



HSvj FOUNDATION'S

**BHARATH**  **BYTES**

BRINGING FACTS TO YOUNGER GENERATIONS



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## Introducing HSvj Foundation's first e-magazine

HSvj Foundation is a non-profit organisation that facilitates Bharathia culture, knowledge and tradition to our younger generation. HSvj Foundation has started this e-magazine 'Bharath Bytes' to extend communication of these principles and practises all around the globe. Bharath Bytes will be accessible in digital formats, separating it from different magazines and placing it in its very own class only engaged for the more youthful age. Consistently, readers will look forward to receiving their own copy of the e-magazine, for its fascinating articles and other valuable information. This e-magazine will provide people with the right knowledge to articulate their practises and principles with facts in the current world. Bharath Bytes will cover complex subjects in clear language, which will make it simpler for more youthful individuals to read and comprehend, and apply it wherever in our day-to-day life. This magazine is focused on everybody across the world who follows the Hindu customary practices as well as those who are seeking to gain more knowledge about our rich Sanatana Dharma.

*- HSvj Foundation Team*



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# PHILOSOPHY

## 1. THE NEED FOR PHILOSOPHICAL INVESTIGATION

By: Siddharth Kumar R.



Why must we bother about philosophy? What, indeed, is the necessity of spending time on religion, devotion, and philosophy to the detriment of other mundane issues? Often, we wonder if there is, at all, any rational reason for indulgence in such practices. Apart from preservation of culture and heritage handed down to us by our ancestors, there is a very strong reason to undertake philosophical investigation. In the ancient days, our ancestors were worried about the uncertainty of life, which included misery, sorrow, and evil in its wake. They wondered if an existence, which was devoid of misery and evil, was possible. In this regard, they took to investigation and realised that such an existence was, indeed, possible. Such a state of existence has been termed 'Moksha'. In other words, Moksha is a state, which is bereft of any trace of misery and evil. Therefore, we may safely conclude that philosophical investigation, in the Eastern world, is Moksha-oriented, or soteriological, in nature. Perhaps, no one puts it more tellingly as Srimad Madhwacharya himself in the following words: 'Moksha is not possible without the Grace of the Lord. His Grace is not realised completely without direct vision (Aparoksha Jnana). To realise such a state, philosophical investigation must be undertaken.'

## A STORY FROM TALAVĀKĀRA UPANIṢAD

By: Srinivasan Pranesh

This Upaniṣad occurs in Talavākāra Brāhmaṇa of Sāma Veda and hence the name. As it starts with the word Kena, it is also called Kena Upaniṣad. This Upaniṣad is preached by Chaturmukha Brahma to Rudra. Most of us might have heard that Viṣṇu is our indweller. This Upaniṣad reveals various facts such as all souls and deities are directed by Mukhya Prāṇa Vāyu and this Mukhya Prāṇa Vāyu is also directed by Viṣṇu. That is why we say Hari is Sarvottama and Vāyu is Jīvottama. There is an interesting story in this Upaniṣad, that appears in the 3rd Khaṇḍa of the Upaniṣad. There are a lot of details that could be given about the story, but, let us keep it short and to the point. In previous times, there was a war between Devās and Asurās. Devās won the battle and thought they won on their own strength. They glorified themselves. Viṣṇu, the Supreme God or Parabrahma, wanted to show them their limited powers, as they really won because of the power of their indwelling God Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu appeared in the form of Yakṣa or spirit, they could not figure out who Yakṣa was. Hence, they asked Agni to find out who that Yaksha was. Agni approached Yakṣa.



# PHILOSOPHY continued...

The dialogue between Yaksha and Agni were as follows:

**Yakṣa:** Who are you?

**Agni:** I am Agni also known as Jātaveda.

**Yakṣa:** What power do you possess?

**Agni:** I can burn anything on Earth.

Yakṣa placed a blade of grass in front of Agni and asked him to burn it. Agni approached the blade of grass with all his force but could not. Agni returned to the Devās and said he could not find out the details of Yakṣa. The Devās then sent Vāyu. Vāyu approached Yakṣa. The dialogue between Yakṣa and Vāyu were as follows:

**Yakṣa:** Who are you?

**Vāyu:** I am Vāyu also known as Mātariśva.

**Yakṣa:** What is your strength?

**Vāyu:** I can blow off anything on Earth.

Yakṣa placed a blade of grass in front of Vāyu and asked him to blow it. Vāyu approached the blade of grass with all his force but could not blow it. Vāyu returned to the Devās and said he could not find out the details of Yakṣa. Then Indra himself went to find out who Yakṣa was and Yakṣa disappeared. ***(There is an important point that we have to note in this story. The Vāyu in this story is not Mukhya Prāṇa Vāyu, who is the chief of all. There are 49 other Vāyus according to the Purāṇās. It is to be noted that Agni, the lower most of gods was sent first and Indra was the last. Hence, Vāyu mentioned here should be superior than Agni but inferior to Indra. This story is about Indrādi Devatās. We can infer so because Mukhya Prāṇa Vāyu is the highest among all deities after Viṣṇu and Lakṣmi. He does not have ignorance or any influence of demons. He never had self-pride and so he is much superior to Indra. This article is not for the purpose of exploring who Vāyu is, in order to keep it short and maintain simplicity. The intention is to prove that the Vāyu mentioned in this Upaniṣad is not Mukhya Prāṇa Vāyu as he is much superior than Vāyu mentioned in the Upaniṣad.)*** Indra while thinking of Yakṣa, had Darśana (vision) of Pārvati Devi and questioned about the Yakṣa. Pārvati Devi said, 'That Yakṣa is Para Brahmam (Supreme God) for certain'. She said, 'The Devās became so proud as if they won the battle while the battle was really won by their indweller Para Brahmam (none other than Viṣṇu).' Then, the Indrādi Devatās realised their very limited powers and their complete dependency on Viṣṇu. Take away from the story:

- Viṣṇu is our indweller and controller. All our actions are as directed by Him.
- Viṣṇu is completely independent whereas all others are dependent on Him.
- All our actions and their fruits are to be submitted to Viṣṇu Himself as we are fit for nothing without Him. We can see that the Devatās cannot show their powers even on a blade of grass, without the grace of Viṣṇu indwelling in them. Hence, we shall not take pride of our actions as if we achieved them ourselves.

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# EPICS AND PURANAS

## INTRODUCTION TO PURANAS AND ITHIHAASAS

By: Anuradha Sridhar

In Sanatana Dharma, Itihasas and Puranas have given lessons to guide our lives. If the Vedas, Upanishads and Aagamas are theoretical, the 'Itihasas and Puranas' are practical philosophy. The 'Itihasas and Puranas,' with the help of examples and simple stories, convey the essence of the Vedas and Upanishads. So, without the study of 'Itihasas and Puranas', it is difficult to comprehend the Vedas. Therefore, a superficial study of these stories may appear disconnected to our lives. We can understand the right spirit and essence of its narration only when we make an attempt to study it in depth. Our Dharma shastras are said to be intertwined with our day-to-day life. The Ramayana which we read today comprising of 24,000, slokas is part of the 'Moola Ramayana' comprising of 'One hundred crore slokas' which was preached by Narayana Himself to Brahma. Similarly, we have the Mahabharata comprising of 'One Lakh slokas.' but the 'Moola Mahabharata' composed by Shri Vedavyasa comprises of sixty lakh slokas as well as the 'Pancharatara Aagamas' which are preached by Hayagreeva Roopi Paramatma to Brahma comprising of hundred crore slokas. We have access to only a few thousands. Mahabharata is considered as 'Panchama Veda.' Mahabharata defines itself as:

**dharme cha arthe cha kame cha mokshe cha bharatarshabha |  
yadihaasti tadanyatra yannehasti na tatkvachit ||**

'Whatever is present here, in the Mahabharata about the matters related to dharma, artha, karma and moksha is not present elsewhere.' It is a psychological interpretation. It has science behind it. It has astronomy. There is medical science in this. It has political science and so on. Description about Rama's Puspaka Vimana can be compared to the modern aircraft, Vedavyasa, assisting in the Birth of Kauravas is no less in comparison to the modern test tube babies as well as the rejuvenation of the body of the handicapped monkeys during the war is a fine example of present-day plastic surgery. Ramayana has also gone a step further to bring back to life the dead monkeys with the help of 'Mritha Sanjeevini herbs.' Kardama Prajapati's narration about the shape of the Earth and the vivid descriptions of the cosmos in Bhagavata is far superior in detail to our present astronomy. As far as political life is concerned there is nothing in comparison to the description given in Ramayana about Rama Rajya. Administration by Rama sets an example of true democracy. How Rama lived for the people is narrated elaborately in the Ramayana. There are several stories narrated in the Puranas which reveal the righteous rule by the kings.



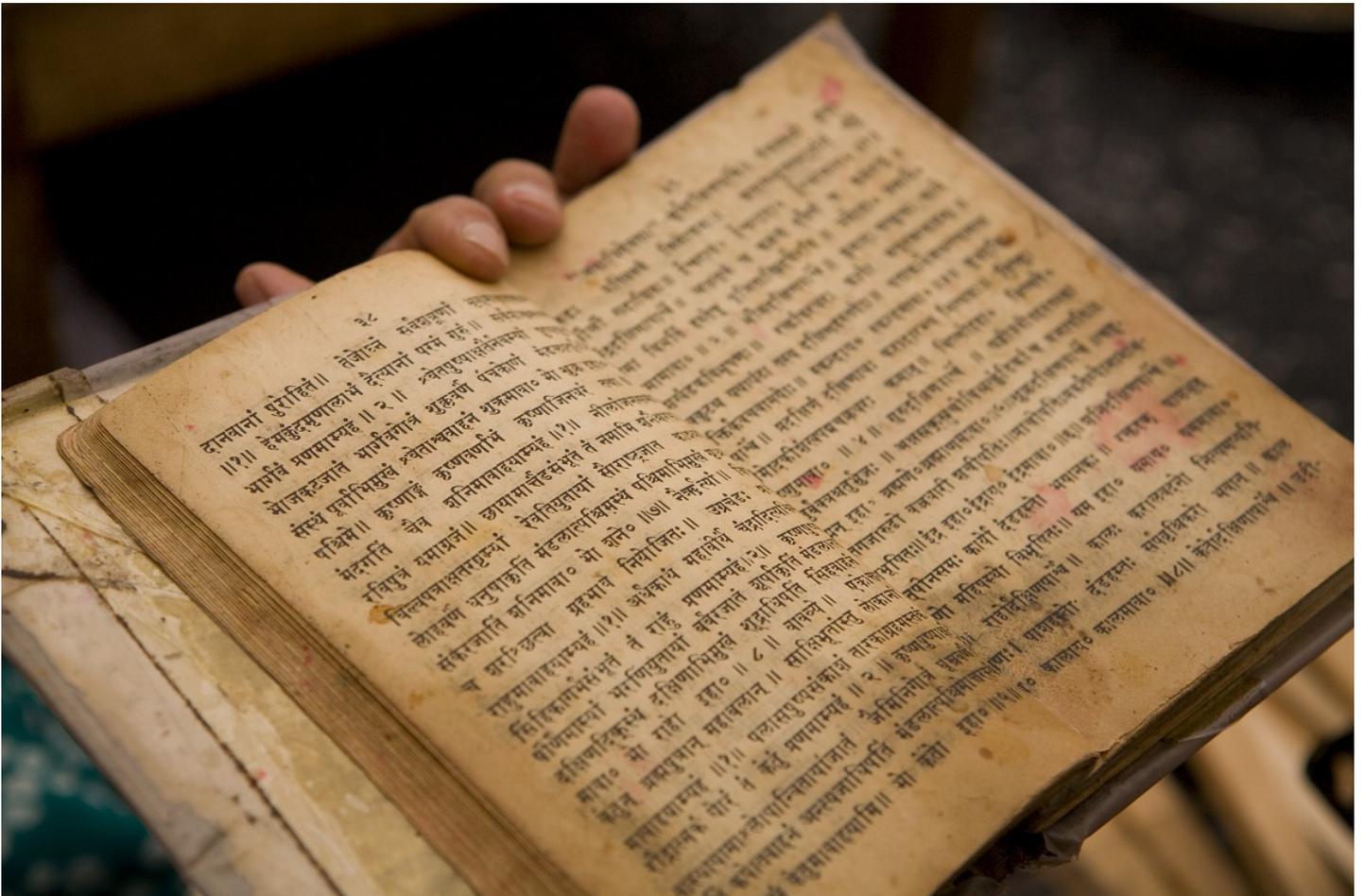
Mahabharata is described as:

## Mahatvaath bharavath vaaca Mahabharatam ucchate

Mahabharata is considered a Magnum opus due to its vastness as well as its contents, being the longest epic in the world. So, to know and learn about our rich culture and heritage, we have to hear about them from the Gurus. That is why among the nine types of Bhakti's, 'Shravana' (hearing) is given importance. Purandara Dasaru says 'Kelide kelo' - Repeatedly listen. But will it not be boring to hear repeatedly the same stories? Jagannatha Dasaru goes a step further and prays to Saraswathi Devi,

## 'Bharata Bhagavata Purana rahasya Tatvagala Arupu karunadali..'

'Oh Mother, with all your compassion, make me understand the secretive philosophical tenets of the Bhagavata, Bharata and other Puranas as I take up to its study.' This will enable us to develop true knowledge which would lead to Bhakti. It also implies that there is so much depth in the meaning that it has to be repeatedly heard for better understanding. During the time of Madhvacharya, there was a debate on the meaning of a particular phrase from the Upanishads. Shri Madhwacharya concluded that both meanings were correct. He said that every word, every phrase of the Vedas has three meanings. We have to refer them to context. Similarly, Mahabharata has ten meanings. So repeated reading and listening to the stories of our Ithihasas and Puranas from the right Gurus is essential. Therefore, in forthcoming issues let us learn more about our 'Ithihasa Puranas' with the help of 'Character analysis and stories' which will be relevant to our day-to-day life.

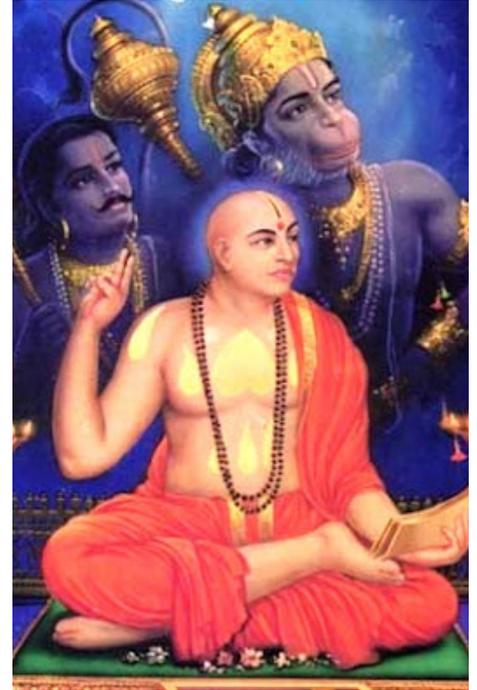


# GREAT PONTIFFS AND ACHARYA'S

**By: Lakshmiathiraja Sathiyarayanan**

Who is Vaayu Bhagavan? Madhva Siddhanta says Shri Hari is Sarvottama - Shri Hari is the Supreme Being; Vaayu Jeevottama- Vaayu is best among the Jivas. A story is narrated in the Upanishads to understand this phenomenon of Vaayu Jivottamatva. As it is a well-known factor that the importance and significance of a person are better understood in their absence, it is said in the Upanishads that a body was put to test to prove who amongst the Devatas is best. There is a set of 'Devatas ' who have control of specific senses in the body and are known as 'Abhimaani Devatas'.

Abhimaani for 'eyes' is Surya, 'Dig Devatas' for ears is Chandra, Agni for the mouth, Rudra (Shiva) for the mind and so on. The main Devata among them is Mukhya Praana who controls the very breath - the inhaling and exhaling function of the body. So it is decided that one in whose absence the body is totally deactivated, he is declared to be the most important among them all. Surya is the 'abhimaani' for the eyes, and so when he leaves, the body becomes blind. When the dig Devatas leave, it becomes deaf and when Agni leaves it becomes dumb. Yet, the breathing function goes on, and the body will still be alive with the jiva in the body. Finally, when Mukhya Praana also leaves, the body falls dead and is known as a corpse - says Saint Sripadarajar in his composition Madhwanaama.



“ Karanabhimaani suraru dehava bidalu Kurda kivida mooka nendenisuva. ”  
Parama Mukhya Praana tolagalaa dehavanu aritu penavendu pelvaru bhuda jana.  
Jaya jaya jagath traana jagadolage sutraana akhila Guna sadhaama Madhva Naama.

**To be continued...**

## ANCIENT HISTORY

**By: Sivaram Krishna**

Contemporary history generally has a total period of 5000 years, but as per scientist's, humans are surviving for 150 000 years. As per Sanatana Dharma/Hinduism in kali yuga, we are currently in the 5112th year. So, we are dealing with the prehistoric period. We have to believe in pramana's as this is the only reference for the topic.

Both Christianity and Islam have a very small history of 2000 years. Hence, it's ruled out from the prehistoric period. To convince, let's take Bharat/Hindustan for references. Usually, in every conversation about modernity and rational thinking, this phrase is uttered: "we can't have a primitive mind and go to the Stone Age". Let us deep dive and think, "Does this phrase make sense?" With reasonable evidences, we can say "Indian's were not primitive and cavemen" The word primitive is used because modernity at present represents a formal English education, rational thinking, tight clothes, booted shoes, high rise buildings, electricity, modern defence systems etc. Do these really help for human species to progress in a sustainable way? During the prehistoric period, each section of society was engaged in their own Varna Duties and responsibilities (Do not confuse Varna with the British term caste.) Brahmins were vedic scholars, priests and teachers. Kshatriyas: rulers, warriors and administrators. Vaishyas: Business and merchants. Shudras: service providers.

# ANCIENT HISTORY continued...

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During those times, the chance of unemployment was very low and everyone could satisfy their needs at ease. For example, think about a grocery seller who will teach his son the skill at a young age and can develop his skill and survive. "What's the need for formal education?" Minimalistic living: A Brahmin can make his living only by the dhana he receives. There was no rat race to chase money. There was no electricity back then and so nature was preserved. Now, we have electricity and of course, it has positive effects, but the negatives far outweigh the positives. We have exhausted the coal resources in thermal power plants. Hydroelectricity power plants are seasonal and solar panels cannot meet the huge electricity demand of the whole population. We have built nuclear power plants and keep fearing rival countries. Just by targeting this power plant, the whole city can be destroyed. Disposing nuclear wastes safely is another challenge. Technology may give comfort but it is dangerous to life. Clothes: Shastra's clearly say that we need to use cotton as this is the most sustainable way of life due to its biodegradability. Buildings: Most of the buildings were built on stone and lime mixtures.

**PraveenMohan. (2018). Rock MELTING Technology at Ramappa Temple, India [YouTube Video]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yaRwGIWLg28>**

Joint family systems were one of the finest and there was no need for the creation of child care and old age homes. Most of the modern confusion in family systems is a result of living together. Joint family systems gave values and discipline which kept the nation in order. Nowadays there is vigilance everywhere, fingerprints and gadgets for safety measures. During pre-historic times, even if these technologies were absent, kings had wars and fighting machinery in dharmic ways. Shri Kanchi Mahaperiyavar says, in a work named Samaraangana Sootram, a king named Bhojarajan gave flight-making techniques. This was even before the proposal of Bernoulli's theorem, the principle behind flight take-off and landing, and even before the Wright brothers invented flight. But, it seems, Bhojarajan clearly said in his work, that he did not practically teach anyone flight-making techniques as people may use it for war and destruction rather than using it for good. Kanchi Periyavar says, now Bhojarajan's concern has come true. (Referred from Srinivasa Pranesh Swamy article: "Be selfless to get what you want"). We had classic debates in the prehistoric period and most of them had a philosophic mind rather than an ideologist mindset. To conclude, we may prefer English education systems, electricity and sky-touching buildings, but these make human's run behind illusionary modernity and pushes us into the dark age.



## INTRODUCTION TO AYURVEDA

By: **Dr. Akila Guruprasad BAMS**

|| Ayurvedaha Brahma Smruthaha || Vagbhata

Lord Brahma (the Hindu God of Creation) is said to have conceived Ayurveda in his consciousness, passed it on to his disciple Daksha Prajapati, who originated from Lord Brahma's thumb, and was among the first celestial figures assigned the task of maintaining the universe.

The evolution of Ayurveda comes from the Vedas, namely: Rig Veda, Sama Veda, Yajur Veda and Atharvana Veda.

Ayurveda is considered the Upaveda/classification of this Veda.

From the Gods, the knowledge was passed on to the three great sages Dhanvanthri (Divodasa), Bharadwaja and Kashyapa. They set up different schools of Ayurveda.

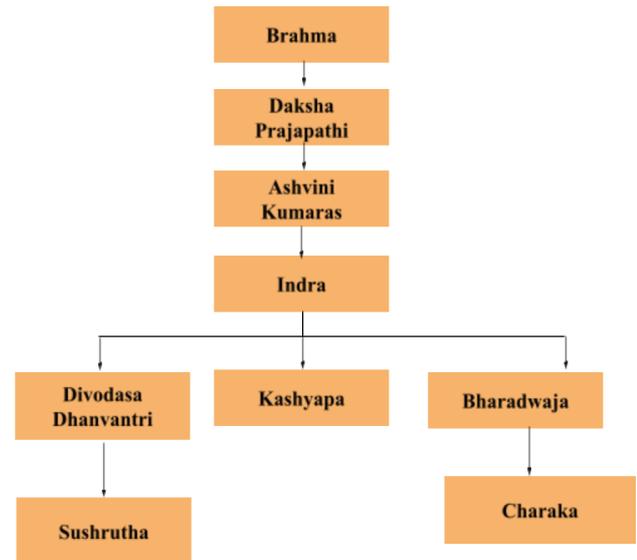
Ayurveda comprises of two words - Ayu + Veda = "Science of Life"

The emphasis is on the maintenance of one's health (physical and mental health) so as to prevent the onset of roga/disease.

Panchamahabhutas (space, air, fire, water and earth) manifest in the human body as Tridoshas (Vata, Pitta and Kapha). These three govern the creation, maintenance and destruction of bodily tissues as well as the assimilation and elimination.

Manas - Ayurveda gives special status to Manas. The mind is responsible for an array of functions like perception, taking the right decisions, thinking and understanding.

Ayurveda blends our modern lifestyle with Ancient wisdom and helps us to lead a happy, stress-free and disease-free life.



# FOOD AND HYGIENE

By: Anuradha Sridhar

The food that we intake impacts us in two ways. In the body it gets divided into three parts. While one-part energises the body with its nutrients, the second part has subtle effects on our minds, while the gross remains gets excreted. Because the food affects the mind, the 'shastras' warn us to be careful with our food habits. That is why Shastras insist on 'Satvik food' cooked at home. In the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna stresses on two factors. He says food habits should be regulated, and its impact on the body should be joyful and pleasurable.

**yuktāhāra-vihārasya yukta-ceṣṭasya karmasu  
yukta-svapnāvabodhasya yogo bhavati duḥkha-hā – Adhyaya**

He, whose food habits are regulated, can progress in the path of goodness. That is why one is practiced to take sanctified food as 'prasada'. Moreover, Krishna says,

**āyuh-sattva-balārogya- sukha-prīti-vivardhanāḥ  
rasyāḥ snigdhaḥ sthirā hṛdyā āhārāḥ sāttvika-priyāḥ - Adhyaya 16**

Food is also classified as 'Satva', 'Rajas' and 'Tamas.' Eating foods that possess 'Satva Guna' results in the mode of goodness. But when foods are excessively bitter, spicy, salty, sour, pungent, it results in discomfort and misery culminating in sickness and disease. They are of 'Rajo Guna' - the mode of passion. Food that is kept for more than three hours is said to become stale and loses its flavour and nutrients. It is known as 'gatarasyam' which harms the body. There are several examples in the 'Ithihaasa and Puranas' which can be quoted to show the impact of the food on the mind. Bhishma, in Mahabharata was no ordinary person. He is the incarnation of one of the 'Ashta Vasus' named 'Dyu.' He had tutelage from Parashurama, 'saakshaath avatara' of Narayana and was very well versed in all 'shastras.' Such a great Bhishma, chose to be silent when the Kauravas humiliated Draupadi in public. Why didn't he raise his voice against the injustice? He had promised himself to protect the 'Kuru Simhasana' from injustice. Then why did he not stop such injustice happening before his eyes? The answer to this is given by Bhishma himself after the 'Kurukshetra' war. It was the same Bhishma, who was lying on bed of arrows pierced during the war by Arjuna. He was waiting for Uttarayana Kaala to give up his mortal coil. At that time Krishna brought the Pandavas and Draupadi to the battle field and made Dharmaraja to seek Dharmopadesha from Bhishma. At that time Bhishma imparted various Dharma Upadesha which included several topics like 'Ashram Dharma, Kshatriya Dharma, Raja Dharma, Stree Dharma and so on. He also recited the Vishnu Sahasranama. Draupadi and the Pandavas were surprised. They wondered what had happened to Bhishma's consciousness on 'Dharma when injustice was done to Draupadi? For which Bhishma himself replied, 'At that time I was having the food given by wicked Duryodhana. I was at his mercy. That had affected my mind. My intellect became blurred and my knowledge got extinguished, like flames on the ocean. He claimed the food to be the main cause.' At that time Dharma Raja asked as to how he was able to talk Dharma now, for which Bhishma said that Arjuna's arrows drained all the bad blood from his body. Now he was purified and so knowledge had once again surfaced in him.



# ASTROLOGY

## ASTROLOGY - A COMMON MAN'S GUIDE

By: Dr V Krishnakanth PhD

I offer this compilation at the feet of the Supreme God Narayana, who is known as 'Hiranya' while creating all the living beings in this entire cosmos, is 'Hari' while protecting them and 'Sankara' during annihilation.

I delve deep into the ocean of 'Astrology' which is like the vast Milky- Ocean (Ksheera Sagara) and try to share the little knowledge that I have gathered from it, after bowing down to Him, the Supreme Being, possessing all auspicious attributes, who is Timeless, very subtle, beyond comprehension and is the very foundation for all living and non-living beings in the cosmos and in Whom exist the entire world.

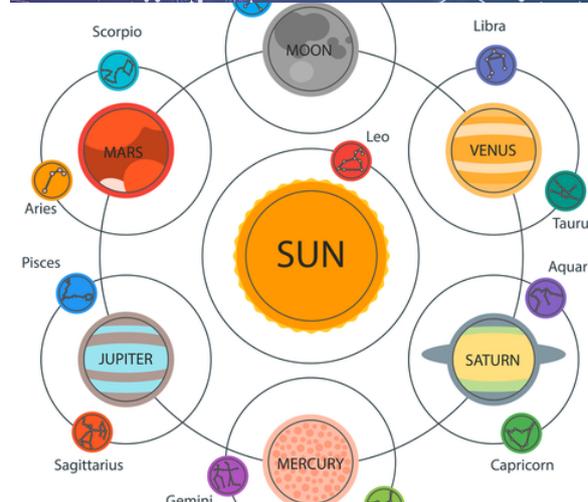
In the beginning, on command by Shri Mahavishnu, Chaturmukha Brahma created the world in tune with the Vedas and brought into being, species ranging from low consciousness to highly evolved human species with six senses. Parallely, he also gave knowledge for developing good human values and the four Vedas for their intellectual growth (Vidya + Buddhi).

'Vid' in Sanskrit means 'To Know', 'Vedas' meaning 'Transcendental knowledge' (Spiritual Knowledge).

Vedas are divided into six parts.

1. Siksha: Phonetics - It deals with the pronunciation of the letters and 'mantras'
2. Vyakarana : Grammar - Grammar in the Mantras
3. Chandas: Prosody - the meter in the Mantras
4. Niruktam: Etymology - The origin or the root of the words which brings out their meaning
5. Jyothisham: Astronomy \_ Space Science - It is 'shastras' related to Space and also tells us about the significance of 'Time' for uttering the 'Mantras.'
6. Kalpam: Rituals - Mantras related to rituals and their details.

'Astrology' is an important aspect in Space science. It is a 'Shaastra' that predicts the 'Past, Present and Future.' This knowledge is essential for better understanding and benefit of the Vedas and Vedangas. Without this knowledge, Vedas will merely remain theoretical, without any practical application. Astrology is beginningless. This scientific knowledge that emerged during the creation was preached by Brahma to Sage Gargi and was passed on to other sages and thus spread to the entire world. Calculation in Astrology is based on the stars and planets. It is very minute, specific and is complicated. It is also very subtle, beyond scientific comprehension and is related to the happenings on this earth in relation to human life. Human birth is given to undergo the effects of 'Karma.' This 'Karma' is very individual. It helps to determine the strength and weaknesses of the individual. Horoscope is based on the date of birth, time and place of a person which determines the consequences of the sinful and meritorious deeds of the past. With the help of this, one can know the details of the configuration of the stars and planets on that particular year, a particular month, date, day, birth star, 'thithi' (phase of the moon), Yoga and Karana. With these particulars, events that can occur during the life time of the person can be determined and explained. However mere indications by the planets alone does not yield results. It should be coupled with confidence and faith in the divine. Benefit of any action can be reaped when performed within the discipline of divine laws.



# SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

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By: Jagan Krishnamoorthy

## WHAT IS ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE?

Artificial intelligence (AI) is a wide-running branch of computer science concerned with building smart machines capable of performing tasks that normally require human knowledge.

## AI APPROACHES AND CONCEPTS

A decade after breaking the Nazi encryption machine Enigma and assisting the Allies Forces win World War II, Alan Turing made a basic inquiry: "Can machines think?". Turing's paper "Processing Machinery and Intelligence" (1950), and its resulting Turing Test (the Turing test is a type of test named after Alan Turing to figure out whether a computer is able to think like a human being), set up the basic objective and vision of computerised reasoning. The sweeping objective of man-made brainpower has led to many inquiries and discussions. To such an extent, no singular definition of the field is widely accepted. To completely comprehend AI, we should look beneath the surface. The positive side is that innovation is making machines more intelligent. Artificial intelligence is the minds uniting quantum computing, nanotechnology, medical technology, brain-machine interface, advanced mechanics, aviation, 5G and more. It is amplifying human integrity as well as interrupting the foundations of healthcare, military, entertainment, education, marketing and manufacturing.

Future articles will include the discussion of **Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Power** written by **Rajiv Malhotra** who is an internationally acclaimed author and public intellectual. He combines his background in physics and computer science with his quarter century of path-breaking research on India's historical and future place in the world. His work covers a broad spectrum of mind sciences, civilisations, geopolitics as well as the future of India.



# YOGA

**By: V. Lalitha Yoga Practitioner**

Yoga is an ancient practice that has crossed borders and is currently practised by millions of people all around the world.

Yoga can be considered as India's gift to the world. It was developed and practised by Indian philosophical and spiritual geniuses.

The beginning of yoga was developed by the Indus-Sarasvati civilisation in Northern India over 5000 years ago. In the 1920s, archaeologists discovered evidence of the tantric civilisation, here they found depictions engraved in soapstone seals that strongly resemble yogi like figures.

The word yoga was first mentioned in the oldest sacred texts known as the Rig Veda and also referenced in many Upanishads. The first known formal appearance of the word 'YOGA' with the same meaning as the modern term in the Katha Upanishad. Probably composed between the 5th and 3rd centuries BCE, the Vedic priests Rishikesh is said to be the birthplace of yoga.

Maharishi Patanjali is often regarded as the father of modern yoga. According to several theories, there are 196 collections of sutras by Patanjali. It is said that these sutras are written at least 1700 years ago.

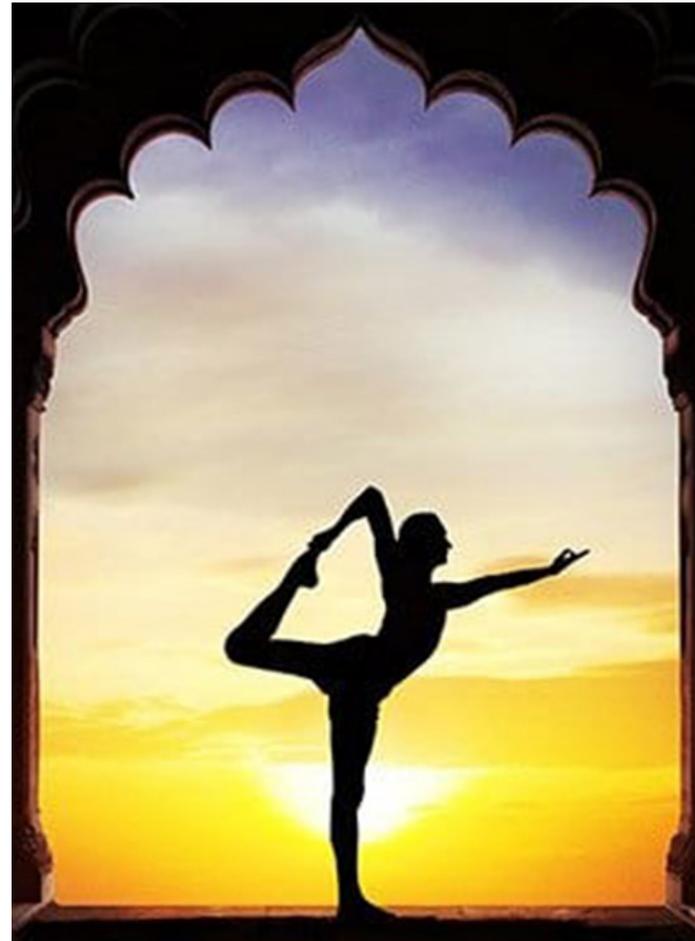
Patanjali enumerates the eight limbs of stages of yoga for the quest of the soul. They are:

1. Yama (Universal moral commandments)
2. Niyama (Self-purification by discipline)
3. Asana (Posture)
4. Pranayama (Rhythmic control of breath)
5. Pratyahara (withdrawal and emancipation of the mind from the domination of the senses and exterior objects)
6. Dharana (Concentration)
7. Dhyana (Meditation)
8. Samadhi (A state of super-consciousness brought about by profound meditation)

In the sixth chapter of Bhagavad Gita, which is the most important authority on yoga philosophy, Sri Krishna explains to Arjuna the meaning of yoga as a deliverance from contact with pain and sorrow.

So, yoga is essentially a spiritual discipline based on an extremely subtle science that focuses on bringing harmony between the mind and body. It is an art and science of healthy living.

In the coming chapters, we discuss further how this yoga benefits our mind and body, and how it is very helpful for diseases.



# CURRENT AFFAIRS

## THE IMPORTANCE OF CURRENT AFFAIRS

**By: Jagan Krishnamoorthy**

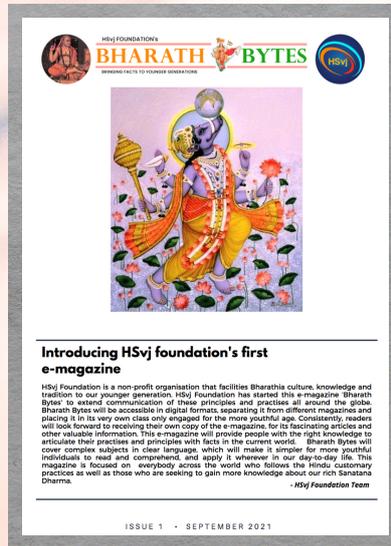
Current affairs plays a vital role in today's younger generation especially in the current modern world. Every individual must be aware of what is happening locally, within their state, nationally as well as globally. Regardless of many changes in the media and information revolution, the knowledge of current affairs has barely changed. In today's society we are so less concerned about what is happening around us in our world today. In fact on average, people would only be able to name their country leader or whatever major event that is circulating around the world. It is important to be aware of issues regardless of whether we are directly influenced or not.

Current affairs mainly encompasses news, information and events that is occurring around the world. It also covers various topics ranging from sports, business, money, education, employment, crime, ethics and so on. The news that you obtain may be from the television, magazines, radio, blogs, social media platforms or even word of mouth. People should be aware and grounded with current affairs as globalisation has transformed the entire world into a global village. As such, every event happening in any corner of the world has started influencing people. Thus, it is important to identify what type of information is reliable and credible and what type of information we should ignore. Future articles will consist of current affairs based on different states around India as well as current affairs around the world providing clarity to think, analyse and act.



### **HOW TO LEARN MORE ABOUT CURRENT AFFAIRS:**

- **CONSTANTLY WATCH CREDIBLE AND UNBIASED NEWS**
- **FIND OUT ABOUT CRITICAL ISSUES RELATED TO POLITICS, THE SOCIETY OR THE ECONOMY AND CAREFULLY ANALYSE EACH SITUATION**
- **LOOK AT OTHERS' VIEWS ON CERTAIN ISSUES AND COMPARE THEM WITH YOUR OPINIONS**



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# ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

## ADHYATMA - WAY OF LIFE

By: Anuradha Sridhar

Everyone wants to always experience happiness without an iota of sorrow at any point in time! Nobody asks why 'happiness'? It is a goal by itself. (Swayam Purushartha). On the contrary, our happiness experienced here is mixed with sorrow. It is called 'Loukika Sukha.' The uninterrupted joy which we seek is known as 'Aloukika sukha.' One needs to have 'Punya' to enjoy both kinds of 'Sukhas.' It can be obtained only by following 'Dharmachrane.' The equation is 'Dharma = Punya, Phala(Good merits) = Sukha. Adharma = 'Paapa Phala' and (demerits) = Dukha. Life is a bundle of 'Punya and Paapas.'

How do we know what is 'Punya and Paapa?' What is the basis of 'Punya and Paapa?' If we claim it to be a set of 'Rules and Regulations, they have limitations. What is right for one person may be wrong for another person. What is right for Muslim countries may be wrong for western countries. So, 'Right' and 'Wrong' are relative. This cannot deliver justice because 'Rules and Regulations are limited to time and place. So, to overcome this problem, there are set of International Laws which is common for all. Similarly, we have 'Universal laws.' It is applicable to the entire humanity. They are the "Shaastras". While the International Laws condemn the offence and pronounce the punishment, the 'Universal Law' is very subtle. It goes a step further to define the very nature of the offence and deals with it pertaining to every circumstance. That is why in the Bhagavad Gita Krishna says in Adhyaya 16 - Sloka 24, '**asmaat Shaastram Pramaanam Kaarya (A)Kaarya vyavastitau**'.

Therefore, let the scriptures be your authority in determining what should be done and what should not be done. Understand the scriptural injunctions and teachings, and then perform your actions in this world accordingly. '**gahanaath karmano gathi:**' 4- 17

The truth about 'Karma' is profound and difficult to understand. So, based on these aspects, we have to understand that 'Sanatana Dharma,' is a way of Life followed in 'Bharata Desha' which is based on the oldest form of literature called the Vedas. They are recorded in Sanskrit and are eternal, although it is given a date by many of the modern thinkers. They are relevant to mankind at any given point in time or place. Knowledge is eternal. It has always existed and will exist. When Science establishes facts with the help of structured study, they are only 'Discoveries' of what already exists. Likewise, the existing knowledge was revealed and the people to whom the texts were revealed were revered as 'Rishis.'

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The Vedas are so vast that they had to be classified into many branches. The final part of each of them is popularly known as 'Vedanta' or 'Upanishads'. This work was done by God Himself in Shri Vedaavyasa avatara. The Vedas and Upanishads emphasise the ultimate Truth and guide to achieving Self-Realisation and God-Realisation. Apart from them, there are Pancharatras, the 18 Puranas and 18 Upa - Puranas, the two famous 'Itihasas' namely Mahabharata and Ramayana. All of them collectively are known as 'Aagamas.' The Puranas are compilations of stories, hymns of praise, philosophy and rituals. One has to be very careful in comprehending the stories that appear in the Puranas. Superficially they may seem irrational but their analysis will give a profound meaning. Certain episodes may appear contradicting to something said elsewhere. Interestingly Acharya Madhva gives importance to both Puranas and Itihasas as 'Shaastras. However, he warns and guides the spiritual seeker to learn 'Baasha Traya' before the study of the Puranas and Itihasas. 'Basha Traya' are 'Samadhi Basha', 'Darshana Basha' and 'Guhya Basha.' These guides help to interpret the episodes in the Puranas in an appropriate manner. He has also given clarity to many of the episodes, by highlighting the various etymological meaning of the words thus rendering their true purport. If these are the philosophical aspects of 'Sanatana Dharma' there is 'Dharma Shaastras' which are 'Sacred Laws.' This includes several rituals, customs and beliefs. They are habitually transferred from one generation to the other. But unfortunately, over the period of time, they seem to have lost their significance and has become very mechanical in several households. As a result, it is overlooked as 'Meaningless practices.' So, we have to attempt to know their purpose and significance which would instil conviction in their practice. Thus, customs and traditions should not become a burden, but a joyful expression of our inner self.

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15 August 2021 ( Sunday )

