks as the *Acesines*. The soil and the people of this area are considered to be the richest in the region.



The Chenab Bridge (shown above) is one of the two highest bridges in the world built by India. Chenab River enters Pakistan and flows through the Punjab plain and meets Rivers Jhelum, Ravi, and Sutlej. This confluence of Rivers finally joins Indus River which flows downstream to Arabian Ocean.

*By Akhilesh Genneri*



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## JHELUM RIVER....continued

The river is famed for its nine old bridges. The length is 725 kilometers(450 miles). In Pakistani Punjab the Jhelum is the basis of an extensive irrigation and canal system. In 1901 the Jhelum canal colony was established, with the intention of irrigating 457,000 hectares, and it quickly brought prosperity to the settler-farmers.

The hydrology of the Jhelum River is largely controlled by snowmelt in the spring and the Indian monsoon that brings heavy rains from June to September. The highest flood discharges on the Jhelum exceed 1,000,000 cubic feet per second. Little rain falls during the winter and river level is substantially lower than in the summer months.

Over the years the Jhelum River has emerged as a major tourism attraction. The Mangala Dam built on the river is one the largest earth-fill dams and a great tourist destination. The wonderful lakes of the city are mostly fed by water from Jhelum.

The River Jhelum in its path takes the form of a stream and act as lovely camping sites. The nine bridges over the River Jhelum also serve as a hot tourism sites. You must visit these places to feel the real essence of the areas.

*By Karthik Kumar*

## Balabhavan summer field trip:

### Metta Forest Monastery:

Balabhavan is excited to announce the first summer field trip to Metta Forest Monastery.

### About Metta Forest Monastery:

Metta Forest Monastery is a meditation monastery in the lineage of the Thai Forest Tradition. Founded in 1990 by Ajaan Suwat Suvaco, it is currently headed by Thanissaro Bhikkhu (Ajaan Geoff). Thanissaro Bhikkhu is a renowned scholar and teacher on Theravada Buddhism. The monastery is situated near Valley Center, California, at the end of a road in an avocado orchard surrounded by the mountains and chaparral of northern San Diego County.

There are a limited number of seats (about 30 kids), due to the size of Monastery premises, on first come first serve basis. Please RSVP immediately.

### Location:

13560 Muutama Lane  
Valley Center, CA 92082  
<http://www.watmetta.org/>

Date & Time: July 3rd 2010 - 4:00 PM



## July Birthdays:

### Toddler:

Ahalya Ratnavel  
Amisha Kandi  
Praseedha Sai Maddipatla

### Juniors:

None

### Seniors:

Deepika Vuppala  
Vinod Krishnamoorthy

### Super Seniors:

Akhilesh Sai Vemuri  
Satish Chandran  
Siddhi Ramesh  
Sankaran Ramanarayanan

## Newsletter Editors

*Anugraha Panneerselvam  
Kalyani Ramadurgam*

## Topics of the Month

Ananya Madabushi  
Karthik Kumar  
Sarthak Madan  
Akhilesh Genneri

## Festivals of the Month:

July 25: Guru Poornima

Please visit the temple website  
[www.shiva-vishnu.org](http://www.shiva-vishnu.org) for more details



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## Balabhavan Annual Picnic

**What a way to kick off the summer! A fun filled picnic on a beautiful warm sunny day by a picturesque lake park with over 50+ families of kids, moms, dads and grandparents. All this while enjoying mouth watering dishes and delicacies followed by some friendly competition and games. We hope everybody had a blast !**

**We would like to extend a big thank you to each and every one of you for making the picnic this afternoon such a memorable event. Special thanks to all the food volunteers who spent so many hours preparing all the tasty treats! Big kudos to kids and adults game coordinators who motivated all of us to participate and conducted the games without any controversies (did the men really win the tug of war?). There were so many others who helped on a timely basis from setting up the table to cleaning up, which made it all possible today.**

**We will be sending out the pictures that captured today's memorable moments. Please share any pictures you might have taken.**

**It was very nice to see the entire Balabhavan family come together, have fun and enjoy a great day outdoors!**

### **BBC TEAM**



