

In memory of all
the brave souls who
lost their lives, fell
in the line of duty
including those from
India (Bharat).



HSS UK
Sanskar Shakhya of
Leamington Spa

In Remembrance/Er Cof

Sangh Mail

HSS(UK) in Action

November 2023

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Sangh Mail – November 2023

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

Shibirs

Bringing people
together





National event

Sangh Chintan Shibir 2023

On 7th October, 234 Karyakartas from around the UK supported by 7 local prabandhaks, attended a one-day conclave for leadership motivation and training in Rugby. They went away fully refreshed to look forward to 2024 with enthusiasm and anticipation.



Belfast

My Family, Hindu Family



91 enthusiastic participants came together for a 2-day residential Shibir (9 - 10 September, 2023).

The Shibir featured physical activities, such as Khel, Vyayam Yog and Niyuddh. Insightful Bauddhik sessions focusing on Hindu sanskar and their relevance in contemporary family life, strengthening the bonds between Swaymsevaks and Sevikas, fostering unity and cooperation within the community. Physical activities, such as Khel, Vyayam Yog and Niyuddh.

Ratri Karyakam (night program) featured performances by children in music and singing, and to end each day everyone came together to sing geet and bhajans around a campfire.



Participants
from
West and
North East
Vibhags

101
attendees
from 12
nagars.

15
shikshaks and
support team
of Karyakarta

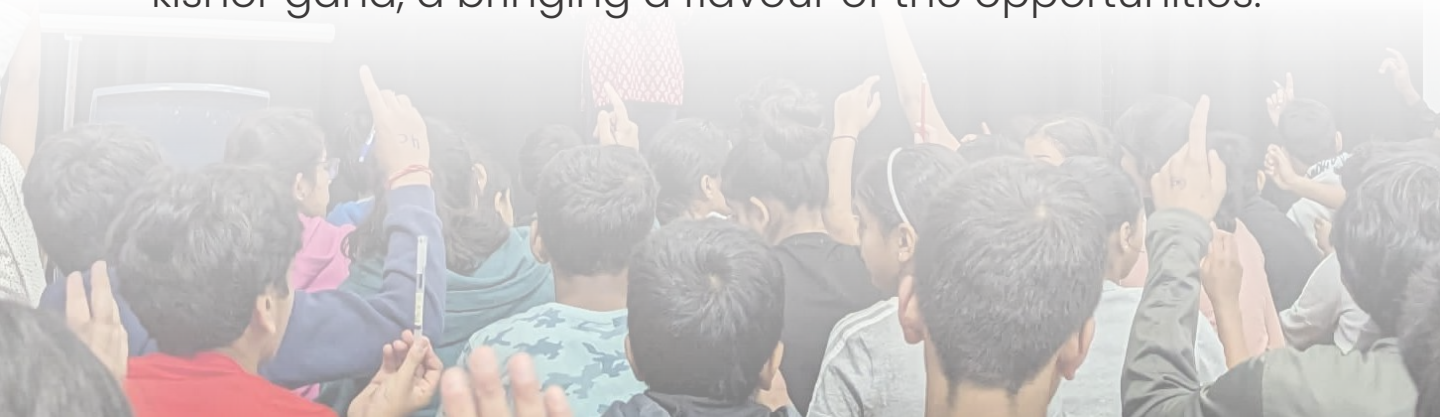
North Zone

North Zone Kishor Shibir

Participants from North West and North East Vibhags numbered 101 representing 12 nagars. 15 shikshaks and support team of Karyakarta made the day productive and enjoyable.

A Pandava-themed Mahakhel, with the aim to find Kunti, was one of the highlight events.

For many participants, this was the first Shibhir, for kishor gana, a bringing a flavour of the opportunities.



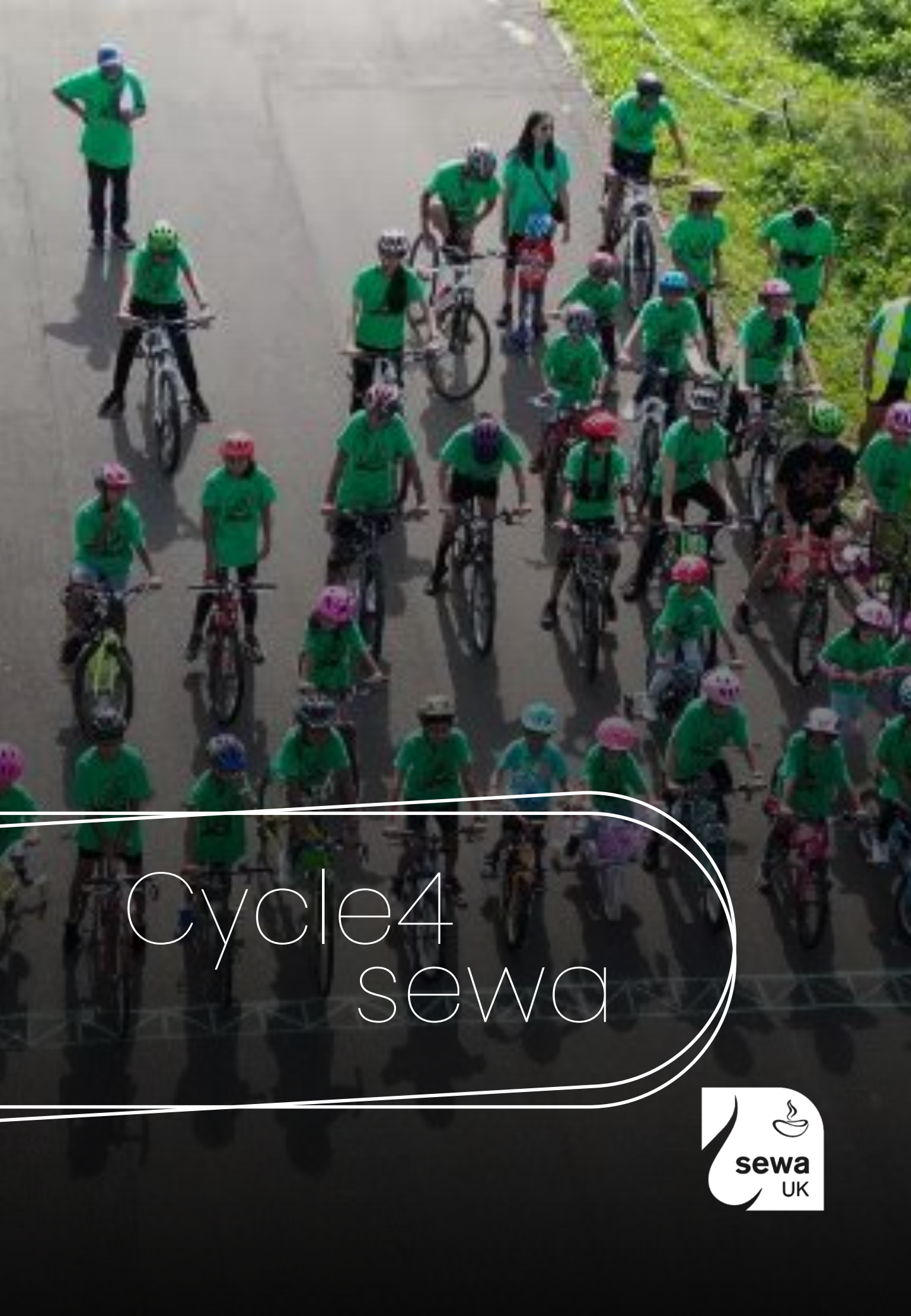




Croydon

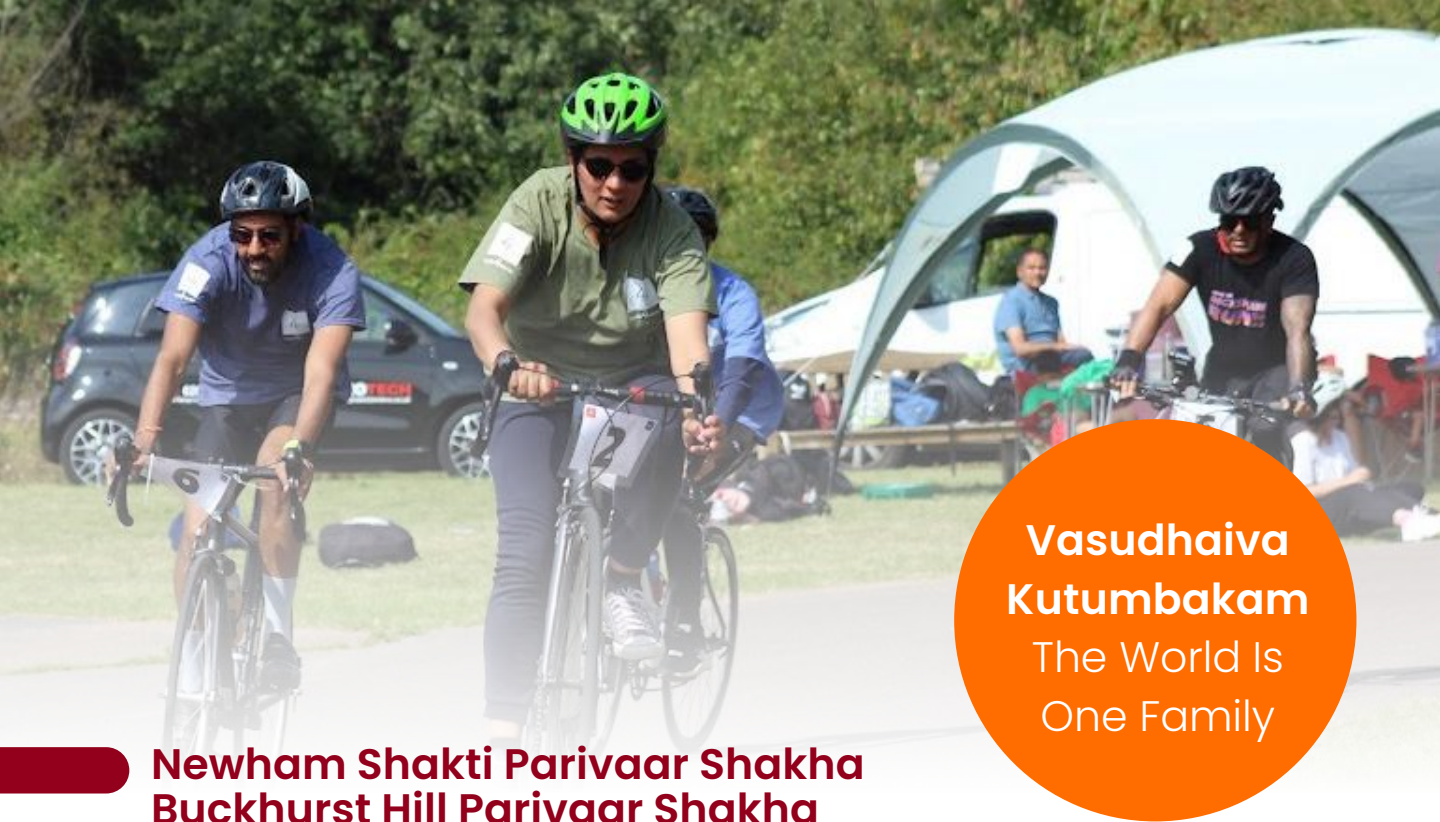
Tasty food and fun!

70 Shiksharthis spent a weekend in September together at Croydon Nagar Shibir. For many young participants, this was their first experience of a shibir and they thoroughly enjoyed it. Workshops, team activities, and even helping out in the kitchen made a wholesome experience. This will be an unforgettable experience for many.



Cycle4 sewa





Newham Shakti Parivaar Shakha
Buckhurst Hill Parivaar Shakha

**Vasudhaiva
Kutumbakam**
The World Is
One Family

Cycle4Sewa as a family!

A time of year which many people look forward to is the yearly Cycle4Sewa event which has been running for the 12th year straight in London. This year's event took place on Sunday 3rd September 2023.

The 2-hour main event kicked off first with cyclists aiming to complete as many laps as possible. Out of 200 participants taking part throughout the event, 70 cyclists were under the age of 16 years at the London event.

Following this, the team challenge took place which consisted of 13 teams split up into 3 leagues: Community, Shakha and Female. Teams consisted of 5 cyclists who each had an hour to complete as many laps as possible. Those in the relay were Woolwich Shivaji Shakha, Mankuva Gaam and Rickshaw Run 2023, of which Woolwich Shivaji Shakha were crowned the Winners.





Shout out to the below and their achievements!

Men's 18+ cycling Jainil Patel - 159km

Boys under 18 cycling Arjun Kothari - 362km

Under 10s cycling Keshav Purohit - 84km

Ladies cycling Aadiya Sahadev - 71km

Running Vishal Sah - 55km

Walking Jayesh Hirani - 120km

Sewa UK would like to give a huge shoutout and thank you to this year's sponsor, Longvalley Packaging and all the volunteers who help every year. Congratulations to all the participants and through their determination a total of over 7000km was cycled by the 200 cyclists.

The money raised by Cycle4Sewa event will go towards Sewa UK projects. More details of these can be found at <https://sewauk.org/>

Donations for Cycle4Sewa can still be made on the following page:

https://sewauk.org/campaignDetails/Cycle4Sewa/C4S23_General

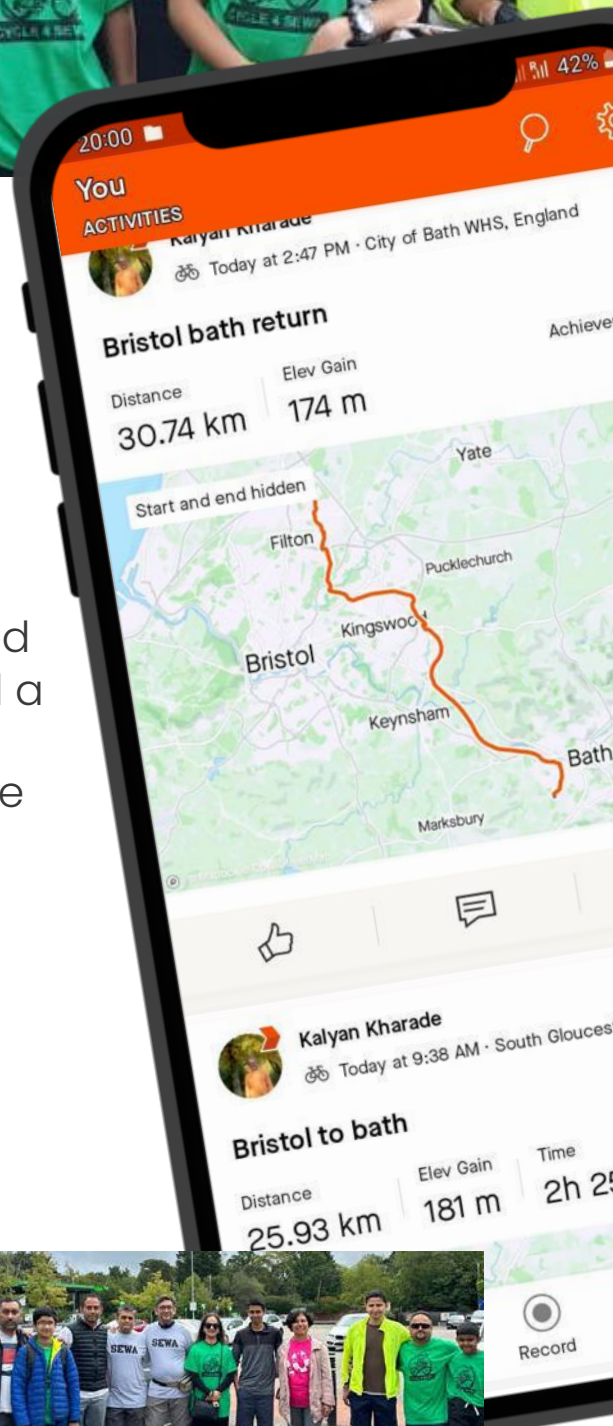


Cheltenham

Cycle4Sewa Cheltenham Style

Through joint efforts of Bristol and Cheltenham Shakhas organised a cycling and walking event from Bristol to Bath Jagannath Temple for Pooja and Darshan.

We met Sushmita ji and her husband Ashishjee (trustees of the temple) who gave warm hospitality and blessings.





Woolwich

Cycle4SewaJourney through Europe by Woolwich Team

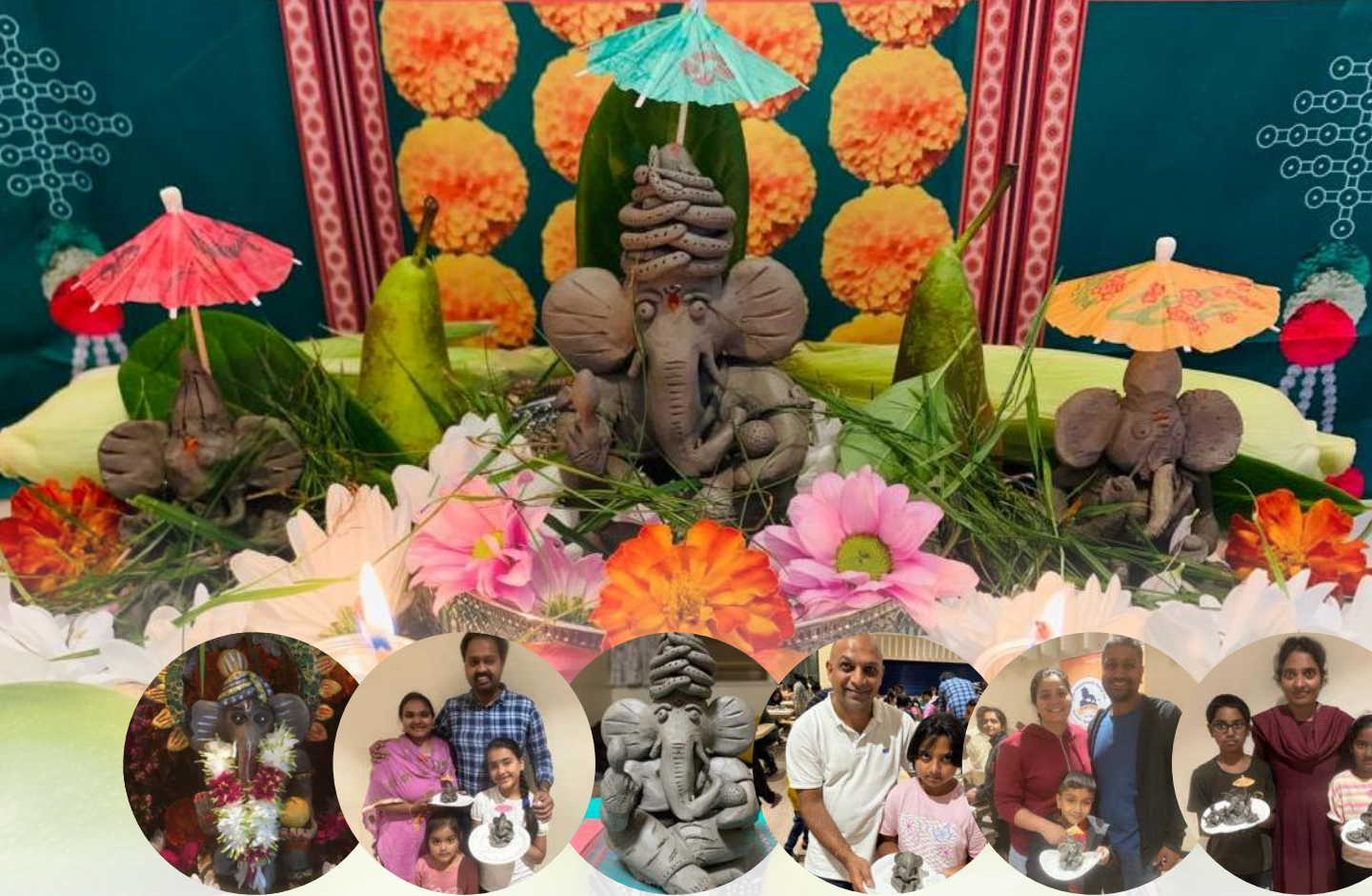
13 Cyclists ranging from age 19 to 68, with a 7 man support team. 150 miles cycled over two days traversing France, Belgium, and Holland.



Bal

CORNER





Coventry

Bringing Ganpati to life!

On Friday 15th September, Coventry Akshaya Shakha and Tejasvi Balagokulam invited over 200 guests to a special event, was a buzzing atmosphere and many excited faces; it was lovely to see a range of ages and people from different parts of India coming together to celebrate Ganesh Chaturthi.

People who had no idea of what Balagokulam was, joined in with the making of Lord Ganesha from clay. Many people shared their views on this event and most families loved the event and were enthusiastic to join Shakha/Balagokulam. There were many kids who were engaged in the task and were intellectually and spiritually connected; this made every parent happy and they too were enjoying themselves.



Aylesbury

Balagokulam Aylesbury Children Gets Involved.

The process of creating posters help us research, assimilate and creatively reproduce knowledge gained on the defined topic. Posters made by kids will help them learn our culture.

Aryabhat shakha, Aylesbury conducted a poster competition on Vishnu avtar for balgokulam. The competition had two parts; first to create the poster and second to narrate the mythological story of the origin and the significance of the Vishnu avtar.

The poster competition helped in getting balgokulam kids involved in research on the avatar, understand the mythological aspects, create the poster and to memorise the story by reciting it to the shakha attendees on the day.



Diwali

also known as Deepavali meaning “row of lights.” The festival generally symbolises the **victory of light over darkness** and is one of the major religious festivals in Hinduism, Jainism, and Sikhism. Diwali honours Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth, the lamps help Lakshmi find her way into people’s homes.



Amersham

Amersham Nagar takes Diwali to Schools

We are delighted that this festive season some of our amazing Karyakartas delivered a "Diwali Assembly" in a few Primary schools in our area. The children at the schools got to learn about our beautiful Hindu festival first hand from our volunteers and the school's management was very thankful as well!

Thanks to the Hindu Education Board for providing the slides and content to help with the preparation and to Vani Mentors for guidance on how to present.

This activity was done at the following schools, a big thank you to all the people who lead the sessions: Little Chalfont Primary School, Elangeni School, Woodside School, St. Mary's



Rugby

Rugby town lights up!

Rugby shakha took charge of marshalling and procession at Rugby town Diwali light switch on. Lazims, drumming and music entertainment provided along the parade route.
Over 2000 people attended.





Nottingham

Nottingham Sevika takes Diwali to Local School and Care Home

Diwali celebration at Jesse Gray Primary School, West Bridgford, Nottingham. Kids and teachers enjoyed the day with lots of fun-filled activities from dressing up in Indian attire, trying Indian snacks, putting henna tattoos on their hands to creating rangoli art and aarti thalis. Great response and feedback were received from the school.





Leawood Manor team would like to wish a very Happy Diwali to all celebrating. Our residents and staff had a brilliant day of Diwali. Staff and residents enjoyed dressing up in traditional Indian sari and jewellery and enjoyed the taste of savoury snack samosas.



Reading

Diwali Light-up Parade

Swayamsevaks from Reading shakha supported the Reading Diwali parade with volunteers for marshalling, first aid and puppeteer support. The event was organised by Kala, The Arts in association with Reading Council.

There were also cultural dances and singing from different groups which was followed by a parade with dhol players and music with giant puppets of Sri Ram, Sita mata, Hanuman ji and Ganesh ji with children carrying lanterns along the route.



Diwali

Light-up Parade





Vijaya dashmi

Vijaya dashmi marks the victory of good over evil. Bhagwan Rama defeated the demon king of Lanka, Ravana, on this day. Another legend says that Maa Durga defeated Mahishasura after a fierce battle that lasted for nine days.



Leicester

Leicester Nagar Inaugurates a New Shakha in Public Utsav

With 200 people attending from all 8 shakhas across Leicester, we also welcomed and inaugurated a 9th new Saraswati shakha in Leicester that will run at Shree Damania Machhi Mahajan.

Shri Yogeshji Bhide (Kendriya Saha bauddhik pramukh) delivered our bauddhik. He linked the historic meaning of the Utsav with taking action to defeat elements of Ravana within us and our samaj.

The chief guest was Shri Ramanbhai Barber, who is the deputy lieutenant of Leicestershire and holds various responsibilities in the samaj including President of Shree Sanatan Mandir (Leicester).

The utsav finished with an enjoyable bhojan where we all interacted and shared memories.





Coventry

Coventry Nagar Celebrates Vijay Dashmi Utsav with Public

Tremendous preparations were undertaken with all shakhas contributing with their items demonstration a variety of activities. The Ramayana play was performed by Tejasvi Balgokulam.

Demonstration of yoga poses and techniques were showcased by Keshav Madhav Shakha. They demonstrated multiple breathing techniques in different postures.



Then Akshay Shakha demonstrated Hindu martial arts known as Ni-Yuddha. They showed the basic punches and kicks that were taught. They also presented Dand , another form of self-defence with a traditional wooden stick.





Queensbury

Queensbury Nagar Vijaya Dashmi Utsav

The event was attended by 12 guests including 6 councillors of local boroughs and 6 guests from local mandirs and other organisations. Our total attendance was 270.

After seeing how nagars around the country have celebrated Vijaya dashmi innovatively in the past few years, we were inspired to do something similar. Our Shareerik pradarshan includes Vyamyog, Yoga, Ni-yudhha ganas. The traditional martial art of Dand and Dand Yuddha and a video highlighting a number of all the different types of khel concluded the first part of the event.

The Bauddhik focused on the importance of organisations like HSS in the UK. Our chief guest, Shri Ameet Jogia, shared his views on HSS as well as Hindu representation around the UK.

More news



Leamington and Kettering

HSS(UK) Nagars Observe Remembrance Sunday

'Lest We Forget'

Members of HSS(UK) Wellingborough, Kettering, and Leamington nagars attended Remembrance Sunday ceremonies in their respective towns. Remembering the millions of soldiers of World War's, The Hindu Community came together to also remember the hundreds of thousands of Indian soldiers who laid their lives in the great wars.

Lest we forget in the quietude of Remembrance Day, we honor the courage and sacrifice of those who served. Their legacy, woven into the fabric of history, reminds us that peace is a solemn gift for which many paid the highest price. On Remembrance Day, it's crucial to reflect on the **1.3 million Indian soldiers served in various theatres of conflict, and around 74,000 lost their lives.**

In World War II, the number of Indian troops exceeded 2.5 million, with over 87,000 casualties. The financial contribution of India to the British war effort was substantial, and the soldiers played pivotal roles in key battles across Africa, Europe, and Asia.

Despite facing discrimination, their bravery and sacrifice remain an integral part of India's military history.



Outreach

Meeting with Anoopam Mission

Mananiya Sanghchhalakji, Shri Dhirajji Shah and other Sangh karyakartas met with the head of Anoopam Mission Sant Shri Bhagwant Sahebji. Key trustees of the org were also present. HSS(UK) informed them of our work through a presentation of HSS(UK). All were very impressed and have offered all help in future, including using their facilities. HSS(UK) has extended an invitation for him to visit our SSV next year.



Birmingham Shiva Shakha Felicitates Akhand Swami

Pujya Shri Akhand Swami from the Swaminarayan Sanstha visited Birmingham Shiva Shaka. He addressed over 100 Swayamsevaks and Sevikas, who intently listened to the Swami and engaged in a Q&A.



Pujya Shri Akhand Swami is a Indian monk, lifestyle coach, motivational speaker, and Neurosurgeon. Akhand Swami is also a humanitarian and a promoter of peace and human values.

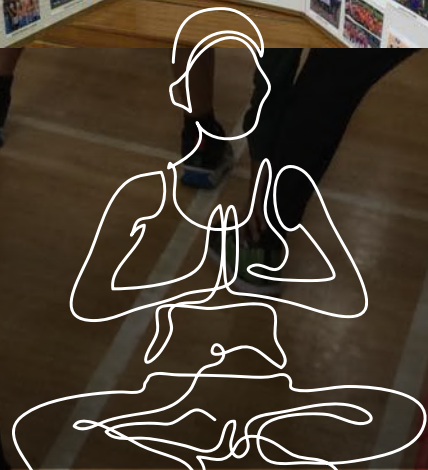
He travelled through disparate countries and cultures yearning for an experience of truth; after finally arriving in India. Rooted in his study of ancient India's mystic devotional tradition, Akhand Swami's message is as profound as it is simple:

"by cultivating a rich inner life of self-awareness and a genuine practice of service, we can become instruments of compassion and agents of sustainable change in the world."



Leamington

HSS Leamington takes Yoga to School



A week dedicated to health and wellbeing cannot be complete without having at least one day devoted to Yoga. Shrubland Primary School, Leamington Spa invited HSS(UK), to conduct a session on Yoga for children.

We taught children some warm up, yoga postures, laughter yoga, meditation, and mindfulness. The program was enjoyed by all, including the teachers! The event was a great success!



Reading

Reading Nagar Kho Team shines

Players from Reading shakha participated in the annual national Kho competition organised by Kho Kho Federation of England (KKFE) on 1st Oct 2023 at Beaconsfield leisure centre. Reading had two junior teams and a senior boys team and senior girls team.

Team Reading Rangers were winners of the Junior Kho competition and the senior boys team was third runner up. We also had Saashwori crowned as best junior best chaser and Mayank as best junior best player. **What a fantastic achievement.**





Reading

Bonding with Nepalese Community

In September, swayamseveks of Hanuman Shakha Reading, were invited to participate in an 11-a-side exhibition football match with the Nepalese community.

Before the match, both teams symbolically tied rakhis to each other signifying the importance of unity and working together.

The football match itself was a spirited contest, filled with enthusiasm and camaraderie. Players from both sides displayed great sportsmanship and teamwork. We look forward to more such opportunities to bond.

ESSENTIAL READ

The #WorldHinduCongress 2023 embraces 'Hindutva' and 'Hindu Dharma' to comprehensively represent the profound essence of Sanatan Dharma by renouncing the term 'Hinduism'

A positive step
towards **cultural
authenticity
and unity!**

Declaration No. 1

WHC Declaration About Terms "Hindu", "Hindutva" and Sanatan Dharma

World Hindu Congress
2023, Bangkok

24th November 2023

In the term "Hindu Dharma", the first word, i. e. "Hindu" is an unbounded word. It signifies all that is Sanatan or Eternal. And then there is Dharma, which means "That, which sustains". Thus, Hindu Dharma signifies all that which eternally upholds everything; an individual, a family, a community, a society, and even nature — both animate and inanimate. In contrast, Hinduism is totally different because it is suffixed with an "ism".

The term "ism" is defined as an oppressive and discriminatory attitude or belief. In the mid-nineteenth century United States of America, the phrase "the isms" was used to collectively refer to radical social reform movements and various non-mainstream spiritual or religious movements in a derogatory manner. The term "Hinduism" should be understood in such a context.

One should also note that the term "Hinduism" was introduced in the popular lexicon by Sir Monier-Monier Willimas via his handbook Hinduism. This handbook was published in 1877 by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

This intellectually dishonest terminology is the seed behind the vicious anti-Hindu narratives over the last 150 years.

It is for such reasons that many of our elders preferred the term "Hindutva" over Hinduism as the former is a more accurate terms since it includes the gamut (spectrum) of all that the word "Hindu" implies. We agree with them and should do the same. Hindutva is not a complicated word. It simply means Hindu-ness. Others have used the alternative "Sanatan Dharma", often abbreviated as "Sanatan". Here the term "Sanatan" works as an adjective indicating Hindu Dharma's eternal nature.



Photo by
Artem Beliaikin
on Unsplash

However, in the present public discourse many academicians and intellectuals regularly portray Hindutva as the antithesis of Hindu Dharma, i.e. extremely negatively. Some of them argue like that because of their ignorance.

But most are anti-Hindutva because of their visceral hatred and biases against Hindu Dharma. Many politicians driven by political agendas and personal prejudices have also joined that group, and are criticizing Sanatan Dharma, or Sanatan with increasing regularity and vitriol.

On behalf of the global Hindu community the World Hindu Congress declares that such malicious criticism of Hindutva, or Sanatan Dharma, or Sanatan,

or Hindu Dharma actually targets the Hindu society and all that is beautiful, just, good, and noble in it. In reality, these are attacks against goodness itself.

The World Hindu Congress strongly condemns such attacks and urges Hindus worldwide for the manifestation of Hindutva through organized global efforts, and overcome those who are engaging in such anti-Hindu attacks and bigotry so that we are victorious.

End of resolution





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



Who it's from

Don't forget to include your Shakha name and location

Send all articles to sanghmail@hssuk.org

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