



SANGH MAIL

Sanskār • Sewā • Sangathan

**March 2023:
Sporting Spirit in Sangh!**

Sangh Mail is a monthly publication showcasing the activities of Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (UK) for circulation to it's members and well-wishers.

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KHEL PRATIYOGITA: NATIONAL SPORTS COMPETITION

HSS(UK)'s National Sports Competition (Khel Pratiyogita) returned for 2023. A full weekend dedicated to playing traditional games, Kabaddi, Kho Kho, Ring and of course, Football!

Shakhas from all across the UK came to take part in this tournament. Participants aged 6 years and above, formed teams to play in their respective age-based leagues, for each sport. After weeks of practising and preparing for the tournament during Shakha, Swayamsevaks and Sevikas engaged in several matches against other Shakhas, displaying sporting spirit, discipline and enthusiasm.

This year a record breaking number of participants was seen, making this HSS(UK)'s most successful Khel Pratiyogita till date.

2 DAYS

1,403

**RECORD BREAKING
NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS**

404

TOTAL MATCHES PLAYED



SEVIKA KHEL PRATIYOGITA

RESULTS:

RING (AGE 11 YEARS +)

Runners up: Amersham

Winners: Leicester

RING (AGE 35 YEARS +)

Runners up - Rugby/Telford/Sutton

Winners - Leicester

KHO KHO (AGE 11 YEARS +)

Runners up - Woolwich

Winners - Manchester

KHO KHO (AGE 35 YEARS +)

Runners up - Cambridge

Winners - Slough

KABADDI

Runners up - Nottingham

Winners - Woolwich

On Saturday 25th March 2023, with a record breaking number of 456 Sevikas, from 28 Nagars, the Sevika Khels kicked off! The atmosphere was electric, as always! The energy, excitement and enthusiasm shown was remarkable. Seeing the sportsmanship and leadership skills on display was wonderful, and the compassion and bond between teams was encouraging.

We were also fortunate to have many guests join us. The owner of Birmingham Bulls Kabaddi Team and a Senior England Cricket Board representative joined for the day, as well as community leaders from BAPS, Shree Sanatan Mandir, Leicester Police, Brahma Kumaris, and leaders from local language associations.





SWAYAMSEVAK KHEL PRATIYOGITA

Sunday 26th March 2023 saw the return of a long-awaited Swayamsevak Khel Pratiyogita. A return to action after being on hold for 4 years, the expectations were high....and the event did not disappoint! Multiple records were smashed as we saw a total number of 947 Swayamsevaks; over 30 Nagars, 96 teams and nearly 300 fixtures played.

We witnessed a showcase of such high calibre skills; the agility, speed, and strength embodied in team spirit and brotherhood motivated everyone. Talks of tactics and team strategy for Khel Pratiyogita 2024 was already a buzz! Suffice to say, all players from the age of 6 all the way to 70 left feeling energised and inspired.



RESULTS:

KHO KHO

Runners up: Woolwich

Winners: Finchley

RING (AGE 35 YEARS +)

Runners up: Leicester

Winners: Finchley

KABADDI (AGE 11-16 YEARS)

Runners up: Reading

Winners: Woolwich

KABADDI (AGE 17 YEARS +)

Runners up: Leicester B

Winners: Bradford

FOOTBALL (AGE 6 – 10 YEARS)

Runners up: Peterborough

Winners: Manchester

FOOTBALL (AGE 11- 16 YEARS)

Runners up : Finchley

Winners : Manchester



SURYA NAMASKAR YAJNA 2023

In February HSS(UK) conducted their annual Surya Namaskar Yagna, encouraging everyone to practice Suryanamaskars (Sun Salutations) on a regular basis, to reap the benefits of this Yoga on physical and mental health. This year's theme was 'Everyday, Everywhere and Everyone'!

- **EVERYDAY** – 300 Swayamsevaks and Sevikas completed at least 13 Suryanamaskars every day during the month.
- **EVERYWHERE** – Swayamsevaks and Sevikas were encouraged to take pictures of Surya Namaskar in iconic locations across the UK.
- **EVERYONE** – Encourage people outside of HSS(UK) to participate in the Yajna - over 240 individuals took part.

411,206 SURYA NAMASKARS
903 PARTICIPANTS
ACROSS 77 SHAKHAS





Valmiki Parivar Shakha, Edinburgh



Edinburgh Nagar chose Calton Hill as an iconic location for the Surya Namaskar Yajna.

Swayamsevak and Sevikas arrived early on the hill and everyone set up their yoga mats and tried their best to keep them from being blown away by the chilly wind! Despite the cold, everyone wrapped up well and were ready to start. People from the wider community also joined us.

Once everyone was set, the first mantra was chanted, which echoed across the space. Everyone then went through the yoga stages at their own pace. A total of 13 Surya Namaskars were performed with mantras. It was a beautiful start Sunday morning! After completing the full set of 13 Suryanamaskars, everyone was feeling fresher and ready for the day ahead. It was truly a memorable experience!

ॐ भानवे नमः

Om Bhanave Namah
One who illuminates



Surya Namaskar Yajna

Leamington Nagar

Leamington Nagar participated in Surya Namaskar Yajna, with a modest, yet motivating, target of 13 namaskars per day. Nearly 140 people, including 79 non-regular to Shakha, took part.

Daily zoom sessions were conducted for warm-ups and 13 surya namaskars. Occasional timebound challenges made those session interesting. First session also benefitted from a very relevant bauddhik on 'Importance of Suryanamaskara everyday'.

We also went to iconic places to perform suryanamaskars, including Basaveshwar's statue, Leamington wind mill, Canary islands, Warwick castle and Stratford-upon-Avon.





Shakha Events





HAPPY HOLI!

Bal Gokulam, Birmingham

Birmingham Bal Gokulam celebrated Holi with enthusiasm. Even the very cold weather could not dampen the spirits as 79 participants enjoyed the colours. The colours thrown filled not only surroundings but also everyone's faces and heads.

The Nagar also celebrated the achievement of reaching Seven thousand Surya namaskars collectively.

Everyone who attended, truly understood that no matter what our age, gender, opinions are, we all belong together and all are welcome to enjoy the celebration of Holi.



Ref: 10-04206

Colourful celebrations

Hindu community gathers at the Phoenix Centre in Newbury for the

By CAMERON BLACKBURN
Newbury News Staff Writer

MEMBERS of Newbury's Hindu community took part in a major religious festival for the second year running last weekend when Holi was colourfully celebrated at the Phoenix Centre.

The ancient Hindu event, famously known for its free-for-all-coloured-powder-throwing, marks the arrival of spring and signifies the victory of good over evil.

Organised by Local Hindus of Newbury, a Hindu social and cultural group, the celebrations on Sunday, March 10, saw nearly 150 people take part in the vivid and vibrant festivities.

A group spokesperson said: "People in attendance were unrecognisable in the end with colour smeared all over their faces."

"With the weather being helpful it was one of most beautiful days and enjoyment was at its fullest."

Holi is traditionally celebrated to mark a Hindu legend about the god



The colourful Holi celebrations at the Phoenix Centre

Ref: 10-04206

Vishnu, his child devotee Prahlad, and Prahlad's father King Hiranyakashipu.

In the tale, Hiranyakashipu resented his son's devotion to Vishnu and subjected him to a large number of cruel

punishments.

This culminated in Holika, a demoness and Prahlad's aunt, trying to burn Prahlad alive.

However, Vishnu saved Prahlad and vanquished both Hiranyakashipu and Holika.

Holi is named after Holika, and it signifies the victory of Prahlad's devotion over Holika's abuse of power. Holi celebrations begin on the night before the actual Holi day.

Traditionally, a bonfire is lit

mark a happy Holi day

spectacular annual Holi festival that celebrates victory of good over evil

and foods such as grains and sweets - which symbolise abundance - are prepared to feed the dev.

This is known as Holika (Holika Dousing) where people gather, perform religious rituals in front of the deities and pray that their internal evils will be destroyed the way that Holika was destroyed in the fire.

The colourful festivities on the following day feature Vishnu's victory and - which is the most and divine love of Radha and Krishna, the combined forms of the feminine and masculine realisation of god.

At the Phoenix Centre on Holi day on Sunday, traditional cultural performances were followed by delicious Indian snacks before the iconic colour-throwing event took place.

With the weather being helpful it was one of most beautiful days and enjoyment was at



Ref: 10-04206



Bharati Shakha, Newbury

Newbury Hindus celebrated their first major festival of 2023 "Holi", a colourful festival celebrated in early spring which signifies triumph of good over evil.

This event was celebrated with some cultural performance, delicious Indian snacks and of course throwing colours at one another. Cultural events included art performances from Indian spiritual history to current day Bollywood. Nearly 150 people attended who all looked the same at the end, with colour smeared all over their faces. The event was published in a local newspaper.



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Pannabai Shakha, Woolwich

*"Woman is the inspiring force for the family and for the nation.
So long as this force is not awakened, society cannot progress"*
- Lakshmibai Kelkar

Sevikas of Woolwich Pannabai Shakha held a themed Shakha for International Women's Day. To celebrate the achievements of women and embrace our culture, Sevikas came to Shakha wearing a kurti and a bindi. Three Sevikas talked about their inspirations and role models.



Live on BBC Radio Berkshire



Bharti Shakha, Newbury

It was an immense pleasure and proud feeling to represent *Bharati Shakha Newbury* and *Sewa Day* on BBC Berkshire Radio today on 18-Mar at 9:00 AM, with RJ Bridgitte Tetteh. It was a great platform to inform the wider audience about HSS(UK) and what activities we do as Pariwar Shakha and Sewa work, and a fun experience for us all!

Listen to the recording of the session at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/pOf5pct3> (Start point: 3:09:00)





MACCLESFIELD SHAKHA



The Indian Hindu community in Macclesfield came together to celebrate the Hindu New year, also known as Varsha Pratipada, which is to mark the beginning of Spring. Varsha Pratipada is the day falls in the beginning of spring, when Goddess of Nature gets bedecked as a divine bride. **Member of Parliament to Macclesfield, Mr David Rutely** and the Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh North West Vibhag Sanghchalak were the guests of the programme. An article about the program was published in the local newspaper.

RADHA KRISHNA BALGOKULAM, BIRMINGHAM

On the occasion of the Hindu New Year, we also had a mother's day pooja. As children, husband's and parents we often take a mother for granted. As we move into Spring, which reminds us of the importance of mother nature, we took the time to appreciate our mothers and thank them, during our Varsh Pratipada celebrations.

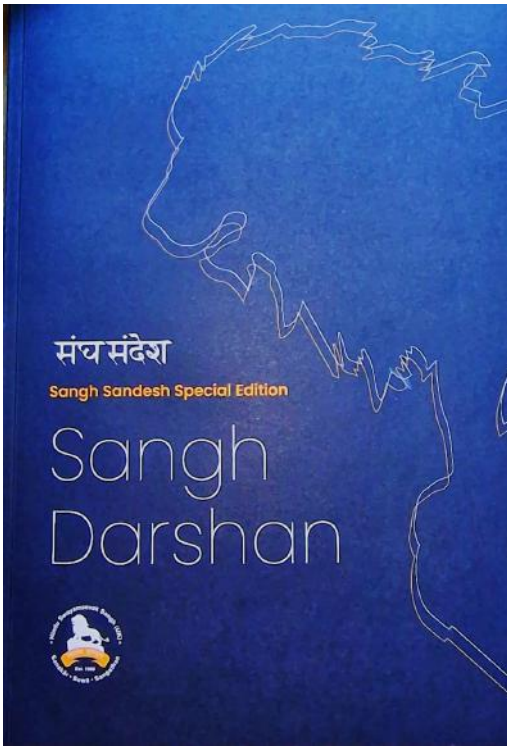




More News!

संगठन में शक्ति है!

Sangathan main shakti hai!



Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (UK) - Promoting Values of a Good Citizen

Diwali festival of 2022 was special for Hindus in the UK. It was a historic occasion when Rishi Sunak became the first non-white and a Hindu Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. Born in the UK, he is the second generation of Hindu migrant family. Proudly proclaiming himself as a practising Hindu, he has become an iconic symbol of British Hindus who now number more than a million (1.7% of the population) according to the latest census. His success story is typical of the Hindu community which has contributed to the mainstream life and economy far more than its population ratio. Hindus in the UK have become model citizens influenced by their cultural and Dharmic values which stress on contribution, cooperation, and co-existence in a multicultural society. It is recognised as the most law-abiding community and well-integrated into the fabric of the country.

HSS(UK) has been promoting these values in its 100 plus activity centres (Shakhas) across the country for the last 56 years. Through well-structured programmes and activities, in a very informal and family atmosphere, its members (Swayamsevak and Sevikas) have imbibed these values and played important roles in the community. HSS(UK) conducts family-based activities, catering to all ages (5-90) and genders, and is open to all who subscribe to its objectives and mission. Some of its admired outreach programmes include Teachers' Appreciation Day (Shikshak Vandan Diwas), Raksha Bandhan (Protecting the Protectors or appreciation of frontline workers e.g. Fire Brigade, Police, NHS staff, Armed Services), National Parliament Week (promoting democratic values), and HSS Sewa (Supporting local charities).

This special issue of Sangh Sandesh highlights some of the broad activities and programmes HSS(UK) has conducted in the last two years, showcasing the spirit of Sanskaar (values), Sewa (selfless service) and Sangathan (community spirit). I hope you will appreciate the valuable work that HSS(UK) is doing, based on eternal values of Dharma. Many VIP's have been regularly invited to observe HSS(UK) in action. So finally, I invite you also to visit any of the activity centres of HSS(UK) and see its work at close quarters. You will be most welcome by our members.

Dhiraj Depar Shah
President (Sanghchalak) HSS(UK)



Hindus in the UK

HINDUS LIVING IN THE UK, HEALTHIEST AND WELL QUALIFIED.

The UK's Office for National Statistics (ONS) has been analysing census statistics to release information across various subcategories for the country's population based on the responses of the online census conducted in March 2021.

In its latest release entitled 'Religion by housing, health, employment, and education' this week, the ONS finds that life outcomes for religious groups varied considerably.

Hindus living in the UK are among the healthiest and well-qualified religious groups.

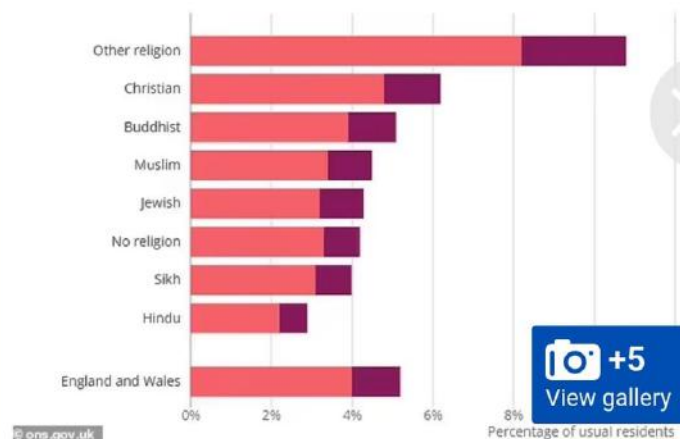
In 2021, those who identified as 'Hindu' had the highest percentage of their population reporting either 'very good' or 'good' health (87.8 percent), compared with 82.0 percent of the overall population," the ONS finds, adding that the Hindus also reported the "lowest prevalence of disability".

"People who identified as 'Hindu' had the highest percentage with a 'Level 4 or above' [certificate-level] qualification (54.8 per cent), compared with the overall population (33.8 per cent)," it noted.

Figure 4: People who identified with an "Other religion" had the highest percentage who reported "bad" or "very bad" health

Religion by general health, England and Wales, 2021

● Bad ● Very Bad



© ons.gov.uk

Percentage of usual residents

Hindus were the healthiest, according to the census rating system, whereas 'other religion' saw the highest number of people with bad health



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Principal: Miss Vanessa Bardsley

29th March 2023

Dear Krishan Dadhania and Rakesh Patel,

I want to take this opportunity to thank you both for your kind donation to Avanti Fields School.

The donation from Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh and K-Direct of journal books and stationery is gratefully received. Your donation will form part of our end of year celebration assemblies to recognise the achievement of our students. Six students in each form class will be recognised for their contributions towards the six core values at Avanti Fields School; empathy, gratitude, courage, integrity, self-discipline and respect. As part of this recognition, we will be gifting each student a journal or notebook from your donation.

Thank you and yours sincerely,

Vanessa Bardsley
Principal



Donation of resources to Avanti Fields School, Leicester

Leicester Nagar in association with K-Direct, a locally based company, donated notebooks and general stationery to the Krishna Avanti School's students. Shri Dipak Patel (chair governor) and Shri Kamlesh Joshi collected the donated items.

It is great to see Leicester Nagar building relationships with such a wonderful school, where HSS(UK) events, such as SSV and Khel Pratiyogita 23 have been held.

Man. Shankar Rao Tatwawadi ji



In March, Sangh Karyakartas, Swayamsevaks, Sevikas, and many thousands of contacts of Mananeeya Tatwawadiji, observed his 90th Janma Diwas or birthday.

Mananeeya Sanghchalak's Birthday message to Mananeeya Tatwawadi Ji:

We all had the good fortune to have your august company while based here in the U.K. (first in Norbury, South London, and then based at Kendriya Karyalaya, Leicester). His first visit to the U.K. was during Sangh Shiksha Varg held in August 1985 at Archbishop Lanfranc High School, Croydon. Thereafter you arrived in the U.K. sometime in 1987 as Vishwa Vibhag Co-ordinator. It was a joy to see you moving around on your own in the car with ease and able to visit Swayamsevaks/Sevikas (during those days when Mobile Phone was distant). During your stay in Leicester, you had the privilege to visit families of Swayamsevaks and Sevikas for evening meals and interact with Parivaar members. Your attendance at many KKM baithaks was an inspiration to all the attendees who interacted with you. With your departure to Bharat at the end of your stay in the U.K., you left with fond memories for one and all.

Many of us subsequently remained in contact with you via e-mails; What's App; telephone talks; while participating in VSS in the years 2000; 2005; 2010 and the last one in 2015. You visited the UK in July/Aug 2016 to participate in the memorable Sanskriti Maha Shibir to mark the golden jubilee of HSS(UK). Your guidance in planning and motivating Swayamsevaks/Sevikas was immense for the successful holding of Virat Hindu Sammelan in August 1989 at Milton Keynes Bowl, Midlands. It was a memorable event where 40 Saints and Sages from Bharat graced the occasion.

All of us pray to Parmatma to grant you a healthy passage of time and continue to serve the cause to which you have dedicated your life.

Pranaam

Dhiraj Shah, Sanghchalak of HSS(U.K.)



The Big Help Out

On the occasion of the King's Coronation

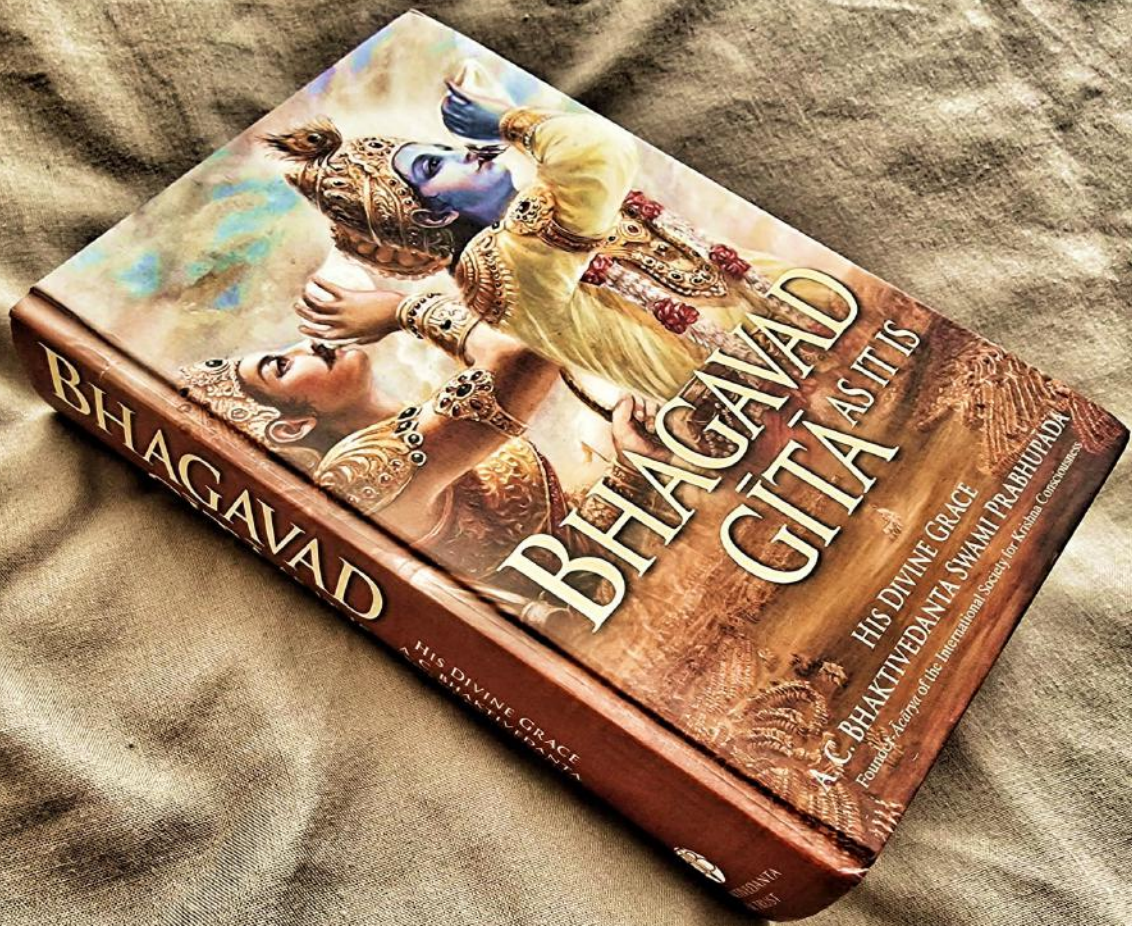
To mark His Majesty The King's Coronation, starting Monday 8th May, thousands of organisations across the country are getting together to give us all the chance to help out in our own local communities.

As one of our HSS(UK) core pillars is Sewa, we encourage as many people to sign up and volunteer as possible, through Sewa Day, at this link:

<https://thebighelpout.org.uk>

The big help out raises awareness of volunteering throughout the the UK.





Essential Reads

*“The gift of **knowledge** is a far higher gift than that of food and clothes; it is even higher than giving life to a man, because the real life of man consists of knowledge”*



- Swami Vivekananda



DHARMA – THE ESSENCE OF SUSTAINABILITY

It is no exaggeration to say that ‘sustainability’ is a fashionable trend in current times. Large corporations are keen to brandish their sustainability policies, displaying their concern for the planet in the adverts for their organisation and products. Every organisation feels compelled to show what they are doing to make sure that their activities, commercial or otherwise, are sustainable. Departments within corporations are tasked to promote the sustainability agenda within the organisation: it is recognised as being good business to do so. Governments are also keen to show what they are doing to promote the sustainability agenda. And their actions are justified...

While a few doubters remain, the case for dramatic changes to prevent long-term damage to our planet caused by pollution of the atmosphere appears to be strong. We are already experiencing extremes of weather around the world. Whether it be the ‘bomb cyclone’ in the USA during December 2022 taking temperatures to -40 degrees centigrade, or the heatwaves experienced in Europe over the summer of the same year (taking temperatures in the UK to around 40 degrees centigrade), these extreme weather events conform to events predicted by climate change scientists.

There is broad agreement about the causes of these environmental changes. Whilst multifactorial, the increase in carbon dioxide in the atmosphere seems to be a significant reason. The burning of fossil fuels releases carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, contributing to the greenhouse effect. Every activity we do – travel to work, turn on the heating, build a house, assemble a car – uses energy, and most of this energy comes from non-renewable sources (for example, the UK gets 42% of its energy from oil and 29% from natural gas), releasing more carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. There is a trend to get our energy requirements from renewable sources, like wind and solar but, for the time being at least, they are considered more expensive (at least in financial terms).

Added to this serious issue is the disparity between countries that have had their industrial revolutions (so called developed countries), and in the process expelled huge amounts of carbon dioxide into the environment, and the countries which have yet to do so (developing countries). The developing countries – including huge economies like India and China – argue that they also have the right to undergo an industrial revolution, whilst developed countries argue that this would cause unacceptable harm to the environment. The whole world is affected by climate change – some countries more than others – and it is recognised that the world needs to work together to overcome this problem. A system of compensation from the developed world to the developing world is proposed, but the costs to the developed world of doing this would in effect lead to a dramatic reduction in the living standards enjoyed by their citizens.



Essential Read

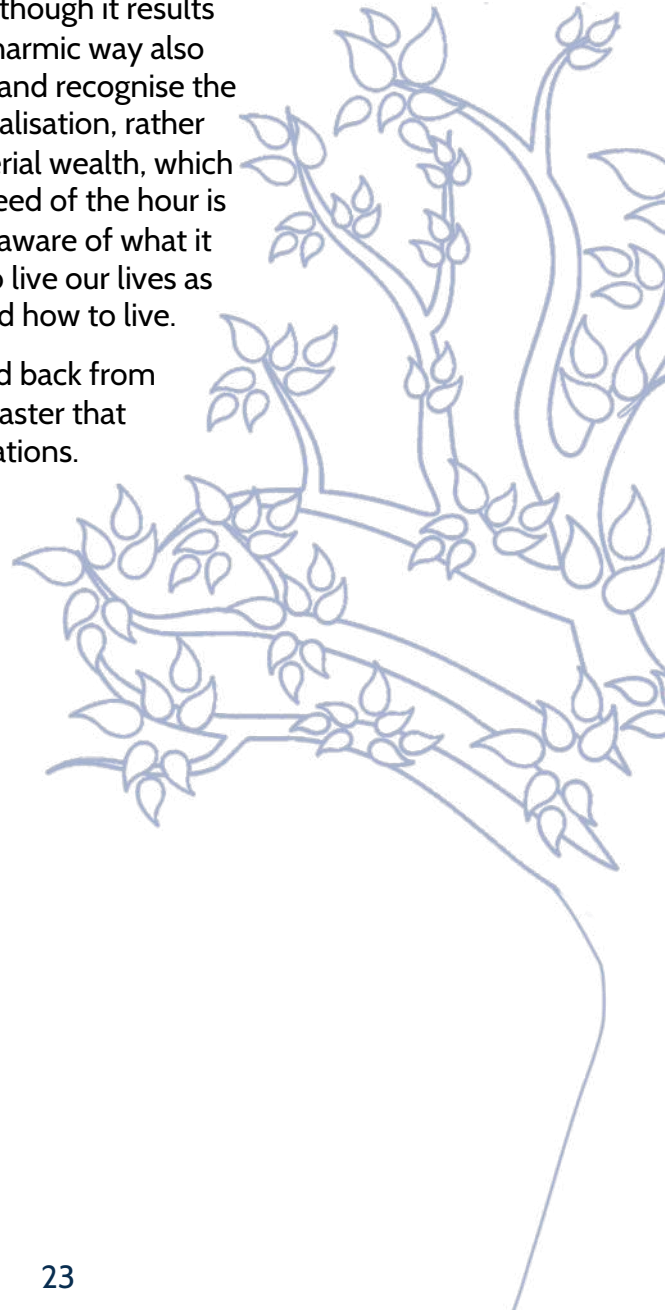
So where does Dharma come into this? The word 'Dharma' literally means 'that which sustains' (from the Sanskrit root 'dhri' which means to uphold, *sustain* or support). To live in a 'Dharmic' way is to live in harmony with nature, with the concept of milking nature to satisfy our needs but taking care not to harm the environment. Many indigenous people from around the world had this 'Dharmic' approach, whether it be the Red Indians of North America, the Aborigines of Australia, or the Druids of the UK. There was a personification of nature: respecting the Earth as mother and giving due reverence to trees and rivers. Unfortunately, these cultures were largely ridiculed and destroyed by those who came to 'educate' and 'develop' these people, often alongside religious conversion.

Framing this issue in a Dharmic way allows us to approach the environment in a different way. One can think of one's own impact first on Mother Earth and try to minimise the impact caused by our actions.

Preventing harm to my mother may be more motivation for me than preventing damage to the relatively remote polar ice caps (although it results in the same actions). Living in a Dharmic way also encourages us to limit our desires and recognise the true purpose of our lives as self-realisation, rather than working only to acquire material wealth, which is ultimately to be left here. The need of the hour is for us, the Hindu people, who are aware of what it means to live in a Dharmic way, to live our lives as an example, and show to the world how to live.

By doing so we can bring the world back from the brink of the environmental disaster that otherwise awaits our future generations.

***By Dr. Yogish Ji Joshi
(Consultant Interventional
Neuroradiologist and Joint
Secretary of HSS(UK))***



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WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

When submitting your articles, here are a few points to consider:

- Provide a summary- keep articles short, highlighting the best parts
- A picture tells a thousand words - select your best photos (maximum of 8) to go with your article in the same email
 - Don't forget to include your Shakha name and location

Send all articles to sanghmail@hssuk.org

