



January 2024 Issue

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President's Message

Dear Friends and Supporters of Hindu Centre,

A new year has begun and with it many exciting plans are afoot to further our mission to bring knowledge and experience of Sanatana Dharma to the Singapore Hindu community through the three pillars of Jnana, Bhakti and Seva.

The year 2023 came to a rousing end at Hindu Centre and you can find details in this issue of Patrika.

January itself will be an exciting month as we kick off with the mass chanting of Kanda Sashti Kavacam on 21 January morning at the Sri Veeramakaliamman Temple in Serangoon Road.

Then on 22 January evening, we will celebrate together with the worldwide Hindu community, the prana pratishtha (invocation of the life force) of the Ram Lalla deity and consecration of the Ram Janmabhoomi Temple in Ayodhya, India.

Inside you will find an article on the significance of prana Pratishtha in Hindu tradition.

Singapore Hindus can be among the first to visit the new temple in March. Visit <https://sfh.sg/hc-north-india-yatra> to know more.

May I take this opportunity to wish Iswara's blessings upon all of you dear friends with good health, happiness and more Jnana, Bhakti and Seva. May you harvest with abundance the seeds of your hard work. Pongalo Pongal!

Dr N Varaprasad
President

Recent Events at the Centre

The Grand Pre-loved Sari Sale

It all started when a Hindu Centre volunteer started clearing her wardrobe on a Saturday afternoon. Try as she might, she couldn't fit half her saris in the giant cabinet. She stacked up some of her saris that she hadn't worn in a while and a thought struck her. She called up another HC volunteer and asked if she thought if some of the saris could be given away or sold for a nominal price. What happened after that is History!

The next step was to put out a call for used saris. Never in our imagination did we think we would receive such a response. By the end of the collection weekend, we had piles and piles of saris of diverse types.



Next came the arduous task of sorting all the saris into different prices; more than 75% were to be given away free. And finally the day of the sale came. It was held at the PGP Hall, thanks to the management of SSPT. We managed to give away most of the saris and sell the really good ones for a nominal price. All proceeds went to supporting Hindu Centre's activities. Much appreciation to the dedicated volunteers who helped through the whole process.



Mindfulness Workshop

Our first ever half-day mindfulness workshop on Dec 2 was a great success. It attracted more than 20 participants of all ages from 15 to 75 years of age. Mindfulness is a great skill to master, because it teaches you to be completely aware of what you are doing at each moment, enabling you to extract the maximum from any activity, without worrying about the past or the future. However, it is also a most difficult skill to master, because our mind is like a monkey, leaping from one thought to another.

The class was taught by Ms S Anuradha, our senior teacher of Hinduism and Yoga. It is interesting to note that much of these practices were taught in our scriptures in many different ways. But we need guidance on how it applies in our everyday life and this is what Hindu Centres does in all our classes. 5 practices were demonstrated and learnt by the students in the class, how to be mindful while walking, eating, drawing etc. We provided a home cooked, nutritious lunch which they also ate mindfully. Students went away with a very useful life skill which we hope they have put into practice in their life.



Vaikunta Ekadesi Celebrations

An interesting mix of puja, stotra chanting, religious talk, bhajan, dance and violin concert marked the Vaikuntha Ekadashi celebrations at Hindu Centre on December 23.

Mrs GN Praveena, a well-known speaker on Vaishnavism, gave a talk on “Gajendra Moksha” where Bhagavan Vishnu comes to the rescue of his bhakta, an elephant whose leg is caught by a crocodile. Praveenaji explained the significance of Lord

Vishnu's name Hari. He rescued Gajendra in his form as Hari and chanting the name frees us from all sorts of troubles and sorrows. She said one can start the day with the chanting of the name Hari.

Pankhi Jain made the participants dance to a simple bhajan on Janardhana and Ram Nagarajan played a medley of Carnatic music songs praising Bhagavan Vishnu.



Keeping awake on Vaikuntha Ekadashi days brings great merit and Hindu Centre thanks all these people for helping the devotees stay awake and submerge themselves in the thoughts of Bhagavan Vishnu.



Margazhi Month Celebrations

Margazhi (December 15-January 14) is considered to be the Brahmamuhurta time for Gods and prayers offered during this month is very beneficial to devotees. Hindu Centre had a packed program for the month. Every morning devotees gathered on

Zoom and sang the Tiruvempavai and Tirupalliyezhuchi composed by Saint Manikkavasagar and Tirupavai composed by Saint Andal.

Well-known Hindu Centre teacher Latha Balakrishnan gave a talk on “Glory of Tiruvempavai” at Hindu Centre’s inaugural Shaiva Satsanga via Zoom. Latha explained that in the 20 songs of Tiruvempavai, Manikkavasagar presents a girl who is encouraging her friends to wake up early in the morning, take a bath in the river and offer their prayers to Lord Shiva. The girl playfully chides her friends who are prefer sleeping over praying. She also explained similarity between Tiruvempavai and Tiruppavai verses composed by Andal. Also In these thirty verses, the girls encourage each other to wake up early and pray to Lord Vishnu.

As part of the Margazhi month celebrations, Hindu Centre also conducted an online “Tiruvasagam Muthrothal” where all the 51 songs composed by Saint Manikkavasagar were chanted.

Overall, it was a month where Hindu Centre enabled bhaktas to deepen their spiritual practices.

Prana Pratishtha

‘Prana Pratishtha’ also known as ‘Murthi Sthapana’. It introduces ‘Prana’ (life) into a ‘Murthi’ (idol). Once the ‘Prana Pratishtha’ is completed, the idol converts into a deity. To bring the deity to life, elaborate rituals are followed, along with chanting of Mantras.

Not everyone can conduct ‘Prana Pratishtha’. The *Vaishayasi Samhita* of the *Panchratra Agam Shastra* states, “One in whose organ *Parmatma* wholly resides, that pure *Mahapurush* is eligible to perform ‘Prana Pratishtha’...”

After ‘Prana Pratishtha’, constant maintenance of the ‘Murthi’ is not necessary, as the deity has been consecrated with life energies.

When a person visits the temple, he or she can absorb positive energies from the divine figure. A genuine devotion towards the deity, can help a person transcend to a higher realm of existence.

Source:

<https://pujayagna.com/blogs/pooja-havan-yagya/pran-prathistha-consecration>

Readers interested in knowing the rituals in greater detail, are encouraged to visit the webpage.

Five Names of Rama

With the consecration of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya this month, it is appropriate to learn the 5 names of Lord Rama. These names are frequently used in Ramayana and all the names have some background attached to them.

1. **Maryada Purushottama (मर्यादा पुरुषोत्तम): மர்யாதா புருஷோத்தம்**

This term translates to "The Best Among Men" or "The Perfect Man." It emphasizes Rama's exceptional qualities and his embodiment of righteousness.

2. **Dharma Raja (धर्मराज): தர்மராஜ்**

Meaning "The King of Righteousness," this term reflects Rama's commitment to upholding dharma, moral and ethical duties.

3. **Raghava (राघव): ராகவ**

A common epithet for Rama, derived from the Raghu dynasty to which he belongs. It is often used to address him with respect.

4. **Aadipurusha (आदिपुरुषः) ஆதிபுருஷ**

"Adi" means "original" and "Purush" means "person." Therefore, "Adipurush" refers to the "original man". Lord Rama is an incarnation of Lord Vishnu and is believed to be the first human being to have embodied the qualities of righteousness.

5. **Kaushalya Nandana (कौशल्यानन्दन): கௌஷல்யாநந்தன்**

Referring to Rama as the son of Queen Kaushalya, this term is used to highlight his royal lineage.

ŚRĪ RĀMA UTSAVA
A CELEBRATION OF LORD RAMA

Programme:
Opening Prayers and Welcome
Puja
Shloka chanting
Bhajans
Dance
Live video from Ayodhya

Monday, January 22, 7-9pm
@Hindu Centre
132 Owen Road
Singapore 218935

ALL ARE WELCOME!

Brought to you by: **Hindu Centre**
Jnana • Bhakti • Seva

Register at: <https://sfh.sg/ramautsava>
Enquiries: events@hinducentre.org.sg
Tel: 6291 8540
www.hinducentre.org.sg

Jai Shri Ram!

Gayathri Mantra

The Gayathri Mantra is the most important and most powerful of mantras.

ॐ भू भुवः स्वः

तत् सवितुर् वरेण्य

भर्गो देवस्य धीमहि

धियो यो नः प्रचोदयात् ॥

Om Bhuur-Bhuvah Svah
Tat-Savitur-Varenniyam
Bhargo Devasya Dhiimahi
Dhiyo Yo Nah Pracodayaat ||

ॐ : Om, the Symbol of the Parabrahman; भूः = Bhu Loka, Earth, Consciousness of the Physical Plane

भुवः = Bhuvah Loka, - The Intermediate Space, Consciousness of Prana; स्वः = Swar Loka, Heaven - The Consciousness of the Divine Mind

तत् = That; सवितुर् = Savitri, Divine Essence of the Sun; वरेण्य = Fit to be worshipped
भर्ग (Bhargha) = Radiance, Effulgence; देवस्यः Divine; धीमहिः I Meditate [on that Divine Effulgence]

धियोः Intelligence; यः = Which, Who, That; नः = Our; प्रचोदयात्ः Awaken [our Intelligence]

1: Om, Pervading the Bhu Loka (Earth, Consciousness of the Physical Plane), Bhuvah Loka (Antariksha, The Intermediate Space, Consciousness of Prana) and Swar Loka (Sky, Heaven, Consciousness of the Divine Mind),

2: Tat Savitur (Savitri, Divine Essence of the Sun) which is the most Adorable,

3: I Meditate on that Divine Effulgence,

4: May that Awaken our Intelligence (Spiritual Consciousness)

1. The Gāyatrī Mantra, also known as the Sāvitrī Mantra, is a highly revered mantra from the Rig Veda, dedicated to Savitr. Savitr is considered to be the force that vivifies the Sun. Before Sunrise, it is Savitr devta and after the sun has risen, it is called Surya.

2. The mantra is an important part of the upanayana (sacred thread) ceremony for young males in Hinduism

3. The general scheme of the Gāyatrī is a stanza of three 8-syllable lines. The Gāyatrī meter is considered as the most refined and sacred of the Vedic meters.

Hindu Centre Membership

To join Hindu Centre as a member, just visit <https://sfh.sg/hcmember>

The fee for Annual membership (12 months) is \$120, and the entrance fee for Life membership is \$2000 (one-time).

Upcoming events at Hindu Centre

- Sri Ram Utsava – Monday, 22 January, 7pm
- Spoken Sanskrit Class – every Friday for 8 weeks from 19 January to 8 March
- Mindfulness Class – Saturday, 17 February evening
- Pustaka Book Club meeting – Sunday, 18 February to discuss Parul Mehra's spiritual art.
- Vedic Yoga Classes every Tuesday. 20 February focuses on Surya Namaskar
- Mahasivarathri – 8 March

For more details and registration, please call the HC office during office hours at 62918540, or email to events@hinducentre.org.sg

Online Chanting Schedule (February 2024)

1 Devi Mahatmyam (Chapters 1-13) chanting: 3.2.2024 (Saturday) 8 am - 11 am SGT/5:30 am to 8:30 am IST

2 Mooka pancha sathi (MPS)-(Arya shathakam shlokas, Padharavindha shathakam shlokas) chanting: 4.2.2024 (Sunday) 7:30 am - 9 am SGT/5 am to 6:30 am IST via zoom online

3 Sivarathri day chanting: 8.2.2024 (Thursday) 7 am - 8 am SGT/4:30 am - 5:30 am IST via zoom online

4 Soundarya lahari (Shlokas 1-100) chanting: 8.2.2024 (Thursday) 7 pm - 8:30 pm SGT/4:30 pm - 6 pm IST via zoom online

5 Ammavasya Abirami Andadi Chanting: 9.2.2024 (Friday) 7:30 pm - 8:30 pm SGT/5 pm - 6 pm IST via zoom online

6 Chathurthi Vinayagar Agaval Chanting: 13.2.2024 (Tuesday) 7:30 pm -8:30 pm
SGT/5 pm -6 pm IST via zoom online

7 Magha Gupt Navaratri (Lalitha sahasranamam, Soundarya lahari, Devi Mahatmyam
(Durga sapthasloki, Devi Kavacham, Argala, Keelakam) shlokas chanting: 14.2.2024
(Wednesday) 7 pm - 8:45 pm SGT/4:30 pm -6:15 pm IST via zoom online

8 Kanda sashti parayanam: 15.2.2024 (Thursday) 7:30 pm -8:30 pm SGT/5 pm -6 pm
IST via zoom online.

Zoom meeting details:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84059244048?pwd=V3dkTlR3cmRMd1NDWC84RXdyRGIDQT09>

Meeting ID: 840 5924 4048

Passcode: bhakti

All are welcome to join, but please be on time,

Find your Purpose and Make a Difference

Hindu Centre provides wonderful opportunities to volunteer and help the community according to your talents and interest. From counselling offenders in prison, befriending old folks staying in homes for the aged, to social media and website design, to helping in the library, or joining our bhajan groups. You will meet a group of wonderful people in a common cause.

Visit <https://sfh.sg/hcvolunteer> to register your interest,

Writers and Website designers Needed!

For those that are interested in contributing content to our monthly e-newsletter Patrika, please send us an email at patrika@hinducentre.org.sg outlining your interest in one or more areas. We are currently looking for writers who can interview prominent Hindus in Singapore and others who can contribute articles for the various sections. Editorial support will be provided for all your content ideas including drafting and proof-reading as needed.

Also looking for people with website design expertise.

Help Us Promote, Protect and Preserve our Vedic Heritage

“Every Little Bit Counts”

Hindu Centre Singapore is dedicated to the spiritual progress of Singapore Hindus through the three pillars of Jnana (Knowledge), Bhakti (Devotion) and Seva (Service). We are a non-profit society run entirely by volunteers. HC depends on the goodwill of generous donors and supporters who believe in our work and mission.

For more information, please click here <https://www.hinducentre.org.sg/donate/>



Use your mobile banking app to scan the code.

OR use PayNow to send to UEN S78SS0017J

Thank you for your generous support.

Every little bit counts!

Ask Us Anything on Hinduism

Do you have a question about Hinduism, Sastras, Life in general, Relationships or activities of Hindu Centre? Send us your question at admin@hinducentre.org.sg and our panel of respondents will get in touch with you. Please be assured of protection of privacy, at all times, regardless of the nature of your questions. Email your questions to at patrika@hinducentre.org.sg

Hindu Centre WhatsApp broadcast Group

To receive regular event notifications, just follow the steps below.

Your name and number will not be shared with nor visible to anyone else.

1. Save +65 8768 0532 in your phone contacts as WhatsUp@HC
2. Send a WhatsApp message “I’m in” to the newly added contact with your name