

# Satsang Sandesh

## India Temple Association, Inc.

Hindu Temple, 25 E. Taunton Ave, Berlin, NJ 08009 SOUTH JERSEY + DELAWARE + PENNSYLVANIA (Non-Profit Tax Exempt Organization, Tax ID # 22-2192491)

Vol. 59 No. 1 Phone: (855) MYMANDIR (855-696-2634)

www.indiatemple.org

**JULY 2015** 

#### **Religious Calendar**

- **July 12 Sunday**
- Kamala Ekadashi
- July 16, Thursday
- Last day of Adhik Purushottam Mas

#### July 17, Friday

Nij Aashadh

#### **July27 Monday**

Devshayani Ekadashi/ • Chaturmas begins/Gauri Vrat starts

#### **July 29 Wednesday**

Jaya Parvati Vrat starts **Monthly Activities** 

Kshama Raghuveer 707-332-3400

July 1, Wednesday

Shri Satyanarayan Pooja 6pm

July 3, Friday

- Vishnu Sahasranama Paravanam @ 8 pm
- July 18, Saturday
- Sunderkand Path 10am

July 31, Friday

- Shri Satyanarayan Pooja 6pm **Monthly Bhajans** July 17, Friday 8-9pm
- Satya Sai Baba of Medford

P.K. Prabhakar 856-596-3147: Sesha Vemuri 856-751-0867

July 24 Friday 8-9 pm

• Shree Ji Bhajan Urmi Upadhyay (856) 424-9328; Charu Sheth (856) -662-8754



#### PURUSHOTTAM MAAS CELEBRATION Women Volunteers of our Mandir has planned this event on July 15, 2015 from 6:00 PM.

Puja of Lord Shri Purushottam (Vishnu) will begin at 6:00 PM followed by Bhajans, Aarti and Prasad.

All are invited to join our hard working ladies who have planned this event for the wellbeing of all humans on earth.

Purushottam Bhagvan's puja helps the individual to attain good health, wealth and assistance during tough period of life. Most of all, it washes away the sins of life.

#### **Special Prayers**

ITA has a program whereby you can have prayers performed on your behalf every year on a special day in your life by pledging \$301. Also, at your request, Shri. Bhupendra Shuklaji or Shri Sudhir Jhaji will perform a special puja on your behalf, or the regular temple puja performed on the designated day will be dedicated in your name. Below are the donors for this month.

- Vinu Patel July 01
- Vinod Mehta July 12 July 13
- Ramesh Upadhyay Asha Gupta Julv 18
- Arun Maheswari
- Pratima Parikh
- July 19 Vijay & Asha Gupta July 22

July 18

Kiran Bhatt July 24 Mahesh Dixit July 24 Amardeep Patel July 24 Hariprasad K Jani July 30

#### Hindu Senior Citizens of South Jersey July 2015 Meeting Announcement Venue – ICC <u>www.Hinduseniors.com</u>

#### Thursday, July 9 & Thursday July 23

6:30 pm	Tea/coffee with snacks, aartii
7:00 pm	Meeting starts
7:30 to 8:30	Lecture followed by question-answer period

#### Thursday, July 9, 2015

#### An Evening of Mirth, Music & Comedy

Mr. Laxmi Chowdhury has prepared a colorful bouquet of humorous items for laughter and amusement. His items inlcude Hindi poems (including his own), Sher-O-Shayari, dohas, jokes, cheerful experiences in various countries, some sensible snippets and lot more. His humble request to everyone is to come with an open mind, heart and hands to clap and laugh with no restrictions and to enjoy the program. All in all this will be a good interesting and entertaining evening."

Laxmi Chowdury is a man of varied accomplishments. By profession he has been a structural engineer working on nuclear projects in nine American states. He writes in Hindi, enjoys travels far and wide, loves comedy, good food, hot peppers in bulk, and heads a family of creative artists.

#### Thursday, July 23, 2015

#### Solar Energy Choices

This presentation will be about Solar Energy Choices, especially as it relates to residents of NJ and PA. Mr. Gautam Chandra, an authority on the subject, will discuss developments in solar energy options for residential and commercial customers, where the market is going, tax credits and other incentives, He will discuss trends in how these systems are being financed. He will also give some pointers to help people determine if this is a good option for them and where to go for further information and help them purchase or finance a solar system if they are interested.

Gautam Chandra oversees corporate strategy and business development for WGL Holdings, Inc. He also oversees the operations of all of WGL Holdings' non-utility operating subsidiaries and directs all of WGL Holdings' investments in new energy assets and companies across the United States. Mr. Chandra serves as a director on the boards of American Solar Direct Holdings, the TIE-DC organization, and the Smithsonian Institution Asian and Pacific American Center. He is also a member of the Young Presidents Organization (YPO) and the Leadership Council for ACORE, American Council on Renewable Energy.

S. Gambhir President HSCSJ

#### **YOGA Program**

Like last year, it is a joy to offer "FREE YOGA SEMINAR" by Dr. Veena S. Gandhi, on July 19th, Sunday, from 9 AM to 1PM at I.C.C., 820, 73N, Marlton for ITA members and South Jersey community. Seminar will include philosophy, simple asanas, pranayama, meditation and sharing session . All ages are welcome. Please come in loose clothing, on an empty stomach for at least 2 hours and bring yoga mat. For further information, please call 8564359148 after 7:30pm

#### **Monthly Pujas at Mandir**

It is a pleasure to perform Satyanarayan puja on Wednesday July 1 and Friday, July 31, at 6 pm and read Sunderkand Path on Saturday July 18, at 10 am at our Temple with family and friends.



We invite you to join us and perform Satyanarayan puja every Purnima day with family and friends and receive the blessings of Almighty God. Donations are welcome. Suggested donation is \$ 31. It is followed by Mahaprasad generously sponsored by Indian Villa.

Please join us for Sunderkand Path held on third Saturday of every month. Mahaprasad generously sponsored by Gagan Palace.



#### 30TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF PRAN-PRATISHTHA SAVE THESE DATES

#### **SEPTEMBER 11, 12, 13, 2015**

From the pages of history: Although ITA was formed in 1975, and a parcel of land was purchased in Lindenwold, it lacked the funds to construct a temple. It was Lord Krishna's divine grace that enabled our active members to merge and bring the assets of Shri Vallabhnidhi with ITA to purchase the existing property for our temple. On May 6, 1982 we purchased the church property and the Hindu Mandir in Berlin became a reality, a place of worship for all Hindus in the Delaware Valley.

Shri Narendra Amin was instrumental in providing the paintings for the temple beautification as well as the meticulous details associated with the ordering of the idols from India. On May 31, 1985, the Idols of Radha-Krishna arrived at the Mandir. However, because of in-transit damage to Radhaji's idol, the Pran-Pratishtha Mahotsava of Lord Krishna was performed on September 20, 21 and 22, 1985. Over the past 30 years, the temple and its services have grown along with the community. The thirtieth anniversary celebration gives us all an opportunity to remember, rejoice, and recommit ourselves to our beloved Mandir.

The Board of Trustees requests the entire community and all the local organizations to come together, support and partake in this memorable celebration.

#### PLEASE SAVE THESE DATES IN YOUR CALENDAR AND BE A YAJAMAN OR SEVA CONTRIBUTOR DURING THESE EVENTS

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#### From Me to You

Pranams!

It is time for us to unlearn. The so called knowledge that we presume to have is creating so many hurdles in trying to understand ourselves. Can I be myself, if I do not know my 'self'? Do I need any kind of knowledge to be myself? A stone is a stone. It does not matter whether the stone knows that it is a stone.

Knowledge is not needed for being. It is actually preventing us from knowing who we are.

The whole process of meditation is geared around how to drop knowledge. Meditation should take us back to being a child again, a stone. Meditation means how just to be and not to think.

One can never become somebody else nor can someone become you. One will always remain one 'self'.

Zen Masters advise their disciples, "Beware of Buddha. If you meet him on the way, kill him immediately". They mean it is our human nature to become imitators. I came across a book, 'Imitation of Christ'. The title of this book is very symbolic. It clearly depicts the human mind. People are constantly trying to imitate, to become somebody else.

This existence wants us to be ourselves. Let us be true to ourselves, 'know who we are' and do 'what it takes' to make our Mandir a place of spirituality and divinity where everyone can unlearn everything and dive deep into the blissful state. I am.

Ramesh Viswanathan

#### Namaste All,

We had a fabulous, fun filling, eventful Balvihar program this year (2014-2015). Our first session started with Ganesh pooja. Apart from our regular study sessions, we also had fun sessions starting with our field trip to the Arsha Vidya Gurukulam(Institute of studies in Vedanta, Yoga and Sanskrit), Saylorsburg, PA. We were privileged to be visited by Mrs.Savitri Mani(one of the main pioneers for starting Balvihar classes under Pujya Swami Chinmayanandaji), who shared her invaluable experiences with our teachers and students. We also had our Sivarathri pooja performed by our temple priests.

Our much awaited Annual day was celebrated on May 2nd with gala dance, drama performances by children in keeping with the theme - The mosaic that is Bharat. We were amply blessed by Pujya Maharaji Dr. Ram Kamaldasji who was invited as our Chief Guest of Honor. Our special thanks to Mrs.Hetal Karumsi for organizing plant sale involving kids and donating the proceeds to Balvihar. Our special thanks to Mr.Samir Patel for bringing out the colorful Balvihar souvenir. Our session for this school year concluded with Mothers Day celebrations followed by Minecraft workshop and roller skating fun events. All said above was possible under the motherly support of ITA. Our heart full thanks to ITA!









Now that you have a glimpse of all the wonderful learning experiences in Balvihar, we encourage all parents to make use of this fantastic opportunity to enroll their kids (grades  $PreK - 8^{th}$  grade) in Balvihar. Following gives the details of registration. Looking forward for a more enjoyable learning year! Jai Shree Krishna!

Malathi Shankar



**Graduation Yagna at our temple** Congratulations to all our graduates. We wish our graduates all the best always.

Please keep us our Indian Temple Association community in your mind and heart, and We will support each other always.

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#### Senior Social Group

© © © © © © © © © © © Senior Social Group(SSG) will meet every Tuesday at 1pm in the Social Hall at Berlin Temple. Please contact Mr. Bhulabhai Bhaktaji at <u>8569830769</u> for details.

#### ITA Balvihar program will begin on Sept 27, 2015 Time: 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM Location: Cherokee High School

**Teaching Sanatana Dharma and Vedic Heritage - Giving Our Children Positive Identity!** The Balvihar Team is excited to begin registration for the 2015-16 school year. Our online registration is open now and we encourage you to enroll your child(ren) ASAP. Please explore the Balvihar webpage for the calendar, curriculum and overall program details. The website is <u>https://</u> <u>www.indiatemple.org/bal\_vihar.php</u>

We have received feedback from parents and students and are making modifications to the schedule that will enhance the large group and classroom experience as your children learn about religion and culture.

The registration fee is \$151 if you register by July 31; the fee is \$201 on August 1 and thereafter. This fee covers all material and facility costs as well as the Balvihar Annual day celebra-

tion. We **ENCOURAGE YOU TO REGISTER EARLY** as it makes it easier for us to plan class-room sizes and order supplies.

For registration questions, please email <u>ita.balvihar@gmail.com</u> or contact Shashank Sheth at 732-604-8956

Pre-K (Prithvi) - Hindu Art, Shlokas/Songs/Story

KG (Meghaa) - Stories from Panchatantra, Indian Festivals

1st (Saagar) - Stories from Puranas, Introduction to Gods/Goddess(coloring and explanation), Introduction to India(States/Languages/rivers/mountains/animals)

2nd (Vaayu) - Bala Bhagavatam, Stories of Saint, India neighbors/religions/diversity/arts(music, dance, rangoli etc.)

3rd (Pavan) - Ramayana, Important people/leaders from Indian History

4th (Aakash) - Mahabharata I, Indian History I (Mauryan dynasty)

5th (Gagan) - Mahabharata II, Indian History II (Gupta dynasty/ South Indian Empires)

6th (Agni ) - Values, Analysis of Ramayana/Mahabharata characters, Indian History III (Mughal dynasty)

7th (Maruth) - Principles of Hinduism & Ishvara, British Rule in India and the after effects

8th (Medhaa) - Religious disciplines, Culture, Tradition, Vedic Chanting, Evolution of civilization Note- 8th grade students have an option to join Bal Vihar, or join Yuva Darshan (Youth) group

#### July 4 Independence Day Parade

4th of July Parade includes Float, T-Shirts, Music and Dance/Songs.

Please make sure you invite your friends and family to participate in the parade. Plenty of food is available at the parade location. We will be providing Coffee and Donuts/Bagels in the morning for people who come to decorate the float. We will be providing T-shirts for parade participants.

Paradise Biriyani will be offering a lunch special for parade participants.

Parade Start time is 10:30AM

Starting Location is Marlton Green Shopping Center

The address is 24 W Rte 70.

You can also enter the address of the Mattress Warehouse store which is located in that shopping center. The address of the store is 46 W Rte 70.

#### First place winner - The Concept of God in Hinduism by Neil Menghani

Western scholars widely disagree over whether Hinduism should be considered a monotheistic or a polytheistic religion. Many of these scholars see Hindus worship and pray to the images of so many different "gods" and conclude immediately that Hinduism is polytheistic. Yet, the fact that all Hindus practice the religion differently complicates the issue. I believe that one can more accurately consider Hinduism to be a monotheistic religion because Hindu scripture and tradition emphasize the oneness of God and because the icons that Hindus worship are not gods themselves but rather represent different forms of the One.

Despite the common misconception that Hinduism has a seemingly infinite number of "gods," religious texts can shed light on the true concept of God in Hinduism. While many Hindus choose to focus their attention on various different deities such as Vishnu, Hanuman, or Lakshmi, most of them would agree that these deities are all forms of the One. In fact, these individual deities can be seen as representing the diverse personalities or faces of God. As the Bhagavad-Gita states: "You are the original god / the primordial spirit of man, / the deepest treasure of all that is, / knower and what is to be known, / the supreme abode; / you pervade the universe / Lord of Boundless Form" (Chapter XI). This passage captures the idea that the spirit of God is so vast, allowing it to be present everywhere at once. Boiling the idea of "god" into simply the sum of all of the different deities would therefore be a misconception. God is much greater than the many human- and animal-like forms that Hindus worship in their everyday lives – the Divine presence is also a strong spiritual essence. According to Hindu tradition, the icon is one of the methods through which the Lord manifests itself, especially according to ideas of the Vaishnavas. Murtis, or icons, of specific Hindu gods make the idea of the Divine – which transcends all human scope of thought – more approachable, so that people can understand and feel its presence. Many Hindus take darshana – which literally means "seeing" but is sometimes translated as the "auspicious sight" – in order to connect with God. In doing so, they not only wish to "see" but also "to be seen" by these murtis. This exchange of vision with icons is consistent with the idea of a Brahman, or One, which is both transcendent and immanent.

The issue of whether Hinduism can be considered a monotheistic or polytheistic religion is a complicated one – it of course cannot be fully addressed in a single essay. The concept of Brahman is extremely abstract, one that shows up in texts as old as the Upanishads and one which many theologians struggle with. We therefore should not be too quick to assign a label to the religion or make hasty assumptions about the "concept of God." After all, some Hindus may see murtis as the numerous faces of the One while others may practice the religion quite differently. When it comes to deciding between the two labels, however, monotheism represents a more accurate explanation of how Hindus perceive the Supreme Being.

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## Sewa Samiti India Temple Association Service Group

#### ITA Seva Samiti Update by Sadhna Kothari \*\*Prayer and Fund raising for Nepal Earthquake\*\*

Seva Samiti held two prayer meetings for the victims of the devastating earthquake in Nepal, on Sunday May 3<sup>rd</sup>. The first immediately followed the monthly Satyanarayan Puja with devotees chanting the Gayatri and Shanti Mantra.

This was to send our heartfelt prayers for healing and peace to the Nepalis.

At 8 pm, we had the second prayer meeting – Lata Pimplaskar spoke briefly on the concept and intention of 'Giving'. We see the unfolding of terror and natural calamities on our TV screens as we relax at home and something stirs in our hearts. We cannot sit idly by and carry on as if nothing has happened.

That stirring of the soul is our human spirit at its 'satvik' best. We do Prarthana and Danam, the former for the good of all and the latter to help the victims to pick up the pieces and re-

#### build their lives.

Attendees lit diyas and offered rice in Puja thalis while chanting Gayatri Mantra 108 times. Our Mandir filled with the auspicious vibrations from the powerful Gayatri and Shanti Mantras.

That evening, ITA Seva Samiti collected over \$5,000. In the next weeks, that number swelled to \$10,000 – Thank you for your generosity!

Om, Sarve bhavantu sukhinah (May all be prosperous and happy) Sarve santu niramayah (May all be free from illness) Sarve bhadrani pasyantu (May all see what is spiritually uplifting) Ma kashchit dukkha bhaghavet (May no one suffer) Om Shanti Shanti Shanti ( Om peace, peace, peace)

Seva Samiti program contacts: Chair: Lata Pimplaskar <u>latap1215@gmail.com</u> Sandwich bags for the homeless: Hina Desai <u>hinamdesai@hotmail.com</u> Youth program: Chetna Giyanani <u>chetnatemple@gmail.com</u> Funeral services: Charu Sheth <u>charu\_sheth@yahoo.com</u> Parivar Seva: Sunitha Reddy <u>sunithahreddy@yahoo.com</u> JAI SHREE KRISHNA

Programs for Your Spiritual Growth YOGA ABHYAS FOR HEALTH, HAPPINESS & GOD REALIZATION: A program for adults on Yogasana, Pranayam & Meditation. First Sunday: 9:30 -11:30 am at our Mandir Contact: Surendra Sheth@ (856) 985-3700 GITA STUDY GROUP: Every Tuesday & Wednesday, 8-9 pm at our Mandir Contact: Sharad Pimplaskar @ (856) 985-4785	Regular Programs for Children and Youth BAL VIHAR: For children (ages 4-13), to promote a positive Hindu identity within the diverse U.S. culture. 2nd & 4th Sunday @ 10 am - 1 pm Contact: Malathi Shankar (856) 424-7849, Bhavesh Patel 1- 855-my-mandir ext 3, Rina Patel (856) 313-5235 for regis- tration and location YOUTH PROGRAM: A program for young adults (ages 13-18) and parents. 2nd & 4th Sunday, 9:45 am - 1 pm at our Mandir.
<b>BHAJANS &amp; STUTI:</b> Every Friday, 7:30-9 pm Contact: Shree Shuklaji or Shri Sudhirji (856) 768-6785	Contact: Praveen Garg at (856) 783-4692 or Sangeeta Rashatwar at (856) 424-4211 <b>CREATIVE ART WORKSHOP</b> 1st, 3rd & 5th Sunday @ 9:30 am at our Mandir

#### Contact: Narendra Amin (856) 429-8761

#### PUJA SERVICE CHARGES, TEMPLE FACILITIES USAGE FEE AND OTHER CHARGES:

The following provides list of applicable charges and fees. Shri Shuklaji /Shri Sudhirji will be available for religious services on request. Please note that 50% of the listed cost of Puja performed outside the temple goes to Pujari in addition to his regular salary. Please check temple availability at <a href="http://www.indiatemple.org">www.indiatemple.org</a>; Click on "CALENDAR tab" and, from drop-down menu, Click on "EVENT/RENTAL CALENDAR". Please contact Shri. Divyakant Parikh at 1-855-MY-MANDIR Ext 1 for the booking of the Temple Facilities and/or scheduling of Puja Services by Shuklaji or Sudhirji.

PUJA SERVICE	INSIDE TEMPLE	OUTSIDE TEMPLE	Following listed fees and charges are in addition to the charges listed for Puja Services
Archana (Panchopachar)	\$11	N/A	
Vahan (Vehicle) Puja	\$21	N/A	
Namakaran/Annaprashan	\$51	\$101	
Birthday	\$51	\$101	TEMPLE FACILITIES USAGE FEE
Shraddha	\$51	\$101	Prayer Hall: \$200
Anniversary Celebration	\$101	\$151	Social Hall: \$300
Seemant	\$101	\$151	
Kesh Mundan Puja	\$101	\$151	
Sodashopchar, Kalash Puja, Punyah-Vachan			
or Blessings	\$101	\$151	OTHER CHARGES
Satyanarayan Puja	\$121	\$151	
Engagement Ceremony	\$101	\$201	MILEAGE AND TRAVEL TIME TIER
Havan/Grah Shanti	\$201	\$251	
Vastu Puja - outside service only	N/A	\$251	\$0 for 1 - 25 mile radius
Sunderkand Path	\$151		
Wedding Grah Shanti	\$201	\$301	\$51 for 26 - 100 mile radius
Wedding Ceremony per day	\$301	\$351	\$101 for 101 - 150 mile radius
Upanayan/Yagnopavita	\$251	\$301	
Antim Rites (Funeral Service)	Voluntary Donation		\$151 for 151 - 200 mile radius
Uttar Kriya per day - outside service only	N/A	\$101	NON-MEMBER
Yagna/Laghu Rudra - outside service only	N/A	\$351	
Navchandi Yagna - outside service only	N/A	\$651	\$51 for non-member surcharge

### NOTE: Charges and availability of other Puja Services not listed above may be discussed with Smt. Charu Sheth at 1-855-MY-MANDIR Ext 1

#### DIRECTION TO BERLIN TEMPLE

#### **A.** From Tacony Bridge: Take NJ route 73S; drive for about 12 - 13 miles and follow signs for East Taunton Avenue. Temple is on your right

#### **B.** From Ben Franklin Bridge:

Take route 30E to NJ route 70E to NJ route 73S, drive for about 7 miles and follow signs for East Taunton Avenue. Temple is on your right

#### C. From Walt Whitman Bridge or Delaware Memorial Bridge:

Take I-295N to Exit 29-A for route 30E to Berlin Twp. Turn left on East Taunton Avenue

#### D. From Central and North Jersey:

Take NJ Turnpike South. Exit 4 for route 73S. Drive for about 10 - 11 miles and follow signs for East Taunton Avenue on your right



**President** Ramesh Viswanathan 1-855-my-mandir x 710 president@indiatemple.org

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Treasurer Shobna Daga 1-855-my-mandir x 713 treasurer@indiatemple.org

Religious Services Facility Rental Temple Manager Charu Sheth Divyakant Parikh 1-855-my-mandir x 1 manager@indiatemple.org

**Darshan Schedule** 

**Morning** 7:30 am - 12:30 pm

**Evening** 3 pm. - 9 pm

**Aarti** 12 pm & 8 pm

Times may change during special occasions

Please use the front door and ring the bell if locked

### India Temple Association, Inc.

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#### PLEASE REVIEW YOUR ADDRESS LABEL AND RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP BASED ON EXPIRATION DATE OR SUPPORT ITA WITH YOUR ENROLLMENT IF YOU ARE NOT IDENTIFIED AS A MEMBER

Please check appropriate items from the following, and mail it to Hindu Temple, 25 East Taunton Ave., Berlin, NJ 08009 Attn: Mr. M. Kanzaria