



# Sanskār ▪ Sewā ▪ Sangathan

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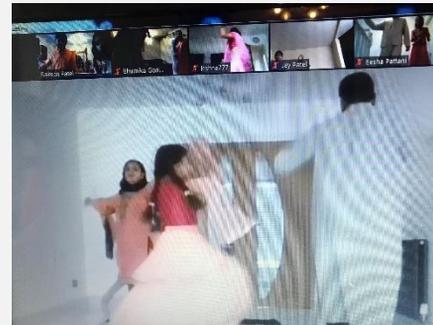
## Sangh Mail



## 'GHAR-MA GARBA' – GARBA AT HOME

There is a spiritual magic of performing raas in a mandal and remembering the nine goddesses on the very important festival on Navratri in the Hindu Calendar. Without the restrictions of Covid-19 sevikas and swayamsevaks, would at this time of year, be getting ready for the excitement of Navratri be it in schools, samaj centres or mandirs. We in Leicester, could not forgot our traditions and the spirit of Navratri, and so on Sunday 18th October Shiv Shakti Pariwar Shakha Leicester Nagar organised Navratri from home (Ghar-ma Garba). Everyone dressed in Bhartiya vesh and we participated in garba for 10 mins, moving onto dandiya and thereafter a maha Aarti by all pariwars on zoom from our respective homes. A fantastic bauddhik was given by sevika Disha Gondaliya on the significance of the nine days of Navratri. Jai Mata Ji.

**Rakesh Patel**, Karyawaha, Shiv Shakti Pariwar Shakha , Leicester



## NORTH EAST & SCOTLAND VIBHAG CELEBRATED VIJAYA DASHAMI UTSAV

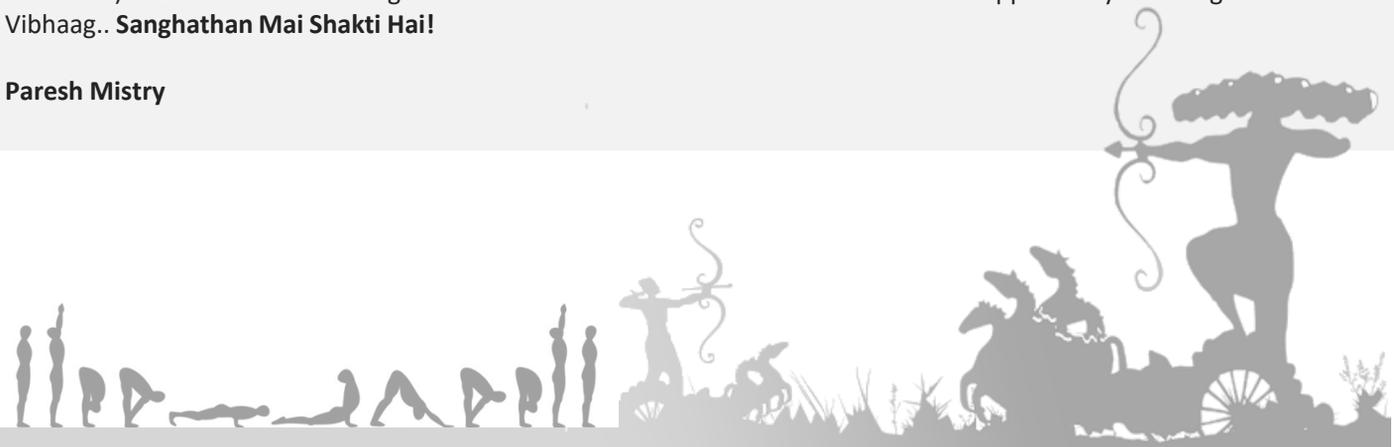
North East & Scotland Vibhag celebrated Vijaya Dashami Utsav on 25 Oct with a sankhya of over **370 ssevaks and sevikas**.

### Key Highlights:

- A planning team of 12 karyakarta's from all **9 active nagars**
- **Over 40 shikshaks/karyakartas** in conducting the various karyakram
- A karyakram which included:
  - Maha Vyayam Yog,
  - Stories and quizzes in breakout rooms
  - Anubhav of new families who have joined E-Shakha
  - Maha Purush Parichay – where some swayamsevaks and sevikas dressed up as inspiring personalities including Shri Ram, Sita Mata, Durga Mata, Hanumanji, Pujaniya Mausiji, Pujaniya Drji.
- **Arts and Crafts pradarshan** made during the week such as bow & arrow, trishool, Rangoli, Aarti decoration
- **Keynote bauddhik was delivered by Madhviji Haria**, HIndu Sevika Samiti UK Karyawahika
- Along with digital Dhvaj **we also had physical Dhvaj** in one of our karyakarta's home along with **Shastra Puja**
- New families from Leeds City Centre and York were also in attendance

The online platform allowed karyakarta's from as far north as **Aberdeen** and as far south as **Sheffield** (and all shakhas in between!) to interact and work together. This utsav therefore has created one further opportunity to strengthen our Vibhaag.. **Sanghathan Mai Shakti Hai!**

**Paresh Mistry**



## SEWA DAY - 25,000 MEALS AND COUNTING! NAVRATRI FOODBANK COLLECTION

This half term over 500 families (plus Hindu temples and street collections) joined hands in our Navratri Food Bank Collection Campaign to help ensure no child went hungry during this half term.

**We have collected and distributed food to over 80 different organizations helping children eat this week and we have delivered enough food for a staggering 25,000 meals!**

The impact that the Sewa Day family is making is just incredible and never seems to stop. Thank you to everyone that had helped and thank you to everyone else that will no doubt help us out in the future. On to our Diwali and Christmas campaigns next, which will be released shortly!



## YOUTH FOR SEWA – HOME AWAY FROM HOME

On the 27<sup>th</sup> September, Youth For Sewa held its annual Samarop, but this time virtually with over 50 people in attendance! The Samarop gave light to this year's four brilliant interns; Priya Koria (Bristol), Neel Joshi (Ilford), Karan Patel (Woolwich) and Samyak Pandey (Slough). Due to the current situation, our interns carried out their internships at home, instead of Bharat.

**Priya Koria** worked with Sewa Day and their 'Spread the Joy' campaign which gives appreciation to local community heroes such as key workers. Priya launched a campaign in Bristol with their Balagokulam to create and deliver appreciation parcels to care homes. Alongside this, she also set up an online Bollywood dance class and online Armchair Yoga class for care homes.

**Neel Joshi** also worked on another Sewa Day campaign, 'Food4All'. Amidst the pandemic, Neel and a dedicated team of volunteers came together to provide food packages for those in need. Neel worked closely with Sewa Day East London whose aim was to show some love to "all those working in care homes, the forgotten soldiers working through the pandemic. It was our opportunity to say 'thank you' by delivering small gifts."

Neel coordinated with a local Mandir (VHP Ilford Hindu Centre) and with over £200-300 worth of donations, they managed to create 150 boxes delivered to 45 care homes! Overall, a truly successful campaign.

These are two great examples of how our interns got involved with Sewa Day projects during the pandemic. We would like to say a huge thank you to Sewa Day for all their support. If you're interested in applying for Youth for Sewa 2021, check out our website [www.youthforsewa.org.uk](http://www.youthforsewa.org.uk)

“...[a] far more immersive than I thought it would be! Right from the start, I met so many kind people who were committed to helping all the interns immerse ourselves in all things Sewa. We read and presented books, in my case, The Book of Dharma and My Grandfather's Blessings. We connected with our wider community, something that is so important right now. It rewired how I think about Sewa and has left me at a great place to go forward practicing Sewa in my everyday life. **Priya Koria**”

**LEICESTER SHIV SHAKTI - BAJRANG BALI**

Over Summer Shiv Shakti Pariwar Shakha from Leicester Nagar organised a 11 Hanuman Chalisa bhajan every Saturday from 11am to 12pm via Zoom. We encouraged each family to sing one Hanuman Chalisa and a list was compiled of 11 singers.. It was a great bhajan event with all ages groups and families singing, some even playing with traditional instruments. It's more important in the current climate to recite the powerful Hanuman Chalisa and also keeping in contact with others even if it is over zoom platform. We had stopped the bhajan's with the lockdown seeming to ease but with the current lockdown restrictions back in place we have organised Hanuman Chalisa on the first Saturday of each month starting in October. Jai Bajrangbali.

**Rakesh Patel**, Karyawaha, Shiv Shakti Pariwar Shakha, Leicester



**SANGHATAN MEIN SHAKTI – AN AMAZING PERFORMANCE**



In another of many firsts, talented individuals across the UK showed off their talents and their undoubted commitment through practice, of several dance, song, and musical. In a production worthy of the small screen, homes across the UK, USA, Europe, Bharat, and Africa were treated to a musical bonanza.

- 11 performances contributed by 31 swayamsevaks and sevikas
- 11 swayamsevaks and sevikas as part of tech and graphic teams
- Whole programme coordinated from across 29 different locations
- Total audience log-ins peaking at over 400!

**Sowmya Talari**, Birmingham

*“A fantastic collective effort, with a quality programme involving swayamsevaks and sevikas across the UK”*

**TARUN PROJECTS – HIGH SANGH MUSICAL**

If you have not yet had a chance to catch it – please have a look at a composition of the geet Sangh Kiran Ghar Ghar Dene Ko, using Bhāratīya and Western classical instruments from our Tarun Team! <https://youtu.be/73OOWWkjtws>



**FIRST HISTORIC HINDU MANDIR EXECUTIVES CONFERENCE (HMEC) IN THE UK** *Excerpt from Press Release*

**Vishwa Hindu Parishad UK (VHP)** successfully organised the first all UK Hindu Mandir Executives Conference on Sunday 4th Oct 2020. Out of around 250 mandirs (temples) in UK, over 200 senior executives and representatives of 135 mandirs from 94 towns participated in a 3-hour online conference. Delegates came from well established large mandirs as well as new and small mandirs scattered across the country right from Aberdeen, Belfast in the north to Cardiff (west), Hull (east) to Southampton (south). They represented different sampradayas (sects), linguistic groups and countries. The conference was supported by major national Hindu bodies like Hindu Forum of Britain (HFB), Hindu Council (HCUK), National Council of Hindu Temples (NCHT) and National Hindu Students Forum (NHSF).

The major part of the conference was devoted to workshops of small groups of 15-20 delegates. There were six topics of the workshops; Mandir and: Governance, External Representation and Engagement, Youth, Promotion of Hindu Dharma, School Visits, Sewa Activities.

Each delegate had opportunity to participate in two workshops and provided excellent opportunities for delegates to share information, experiences, innovative ideas and challenges faced.

The keynote address was delivered by Dr Ram Vaidya, international coordinator of HSS activities, who described the concept and role of mandir since ancient times and why it was the pillar of the community life. He broadly explained the purpose of a mandir under three headings: **shiksha** (education), **sanskar** (life values) and **suraksha** (security).

After the reporting of each workshops to the whole conference, Shri Dhiraj Shah, Sanghachalak (President) of HSS UK, gave an inspiring concluding address, summarising the essential takeaway messages. He congratulated VHP UK for organising such a successful conference which was professionally planned and executed without any hitches or flaws. Quoting the ancient saying "Sangha shakti kaloyuge", he said that in the present world it is the collective efforts which are successful for the community.

For more information please contact VHP UK secretary by email at [secretary@vhp.org.uk](mailto:secretary@vhp.org.uk)

*"Hindu mandirs are the heart of Hindu community. They play an essential role in the spiritual, cultural and social welfare of the community. The objective of HMEC UK was to explore ways to make mandirs more effective and vibrant in meeting the ever changing needs of UK's diverse Hindu samaj."*

**Dr Tribhovan Jotangia**, President VHP UK

**DID YOU KNOW?**

All this 'virtual' activity has created opportunities to build and develop an expertise in online conferencing. We now have an established 'Tech Team' who are those brilliant magicians who make our online activities operate seamlessly – including the support for HMEC!



## REACHING NEW PEAKS

## YORKSHIRE 3 PEAKS CHALLENGE - AUG

A total of 91 participants [including several few first timers] managed to undertake 8 trips over the Yorkshire dales in small [covid compliant] groups. In a new record, 14 participants managed to complete all 3 peaks! A further 16 completing 2 peaks, and 61 participants undertook a super effort in completing 1 peak. Monies raised as of 1 Nov was £6238.80 inc tax relief. 20% of donations was shared with Lepra Charity No 213251. Remaining balance went to SEWA UK Charity No 1135425

**Satish Shah**, Team CTA and SEWA Volunteer

## A WALKER'S PARADISE - THE OGWEN VALLEY SUNDAY 27 SEPT 2020

Fifteen participants took part in the four peaks walk in Wales – described as the ‘**Best walk in UK - a rock boulder hopping walk**’ Here is a report of the experience by **Binu Pillai** a Sevika from Manchester.



**PEAK 1:** Climbing Tryfan 917m, was a totally new experience. We started from the North Ridge and as we were moving up, the landscape was getting more clear with lakes around the mountains, mesmerizing moment. We managed to reach the top with lots of scrambling and boulder hopping. Took around 2 – 2.5 hours' time. The views were amazing. The summit of Tryfan is famous for the twin monoliths of Siôn a Siân (Adam and Eve in English), a pair of rocks some three metres high and separated by 1.2 metres. The rocks are visible from the Ogwen valley. Those who tackle the "step" between the two rocks are said to gain the "Freedom of Tryfan" (Satish Shah has the freedom)

I managed to climb on the Adam pillar, but didn't have the courage to jump onto other rock Eve, it was a steep valley..phew. On our way was the Cannon stone - a distinctive smaller rock known as "The Cannon" which points upwards at 45 degrees and is visible from the valley. Was an amazing feeling to get on top of it like Rafiki the mandrill from Lion King. These memories will remain in my heart.

**PEAK 2:** Next Mt Glyder Fach 994m, the word "Glyder" derives from the Welsh word "Gludair", meaning a heap of stones. And tbh – it really was. On the summit, there were more surprises awaiting other than the landscape. Loads of rock formations and the best one was the Cantilever, a large rock which from the correct angle appears to be precariously balanced and perfect for a photo moment. There were quite a lot of a spiky rocky outcrop, giving the Jurassic age feeling,

**PEAK 3:** Glyder Fawr 999m, the highest peak in the Glyderau range. On the top we were welcomed by many more rocky outcrops. The decent from Glyder Fawr, was too adventurous. Once down, you can see the devils kitchen view. The Devil's Kitchen is the name given to the dark, black crack which splits the rock of Clogwyn y Geifr (Cliff of the Goat) between Y Garn and Glyder Fawr. The Welsh name for Devil's Kitchen is Twll Du, meaning 'black hole'. Twll Du is known as the Devil's Kitchen because of the plume of steam that is often seen rising from the crack resembling a chimney. It's said when steam can be seen rising from the chimney, the Devil was cooking.

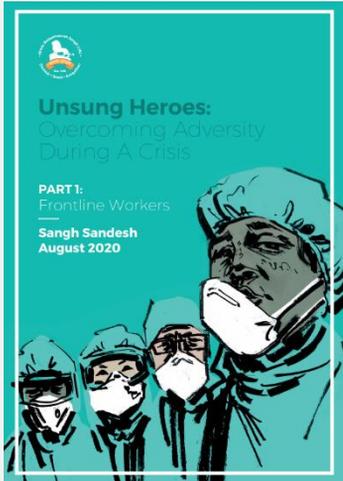
**PEAK 4 - Y Garn 947m.** This was the only climb which we can correlate to Yorkshire 3 peaks walk. CTA team were quite supportive and kept me motivated for this last stretch. Really needed it and many thanks to all. Couldn't have done without you guys. We reached the summit around 5 pm and finally, around 7 pm managed to reach our base near the YHA Idwal Cottage.

The Ogwen Valley is undoubtedly one of the stunning areas of Snowdonia. It has steep cliffs, bulky mountains, challenging ridges, lakes, and stunning valleys, which makes this area a walker's paradise

One of the climbs, which will always remain in my memories to come. Do give it a try if you have a passion towards climbing, boulder hopping and scrambling, best one so far for me.

Thanks for the CTA team again, for giving me this opportunity and motivation. They are doing this for a great cause. Please go the below link and donate generously, how much you can. Every little helps!!!  
<https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/Team/CTA>

## SANGH SANDESH – DIGITAL ONLY VERSIONS – 3 PART SERIES



Namaste, over the last few weeks you will have seen the publication of the first digital-only version of Sangh Sandesh. The inaugural digital launch sees a 3-part edition **Unsung Heroes: Overcoming Adversity During A Crisis**

The first part has is dedicated to some inspirational stories of our frontline workers [healthcare and education] who rose to the challenge.

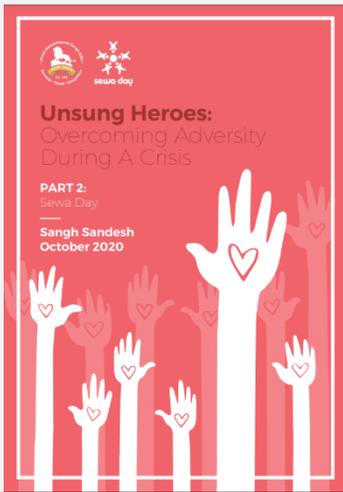
**Part I Frontline Workers:** *The last 5 months has seen a pandemic wreak havoc across the world; plunging economies into recession and turning lives upside down in an instant. As we navigated our way through this crisis, we have received countless anecdotes that have shone a light on the true nature of humanity when it's backed into a corner. Not only did we fight for those we loved, but we also fought for complete strangers as society was lifted and sustained through the kindness and resilience of our unsung heroes.*

The second part is dedicated to **Sewa Day**.

Thousands of Sewa Day volunteers have taken up the challenge to support our frontline workers who were battling the pandemic and to serve our local communities, giving them hope and comfort through these uncertain times.

Putting their own safety aside, these volunteers sprang into action, organising various activities, ranging from supplying meals to local hospitals and care homes to door-to-door distribution of food and medicines to the most vulnerable.

Under the banner of Sewa Day, all these dedicated swayamsevak and sevikas working closely with other local volunteers truly demonstrated the principle 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' - the whole world is one family. Their inspirational stories have been collated together in this second part.



If you have not received a copy, please contact your local Vibhag / Nagar karyakarta teams. Look out for the final part, which will be published over the next few weeks.

## HSS [UK] SAYING IT LOUDLY AND CLEARLY 'IT STARTS WITH YOU'

UK Parliament Week starts 1-7th November 2020. IT STARTS WITH YOU, ME and EVERYONE. We have the ownership of our future. **49 Shakhas will be holding conversations with UK Parliament in the virtual ecosphere this year.** More than 14 MPs and several councillors and Mayors will be joining our events across the country. Creativity has been blooming. Activities include role plays as a speaker of the House of Commons, debates and voting, paintings and drawings, panel discussions, being an MP for a day, raising a petition, writing to your MP, virtual visit to Parliament, online 'How Parliament Works' workshops and much more. Have your say! Please join and celebrate democracy. **Dr Harsha Jani**, HSS [UK] Lead for UK Parliament Week Activities



# Poetry Writing Competition

Open to all swayamsevaks and sevikas (age 10+)

Email submissions to: [bauddhik@hssuk.org](mailto:bauddhik@hssuk.org)

Submission due date: **5th December 2020**



Age Group	Vishay	Guidelines
10 to 12	1. My favourite part from Ramayana / Mahabharata 2. Choose one God or Goddess 3. Hindu Symbols	
13 to 16	1. Parivaar (Family) 2. Mother Earth 3. Dharmic values (Truth, Non-Violence, Living simply etc.)	
17 to 21	1. Maha Purush 2. Punya Bhoomi Bharat (history, diversity, geography) 3. The Environment ( <i>Climate Change, Conservation, Pollution, Recycle etc.</i> )	Poem: 8-20 Lines
22 to 30	1. Hindutva 2. Social media (a + ve or -ve influence on our thoughts and behaviours.) 3. Bharat History	
31 +	Write an <b>article</b> or <b>poem</b> on one of the topics below: 1. Bharat History in UK 2. Teaching Hindu dharma in schools 3. Dharmic Britain (We often talk about our values and Hindutva in Britain. In your own words what do you think Britain would be like if it had dharmic values)	Poem: 8-20 Lines  Article: up to 600 Words



**WE LOVE HEARING FROM YOU!** To help in publication here are few points when submitting news items:

**\*\*PLEASE NOTE OUR NEW EMAIL ADDRESS – [sanghmail@hssuk.org](mailto:sanghmail@hssuk.org) – FOR ALL FUTURE CORRESPONDENCE\*\***

- 1. Provide a summary** - try to keep articles down to 100 words or less, but if you can't, be sure to include a summary. That way we ensure we don't miss out on the best bits.
- 2. A picture tells a thousand words** - it also provides that 'I wish you were here' moment!
- 3. A thousand pictures on the other hand....** We have tremendous fun looking at your snaps, but if you can share the ones you'd suggest to include [from a google share for example], then we'll make sure that we get your best side
- 4. Tell us who you are** - its an opportunity to get to know one another; so include your name, location and responsibility [where relevant]. If you don't object – we'd also like to include your email address so others can get in touch for more information.