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Hindu Satsang Updates

Roma Bhagat

Pranaam to all Satsangis!

Best wishes for the New Year to all of you! As we know with Hindu Satsang, we start the new year with Sundar Kand paath. This year we will have ISSA (International Society for Spiritual Advancement) sevaks who will present Sundar Kand. More details about ISSA on Page 10. Also read about the beauty of Sundar Kand on Page 8 & 9.

In February, our annual Youth Festival is scheduled to take place. The event will be held on Sunday, February 23rd, at Rathi Auditorium, HTGC temple, starting from 10 am. Children aged up to 18 are invited to participate and exhibit their talents. All participants will receive a trophy with their name engraved on it. It's an opportunity to showcase your talents to the world! Prepare for the Youth Festival by showcasing your talents — **singing, dancing, playing an instrument, or any entertaining act,**

including Bollywood, but ensure it has a devotional theme.

Further information will be conveyed through email. Please share the details about Sundar Kand and the Youth Festival with your family and friends, and extend invitations for them to join us. The more people we have participating in our Hindu Satsang programs, the more vibrant and enjoyable the celebrations will be.

Wish you all a very happy Vasant Panchami on Sunday, February 2nd, India's Republic Day on Sunday, January 26th, and Maha Shivaratri on Wednesday, February 26th. This is our first meeting this year, make it convenient to attend this special Sundar Kand Sabha on January 26th at 10 am. Set a phone reminder alert to make sure you don't miss this event. ❁

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Happy Birth Month to our Satsangis born in January



Ajay Buti	Ajay Gupta	Archana Agrawal	Amisha Shah	Aroon Pal	Sonia Gunya	Arushi Singh
Binish Choksi	Dinkar Tiwari	Gunjali Mittal	Karuna Uppal	Kushal Sareen	Manju Goel	Neeraj Kataria
Nina Choksi	Niranjan Kataria	Payal Dhingra	Preeti Kalra	Promilla Dhar	Rajesh Tiwari	Raman Noharia
Reena Sood	Richa Agnihotri	Richa Bhargava	Rishi Salgia	Rohini Bahl	Ruchi Kapoor	Serena Raheja
Shana Bhagwat	Shikha Malhotra	Sudhir Aggarwal	Subhash Sharma	Sudha Parikh	Sujata Sharma	Surbhi Agarwal
Surendra Salgia	Vinod Gandhi	Suresh Ambegaoker	Vipin Malhan	Hemal Gandhi		

Happy Anniversary शादी की सालगिरह पर ढेर सारी शुभकामनाएं!

Jharna & Gitesh Shah	Roma & Neil Bhagat	Sadhana & Rajesh Tiwari	Sharda & Manohar Sharma	Shubh & Ramesh Malhan
Sudha & Hans Upadhyay	Tripta & Brum Pal	Vijay & Nisha Goyal		

Gift of Laughter on Your Anniversary

. - डर से लगता है डर - .

दोस्त: "सारी उम्र डरते ही रहे। पहले माँ-बाप से, फिर टीचर से, फिर बॉस से, फिर मौत के खौफ से, फिर भगवान से, बस डरते ही रहे।"

उसका मित्र: "बड़े बहादुर हो, बीवी का नाम नहीं लिया आपने"

दोस्त: "(धीरे से) अरे भाई, वो तो डर के मारे नहीं लिया"

Keep laughing with each other to make the most of your life because it is not the years in your life that matter, it is the life in your years.

**An Ayurvedic Perspective:
Relief From Hypothyroidism Part 1
By Sh. Rajeev Jain**

The thyroid gland is a small, butterfly-shaped organ located in the front of your neck just under the larynx. It is like a butterfly's body centered on your neck, with the wings spread around your windpipe (trachea). The primary function of the thyroid is to control your metabolism – i.e. the process that your body uses to transform food to energy your body uses to function. The thyroid creates the T4 and T3 hormones to control your metabolism.

The thyroid gland can become overactive (known as Hyperthyroidism), but in 95% of the cases it becomes underactive (known as Hypothyroidism). Hypothyroidism is when there isn't enough thyroid hormone in your bloodstream as the thyroid gland is not producing enough thyroid hormones. Hypothyroidism affects approximately 45 cases per 100,000 people globally. Nearly 5% of Americans aged 12 years and older have hypothyroidism. The prevalence has been increasing, with some estimates suggesting around 10-20% of the population may have some form of hypothyroidism (Endocrinol., 15 June 2021).

Hypothyroidism can occur at any age but it is more common in middle-aged and older adults, particularly women over the age of 60. It often occurs during menopausal years.

Causes:

Hashimoto's thyroiditis is the most common cause (autoimmune disease). However, there can be other reasons like iodine deficiency, vitamin A deficiency, radiation therapy (as part of cancer treatment),

medications, that affect thyroid function, etc. According to ayurveda, the root cause lies in poor dietary habits (e.g., excessive intake of cold, heavy, and oily foods), sedentary lifestyle, stress and emotional factors, genetic predisposition or imbalance in Agni (fire).

Symptoms and impact on lifestyle:

Common symptoms include fatigue, weakness, muscle aches and stiffness, weight gain, cold intolerance, constipation, dry skin and hair, depression and memory problems. It can also lead to complications such as heart disease, infertility, and joint pain if left untreated. Hence, hypothyroidism can significantly affect an individual's quality of life.

Ayurvedic approach

Ayurveda can manage and reduce the symptoms of hypothyroidism effectively. However, the possibility of complete cure varies based on individuals prakruti and situation. A consistent treatment and adoption of lifestyle changes should significantly improve the quality of life. Hypothyroidism is considered a manifestation of increased Kapha dosha, characterized by sluggishness and congestion in the body. It is also associated with increased Vata dosha and low Agni (digestive fire). The Rasa (plasma/lymph) and Meda (fat) srotas are primarily affected by hypothyroidism. Addressing hypothyroidism is crucial to prevent further complications and cardiovascular issues. Let us address the problem from three perspectives – diet, lifestyle and formulations.

Continued on the next page 

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(1) Diet:

An Ayurvedic diet for hypothyroidism focuses on balancing the doshas, particularly Kapha and Vata, and enhancing the digestive fire (Agni). Ayurvedic dietary recommendations for hypothyroidism include:

Foods to consume:

1. Warm, cooked foods – such as soups, stews, and porridges – they are easier to digest and help balance Vata and Kapha doshas.
2. Whole grains – such as barley, oats, quinoa, brown rice, and millets – they provide sustained energy and support digestion.
3. Vegetables – such as carrots, beets, sweet potatoes, and leafy greens – they are rich in nutrients and easy to digest when cooked. Fruits are also high in nutrients.
4. Healthy fats – such as ghee, coconut oil, and flaxseed oil – they support thyroid function and overall health.
5. Spices – such as ginger, turmeric, cumin, black pepper, and cinnamon – they enhance digestion and metabolism.
6. Selenium-rich foods – such as brazil nuts, sesame and sunflower seeds, ghee and mushrooms – they support thyroid function and antioxidant defense.

7. Iodine-rich foods – such as seaweed and dairy products – they too support thyroid hormone production.

Foods to Avoid

- ❑ Cold and raw foods – such as salads, smoothies, and raw vegetables – they are difficult to digest and can aggravate vata and kapha doshas.
 - ❑ Processed foods – such as white bread, pasta, and sugary snacks – they can lead to toxin accumulation and disrupt digestion.
 - ❑ Goitrogenic foods – such as cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, and soy products – they can interfere with thyroid function when consumed in large amounts.
- Caffeine and alcohol – they can disrupt metabolism and stress the thyroid gland.
- General Dietary Tips Eat regular meals, avoid skipping meals to maintain stable energy levels and support digestion. Stay hydrated by drinking warm water or herbal teas throughout aid digestion.

These dietary changes, along with regular exercise and stress management, can significantly improve thyroid function and overall well-being. It's always best to consult with an Ayurvedic practitioner to tailor the diet to your specific needs. We will discuss the Exercise/Lifestyle changes and the Ayurvedic formulations next month. Wishing everyone great health in 2025!

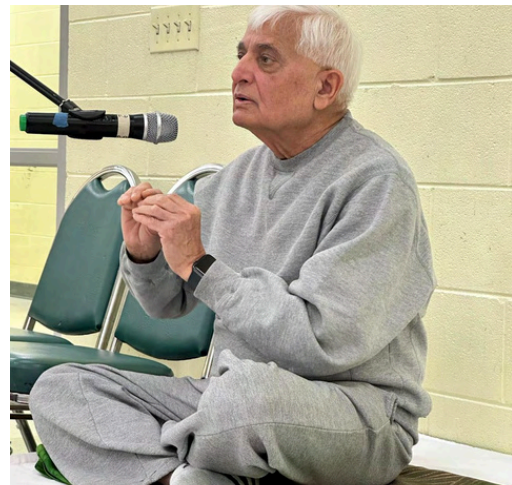


Laughter Yoga recap

Conducted by Sh. Dharam Punwani



A glimpse of
Hindu Satsang's Monthly Sabha
held on December 22, 2023





Quiz Maha Kumbh Mela

By Shivam Viswanathan

महाकुंभ

The Maha Kumbh Mela is the world's largest peaceful religious congregation, where millions of Hindu devotees gather to bathe in sacred rivers at Prayagraj. The Kumbh Mela in 2025 will take place from January 13, 2025, to February 26, 2025. Below is a quiz to test how much you know about this significant event.

Quiz: Test Your Knowledge About Kumbh Mela

- 1 How often does the **Maha Kumbh Mela** occur?
A. Every 10 years B. Every 12 years
C. Every 6 years. D. Every 144 years
- 2 What does the word '**Kumbh**' translate to?
A. Nectar, B. Power, C. Pitcher, D. Family
- 3 Why is this event called the "**Kumbh**" Mela?
- 4 At which four locations is the Kumbh Mela held in rotation?
- 5 Which rivers are associated with the Kumbh Mela at four locations?
- 6 In which year was the Maha Kumbh Mela recognized as an Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNESCO?
- 7 How many days will the Kumbh Mela 2025 last?
- 8 Which ancient event is associated with the origin of the Kumbh Mela?
- 9 Who assumed the form of Kurma to stabilize the mountain during the churning of the ocean?

महाकुंभ

The answers are in the right column ->

Answers

1. **D: 144 years.** While the Kumbh Mela occurs every 12 years, the Maha Kumbh Mela takes place once every 144 years (every 12th Kumbh Mela). The Maha Kumbh is celebrated during a rare planetary alignment of the Sun, Moon, Jupiter, and Saturn. After 2025, the next Maha Kumbh Mela will not occur until 2169, making this event exceptionally significant for devotees.
2. **C: Pitcher.** "Kumbh" is a Sanskrit word for "pitcher," also referred to as the Kalasha. "Mela" means a gathering or fair.
3. The devas and demons fought over the pot ("Kumbh") of nectar to gain immortality. The pot was spilled at four locations, which became the origin of the four Kumbh Mela sites.
4. The four locations of Kumbh Mela are:
a. **Prayagraj**, b. **Haridwar**, c. **Ujjain** d. **Nashik**
5. Rivers associated with Kumbh Mela:
 - **Prayagraj:** Confluence of the Ganga, Yamuna, and the Saraswati rivers (Triveni Sangam), **Haridwar:** Ganga, **Nashik:** Godavari, **Ujjain:** Shipra
6. In 2017, Kumbh Mela was recognized as an Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNESCO.
7. The Kumbh Mela 2025 will last 45 days.
8. The origin of Kumbh Mela is linked to the Samudra Manthan (Churning of the Ocean), a collaboration between the Devas (gods) and Asuras (demons). They churned the cosmic ocean (Ksheer Sagar) to retrieve the nectar of immortality (Amrit).
9. Bhagwan Vishnu assumed the form of Kurma (a tortoise) to stabilize Mount Mandara during the churning of the ocean.

The Beauty of Sundar Kand

by Shivam Viswanathan



What is Sundar Kand?

Sundara Kaanda, or Sundar Kand, is the fifth book (out of seven) in the Hindu epic, the Ramayana. The original Sundara Kanda is in Sanskrit and was composed by Valmiki, who was the first to scripturally record the Ramayana.

Why is it called Sundar Kand?

Hanuman ji was fondly called 'Sundara' meaning a charming one, by his mother Anjani. Sage Valmiki chose this name because the Sundar Kand is about Hanuman and his devotion to Rama.

How is Sundar Kand different from other parts of the Ramayana?

Sunder Kand is the only part of the Ramayana in which the hero is not Rama, but rather Hanuman. The work depicts the adventures of Hanuman, and his selflessness, strength, and devotion to Rama.

What are the benefits of listening to Sundar Kand?

Each of the Ramayana's verses is a mahamantra. Although the entire Ramayana is beautiful, Sundar Kand is particularly wonderful. Just as the Gita is the best part of the Mahabharata, similarly, Sundar Kand is the best part of the Ramayana.

It is believed that just listening to Sunderkand has many benefits. A few of them are:

- It can help ward off evil.
- It removes all the negativity and obstacles from one's life and bestows the person with happiness and prosperity.
- Sundar Kand teaches you how one can overcome every difficulty and unfortunate situation
- Reciting Sundar Kand also plays a vital role in improving the financial condition of a person.
- It protects oneself against diseases and ensures good health.

What is the beauty of Sundar Kand?

It is impossible for anyone to explain the beauty of Sundar Kand in a few words. But I'll use the following verse to try to explain the sundarta of Sundar kand:

सुन्दरे सुन्दरो रामः सुन्दरे सुन्दरी कथा
सुन्दरे सुन्दरी सीता सुन्दरे सुन्दरं वनम्।
सुन्दरे सुन्दरं काव्यं सुन्दरे सुन्दरः कपिः
सुन्दरे सुन्दरं मन्त्रं सुन्दरे किं न सुन्दरम्॥



Rama is handsome (sundar), and so is the story.

Sita is beautiful, as is the Ashoka Vanam (where Sita was held captive by Ravana in Lanka).

The Kaavya (poems) are beautiful, and so is Hanuman, the self-realized kapi / vanara.

The mantras (sacred hymns) are beautiful. So what isn't beautiful about Sundar Kand?

Don't miss Sundar Kand on January 26, starting at 10am, at Gupta Hall at HTGC (Lemont Temple).



Special Hindu Satsang Program in the Month of January

For the past 26 years, ISSA (International Society for Spiritual Advancement) has stood as one of the foundational pillars of Sanatan Dharma upliftment, primarily within Chicagoland and the Washington DC Metropolitan areas. Under the guidance of Ramanand Dwivedi Ji, ISSA conducts spiritual programs, reciting Sunderkand and Ram Charit Manas Path throughout Chicagoland, Washington DC, and many other North American cities.

As the Kumbh Mela is going on, which has brought devotees together from all around the world and invoked spirituality like never before, ISSA is organizing several recitations in the month of January. This includes the Sunderkand recitation on Sunday, January 26th, at Hindu Satsang.


ISSA is dedicated to spreading spiritual awareness and igniting the love for Ram Ji and Hanuman Ji, especially among youth and little kids. This connection, once established, acts as a protective kavach that prevents us from getting distracted and helps us stay on the righteous path. As Sant Tulsi Das Ji says in Ram Charit Manas, the Lord protects us like a mother all the time: "*Karahu Sadha Tin Kar Rakhwari, Jimi Baalak Raakhe Mahatari.*" (करहुं सदा तिन के रखवारी। जिम बालक राखे महतारी।)



This connection with the Lord strengthens the inner bond and helps us through difficult times.

ISSA is committed to performing community service by chanting weekly Sunderkand and monthly Ram Charit Manas path at various residential and spiritual establishments to instill faith and supreme consciousness. The Bhakti of Lord Hanuman is our guide, and each verse from Ram Charit Manas is pure nectar, if only one is willing to drink.

ISSA also organizes a yearly Sunderkand Mahayagya program with a minimum of 108 families. There is no fee of any sort, and everyone is invited. ISSA sevaks include Shri Ramanand Dwivedi Ji, Mithlesh Sharma Ji, Ram Shraddha Das Ji, Anand Tiwari Ji, Rahul Trivedi Ji, Pankaj Patel Ji, Ramesh Savsani Ji, and Inder Gurtatta ji.

Please join us for Sunderkand on January 26th at the Lemont Hindu temple, Gupta hall. 

Hindu Satsang's Monthly Sabha (4th Sunday of the month) 10 AM CST on Sunday, 26th, January at VSC



Everyone is cordially invited

Hindu Satsang Sabha

Venue: Gupta Dinning Hall

Time: 10 am to 12:00 pm, followed by lunch



Program



10:00 am:	Vedic Pooja
10:10 am	Sundarkand delivered by ISSA sevaks (Ramanand Dwivedi Ji, Mithlesh Sharma Ji, Ram Shraddha Das Ji, Anand Tiwari Ji, Rahul Trivedi Ji, Pankaj Patel Ji, Ramesh Savsani Ji, and Inder Gurtatta ji.)
11:45 am	Program followed by lunch

We invite everyone to Satsang Sabha
Come and feast on food for the
body, mind, and soul.

December Aarti Collections

Thanks everyone for your generous donations.

Achal Jain	\$31
Gitesh & Jharna Shah	\$51
Yashpal & Sneha Chaudhry	\$51
Kiran & dharam Punwani	\$101
Cash	\$104
Total	\$338

| Om Shree Mahalakshmyai Cha Vidmahe ..
Vishnu Patnyai Cha Dheemahi
Tanno Lakshmi Prachodayat Om |



Maa Annapurna devi
May you be blessed with good
health, wealth, and prosperity.

Richa Agnihotri Family
Poonam Pandey family
Rani Trivedi family
Sharda Saini family

