



MARG

A Path to Hindu Heritage

RENEW YOUR 2025 SUBSCRIPTION



Maha Shivratri is on February 25, 2025

THE MARG FOUNDATION

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Post Office Box 714
Gaithersburg, MD 20884-0714
PH: 301-351-3164
MargFoundation@gmail.com

Suresh Chander
Executive Director & Secretary

Rameshwar Paul
Chairman Emeritus

Directors

Sant Gupta ♦ Kshemendra Paul

Editor-In-Chief & Publisher

Suresh Chander

MARG ADVISORS

Anli Pendse ♦ Arjun Mendhiratta ♦ Veena Kapoor ♦
Rateebhai Patel ♦ Ved Chander



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Views expressed in **Marg** do not necessarily reflect the views of the Foundation, its directors, or the Marg editors.

Marg welcomes original articles for possible publication in the following areas: Dharma, Philosophy, Scriptures, and Culture; Hindu way of life; growing up as Hindu in America; Holistic living; problems and needs of multicultural Hindu families; and materials, including stories for the young readers.

We also invite our readers to send their comments regarding the **Marg** articles, or about other issues falling within the scope of **Marg**. We reserve the right to select, abbreviate, and edit for clarity submitted materials to conform to the editorial policy of **Marg** and the available space.



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ADVERTISE IN MARG

MARG is distributed nationwide; however, a large majority of readers are in the greater Washington DC, Baltimore Metro area, and Virginia. MARG magazine offers an excellent opportunity to publicize your message to the Indian community and as well as supporting the Marg Foundation – a worthy cause. The rates of advertisement are as follows:

FULL PAGE	9.6" H x 7.2" W*	\$300 per MARG - Issue
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If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Suresh Chander (301-351-3164) or email at suresh.margfoundation@gmail.com or MargFoundation@gmail.com

20 YEARS OF THE MARG FOUNDATION

It is my profound pleasure to inform all our **MARG** readers and supporters that, as we start the year 2025, the Marg Foundation has successfully completed 20 years of publishing **MARG** magazine.

In June 2005, six people (Dr. Rameshwar Paul, Dr. R.S. Dwivedi, Late Mr. Naresh Sayal, Mr. Arvind Gupta, Mr. Kshemendra Paul, and Dr. Suresh Chander) got together at Rameshwar-ji's house in Gaithersburg, MD with a vision **to promote the awareness, understanding, and appreciation of Hindu heritage and values among the Indian Community.**

After a couple of brain-storming sessions, it was decided to publish a bi-monthly magazine "**MARG - A Path to Hindu Heritage**" to achieve the Foundation's vision. The first issue of MARG was released in September 2005 and since then the Foundation has continued to publish MARG every two months and also provided a wide range of other services, like (1) Seminars, workshops, and presentations on Hindu Awareness and related topics in support of its mission; (2) maintaining a panel of Speakers on Hindu Dharma; (3) publishing a variety of hand-outs on Hindu Dharma-related topics.

I sincerely thank all of you -the MARG readers - because without your encouragement, support, and input the Foundation could not have continued to publish the magazine and provided other services.

As we celebrate the completion of 20 years of the Marg Foundation, I make a special request:

(a) If you reside in the Washington DC metropolitan area, please consider joining the board of the Marg Foundation.

(b) If any of you (Regardless of where you live) would like to participate in the Marg Foundation's "Contributing Editor Program," please write to me for more information at: suresh.margfoundation@gmail.com

Also, I request all of you to **renew your 2025 subscription by January 31, 2025.** This will help us plan properly and adequately for the year 2025. Please use the form on page 16 for mailing your Subscription/Donation check.

Thanks,

Suresh Chander

Executive Director

"WISHING EVERYONE A VERY PEACEFUL AND HAPPY NEW YEAR"

SOAR BEYOND WALKING, DREAM, AND DEEP SLEEP

Swami Jyotirmayananda

Throughout all embodiments in the soul's journey towards the Absolute Self, the three familiar states of waking, dream and deep sleep continue to alternate. Bound by ignorance, one must experience those three states of consciousness until the attainment of Liberation, when they go beyond the three. Until then, according to Vedanta, all experiences of the soul—pleasure and pain, gain and loss, birth and death—can be classified in these three states. Therefore, waking, dreaming and deep sleep have profound implications in Yoga philosophy.

Let us explore these states one by one, beginning with the waking state. You consider yourself awake when you operate through your senses, when you use your mind, when your physical body is active, and when you come into contact with the objects in the world of time and space. However, from a profound point of view, a person is truly awake only when he has developed aspiration for Self-realization. Otherwise, he just lives on, creating illusions and entanglements, as if half asleep.

When you become tired, physically and men-tally, and want to sleep, you retire from waking realities. The process of sleep is mysterious. Tamasic the guna or mode of the mind that causes inertia, and when it begins to operate, it makes your body heavy. Wherever you are, you feel as if you need to let go of all the

weight of your body. Your head begins to droop, and you enter either into dream or deep sleep.

Entry into dream can be best described by the analogy of projecting images on a screen. Suppose images are continually being projected. If the lights are on in the room, the images will not be seen. But as the lights are dimmed, the images will slowly appear until they become well enough defined for the observer to totally enjoy the projection.

It is like a dream. The causal plane of the mind is continually projecting impressions and images “based on numerous karmas of the past. In the waking state, however, the intellect, which is the source of light in the mind, is constantly screening those projections. But as the light of the intellect is withdrawn with the coming of sleep, those images that had no meaning when the intellect was bright now become visible and alive on the mental screen.

It is the intellect, the power that organizes and evaluates things, that coordinates thoughts that weaves the web of our waking reality. However, even the reality that we normally experience when awake is a relative reality; even our waking experiences are not absolute reality. Simply because we touch a table and feel it is solid, or simply because we are bumped when we walk into a wall does not mean that either the table or the

wall is real. In a dream, if you try to go through a wall, it may break your head. While you are in dream, the experiences you have become very real. It is only when you wake up that you realize that your experience was not real, but illusory. Similarly, as I will explain later, waking experiences are as illusory to one who is enlightened as dream experiences are to a person who is awake in the normal sense.

A parable is told of a great king, Janaka, who once had a strange dream. In his dream he experienced that he was defeated and that his enemies drove him out of his kingdom. He had no refuge anywhere, and no one gave him any sustenance. So, he became like an ordinary beggar, lost somewhere in the street. Feeling terribly hungry, he began to beg for food, but no one gave him any. When someone eventually gave him food, another person came along and threw it away. And so, he felt completely miserable. Within just one dream, one who was the emperor of emperors had such a humiliating experience!

When he woke up, Janaka was ashamed to tell that dream to anyone. However, wanting to know the message behind the dream, he presented a question to his ministers and attendants. He said, “Tell me, what is real, this or that?” But he didn’t explain what he meant thereby. And so, no one understood him until a Sage named Ashtavakra stepped

EXPANSION OF THE SUPREME SELF

Swami Lalitananda

The concept of worldly success for many people is limited to one's selfish, egoistic interests. People work hard most of their life for material and financial gain, for keeping their relatives happy, and for acquiring social prestige and recognition. But this thought process builds limitations within one's consciousness. Unable or unwilling to relate to those individuals outside of their own family and friends, they confine their compassion and kindness only to people they love or consider helpful towards their own selfish fulfillment.

Incapable of sharing the joys and sorrows of people outside their circle, at times a person can become indifferent and even unreasonably cruel to others. "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" (Luke 6:31) does not occur to them. As a result, their tender creeper of spiritual aspiration grows in a dark cave devoid of the sunlight of God. Eventually the joy they once glimpsed in life withers

away and their creative ability becomes impoverished and pale.

For so many people, the principles of virtue are subordinate to the demands of ego. Whoever pleases one's ego is "good." Whatever action serves the interest and delight of one's ego is "right." Whatever produces egoistic happiness is considered "virtuous." "It does not matter whether the feelings or opinions of others are obstructed. Thus, a person with this type of vision continues existing in the narrow confines of selfishness. Despite all their efforts, they never reach a state of genuine inner joy.

In the New Testament a man approached Jesus, asking, "Master, which is the greatest commandment?" Jesus replied, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the laws

and the prophets." (Matthew: 22:35-40)

Therefore, turn your vision to God and strive to give respect and honor to all, engaging in selfless service under the guidance of a Guru who is adept in this art. Along with this, practice a harmonious blend of meditation, devotion to God and enquiry into "Who Am I?" Yogic arts that will begin to reveal the mysteries of life. It is through the integral unfoldment of your personality that you can rise beyond the ego and its limited concepts, allowing you to glimpse the cosmic stream of life that abides in all. This is the basic movement towards God, towards Self-realization. It is through this process of ego-transcending expansion that the sublime ideals of life will bloom in all their glory, allowing you to soar in the expansion of the Supreme Self.



Courtesy: <http://www.yrf.org>

Life is purely pious and always purposeful!

Live up to your good conscience without fear!

'Life is a lesson' - taught by grinding years!

WHY MAHA SHIVRATRI IS CELEBRATED AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

Sri Sudhguru

Mahashivratri is of great significance for all those who aspire for the Ultimate. May this night become an exuberant awakening for you.

Maha Shivratri, “The Great Night of Shiva” is a night of special spiritual significance. Sadhguru explains why Maha Shivratri is celebrated and how we can make use of this possibility.

In the Indian culture, at one time, there used to be 365 festivals in a year. In other words, they just needed an excuse to celebrate every day of the year. These 365 festivals were ascribed to different reasons, and for different purposes of life. They were to celebrate various historical events, victories, or certain situations in life like sowing, planting, and harvesting. For every situation there was a festival. But Maha Shivratri is of a different significance.

WHY IS MAHA SHIVRATRI CELEBRATED

Maha Shivratri, “The Great Night of Shiva” is the most significant event in India’s spiritual calendar.

The fourteenth day of every lunar month or the day before the new moon is known as Shivratri. Among all the twelve Shivratri that occur in a calendar year, Maha Shivratri, the one that occurs in February-March is of the most spiritual significance. On this night, the northern

hemisphere of the planet is positioned in such a way that there is a natural upsurge of energy in a human being. This is a day when nature is pushing one towards one’s spiritual peak. It is to make use of this, that in this tradition, we established a certain festival which is nightlong. To allow this natural upsurge of energies to find their way, one of the fundamentals of this nightlong festival is to ensure that you remain awake with your spine vertically throughout the night.

IMPORTANCE OF MAHA SHIVRATRI

Maha Shivratri is very significant for people who are on the spiritual path. It is also very significant for people who are in family situations, and also for the ambitious in the world. People who live in family situations observe Maha Shivratri as Shiva’s wedding anniversary. Those with worldly ambitions see that day as the day Shiva conquered all his enemies.

But, for the ascetics, it is the day he became one with Mount Kailash. He became like a mountain – absolutely still. In the yogic tradition, Shiva is not worshipped as a God, but considered as the Adi Guru, the first Guru from whom the science of Yoga originated. After

many millennia in meditation, one day he became absolutely still. That day is Maha Shivratri. All movement in him stopped and he became utterly still, so ascetics see Maha Shivratri as the night of stillness.

SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE OF MAHA SHIVRATRI

Legends apart, why this day and night are held with such importance in the yogic traditions is because of the possibilities it presents to a spiritual seeker. Modern science has gone through many phases and arrived at a point today where they are out to prove to you that everything that you know as life, everything that you know as matter and existence, everything that you know as the cosmos and galaxies, is just one energy which manifests itself in millions of ways.

This scientific fact is an experiential reality in every yogi. The word “yogi” means one who has realized the oneness of existence. When I say “yoga,” I am not referring to any one particular practice or system. All longing to know the unbounded, all longing to know the oneness in the existence is yoga. The night of Maha Shivratri offers a person an opportunity to experience this.

SHIVRATRI THE DARKEST NIGHT OF THE MONTH

Shivratri, is the darkest day of the month. Celebrating Shivratri on a monthly basis, and the particular day, Maha Shivratri, almost seems like celebration of darkness. Any logical mind would resist darkness and naturally opt for light. But the word “Shiva” literally means “that which is not.” “That which is,” is existence and creation. “That which is not” is Shiva. “That which is not” means, if you open your eyes and look around, if your vision is for small things, you will see lots of creation. If your vision is really looking for big things, you will see the biggest presence in the existence is a vast emptiness.

A few spots which we call galaxies are generally much noticed, but the vast emptiness that holds them does not come into everybody’s notice. This vastness, this unbounded emptiness, is what is referred to as Shiva. Today, modern science also proves that everything comes from nothing and goes back to nothing. It is in this context that Shiva, the vast emptiness or nothingness, is referred to as the great lord, or Mahadeva.

Every religion, every culture on this planet has always been talking about the omnipresent, all-pervading nature of the divine. If we look at it, the only thing that can be truly all-pervading, the only thing that can be everywhere is darkness, nothingness, or emptiness.

Generally, when people are seeking well-being, we talk of the divine as light. When people are no longer seeking well-being, when they are looking beyond their life in terms of dissolving, if the object of their worship and their sadhana is dissolution, then we always refer to the divine as darkness.

SIGNIFICANCE OF MAHA SHIVRATRI

Light is a brief happening in your mind. Light is not eternal; it is always a limited possibility because it happens and it ends. The greatest source of light that we know on this planet is the sun. Even the sun’s light, you could stop it with your hand and leave a shadow of darkness behind. But darkness is all-enveloping, everywhere. The immature minds in the world have always described darkness as the devil. But when you describe the divine as all-pervading, you are obviously referring to the divine as darkness, because only darkness is all-pervading. It is everywhere. It does not need any support from anything.

Light always comes from a source that is burning itself out. It has a beginning and an end. It is always from a limited source. Darkness has no source. It is a source unto itself. It is all-pervading, everywhere, omnipresent. So, when we say Shiva, it is this vast emptiness of existence. It is in the lap of this vast emptiness that all creation has happened. It is that lap of emptiness that we refer to as the Shiva.

In Indian culture, all the ancient prayers were not about saving yourself, protecting yourself or doing better in life. All the ancient prayers have always been “Oh lord, destroy me so that I can become like yourself.” So, when we say Shivratri, which is the darkest night of the month, it is an opportunity for one to dissolve their limitedness, to experience the unboundedness of the source of creation which is the seed in every human being.

MAHA SHIVRATRI A NIGHT OF AWAKENING

Maha Shivratri is an opportunity and a possibility to bring yourself to that experience of the vast emptiness within every human being, which is the source of all creation. On the one hand, Shiva is known as the destroyer. On the other hand, he is known as the most compassionate. He is also known to be the greatest of the givers. The yogic lore is rife with many stories about Shiva’s compassion. The ways of expression of his compassion were incredible and astonishing at the same time. So, Maha Shivratri is a special night for receiving too. It is our wish and blessing that you must not pass this night without knowing at least a moment of the vastness of this emptiness that we call Shiva. Let this night not just be a night of wakefulness, let this night be a night of awakening for you.



HUMBLENESS IS INTEGRAL TO SPIRITUALITY

Konganavar was a very pious and religious man who did great penance and meditation, and so acquired great powers at a young age.

One day, while he was meditating, a crane was sitting on a branch above his head and its droppings fell on his lap. Enraged at being disturbed in his prayers, he looked at the bird, which immediately started to burn, at his very look.

Konganavar was impressed with the power that he seemed to have acquired as a result of his penance and meditation.

Now, it was customary for Konganavar to beg for food only at night. If he failed to get food at the first house he tried, he simply fasted till the next night. But such a thing happened very rarely, as housewives were very eager to feed the holy man.

On the day that he burnt the crane, he decided to visit the house of the poet Thiruvalluvar. The poet's wife Vasuki was serving her husband when the Sage arrived. On hearing Konganavar call for alms, she called out to him to wait until she had served her husband.

Konganavar was annoyed at the delay. He thought to himself, "Only if the poor lady knew that I am a great saint and have the power to burn a bird by merely looking at it, she would not keep me waiting".

When Vasuki finally came out, she saw that the sage seemed upset at her for not serving him right away. She told him, "Oh Konganavar, do not think I am a like the bird you burnt today".

Konganavar was terribly upset for he knew that the incident had occurred deep in the forest, and no one had witnessed the event. Yet Vasuki knew about it. He bowed humbly before her and asked her how she could know things that she had not really seen or heard.

She said, "Go to the house of the butcher, who lives down the street, and he will enlighten you".

The sage immediately did so. The butcher was bathing his old blind parents and hence could not give the saint his immediate attention. But this time Konganavar's curiosity was so great that he did not get annoyed to wait.

After serving his parents the butcher brought food for the

saint and said, "Oh holy man, please eat my humble food and I shall tell you why the wife of the poet asked you to see me".

Normally, Konganavar would not have had any dealings with the butcher who is considered to be of a low birth and unclean. However, he was willing to do anything to get at the truth behind the extraordinary powers of an ordinary housewife and a butcher.

After having a sumptuous dinner, Konganavar asked the butcher, "Please tell me the secret of the extraordinary powers that you and the poet's wife have".

The man replied, "We have no extraordinary powers. We say what we feel, and we feel for others as much as we feel for ourselves. We carry out our duties to the best of our abilities. There is nothing more than that".

On hearing this Konganavar bowed down low in reverence to the butcher and said, "Teacher, you have enlightened me, I shall always be grateful to you!"

So, saying he left the house as a humbler person and went about healing and helping people.



Remember to look up at the stars and not down at your feet.
Never give up work. Work gives you meaning and purpose, and
life is empty without it.



SMALL STEPS TO BIG CHANGES

When making big changes in our life, it can be easier to break it up into a few small changes to avoid being overwhelmed.

When we decide that it's time for big changes in our lives, it is wise to ease into them by starting small. Small changes allow us to grow into a new habit and make it a permanent part of our lives. Sudden changes may cause a sense of failure that makes it difficult to continue, and then, we are more likely to revert to our old ways. If we have gone that route and find ourselves contemplating the choice to start over again, we can decide to take it slowly this time and move forward.

Sometimes, the goals we set for ourselves are merely indicators of the need for change and are

useful in getting us to move in the right direction. But we may find that the change doesn't actually suit us or make us feel the way we had hoped. By embarking on the path slowly, we have the chance to look around and consider other options as we learn and grow. We have time to examine the underlying values of the desire for change and find ways to manifest those feelings, whether it looks exactly like our initial goal or not. Taking small steps forward gives us time to adjust and find secure footing on our new path forward.

Life doesn't always give us the opportunity to

anticipate or prepare for a big change, and at times, we may find ourselves overwhelmed by what is in front of us. By choosing to work on one thing at a time, we focus our attention on something manageable, and eventually, we will look up to see that we have accomplished quite a bit. Forcing change is, in essence, a sign that we do not trust the universe's wisdom. Instead, we can listen to our inner guidance and make changes at a pace that is right for us, ensuring that we do so in alignment with the rhythm of the universe.



Courtesy: <http://www.yrf.org>

We are responsible for what we are, and whatever we wish ourselves to be, we have the power to make ourselves. If what we are now has been the result of our own past actions, it certainly follows that whatever we wish to be in the future can be produced by our present actions; so, we must know how to act.

- Swami Vivekananda



2025 FESTIVALS CALENDAR

VIKRAM SAMVAT 2081 - 2082

January (Pausha – Magha 2081)

01	WED	NEW YEAR DAY
09	THU	Putrada Ekadashi
11	SAT	Pradosh
12	SUN	Swami Vivekananda Jayanti
13	MON	Purnima - LOHRI
14	TUE	Makar Sankranti
25	SAT	Shattila Ekadashi
26	SUN	Pradosh
26	SUN	Indian Republic Day
28	TUE	Amavasya
30	THU	Mahatma Gandhi Punyatithi

February (Magha – Falgun 2081)

02	SUN	Vasant Panchami
08	SAT	Jaya Ekadashi
09	SUN	Pradosh
12	WED	Purnima
12	WED	Kumbha Sankranti
12	WED	Swami Dayanand Saraswati Jayanti
23	SUN	Vijaya Ekadashi
25	THU	Pradosh
25	TUE	MAHA SHIVARATRI
26	WED	Veer Savarkar Punyatithi
27	THU	Amavasya

March (Falgun – Chaitra 2081)

09	SUN	Amalaki Ekadashi
11	TUE	Pradosh
13	THU	PURNIMA
13	THU	Holika Dahan
14	FRI	Meena Sankranti
25	TUE	Papmochani Ekadashi
26	WED	Pradosh
28	FRI	AMAVASYA
29	SAT	Navratris Begin - Ugadi



April (Chaitra - Vaisakha 2081- 82)

06	SUN	Ram Navami
08	TUE	Kamada Ekadashi
09	WED	Pradosh
10	THU	Mahavir Jayanti
12	SAT	Purnima, Hanuman Jayanti
13	SAT	Samvat 2082 Begins
13	SUN	Baisakhi, Mesha Sankranti
23	WED	Varuthini Ekadashi
25	FRI	Pradosh
27	SUN	Amavasya

May (Vaishakh – Jyeshth 2082)

07	WED	Mohini Ekadashi
09	FRI	Pradosh
12	MON	Purnima - Buddha Jayanti
14	WED	Vrishabha Sankranti
23	FRI	Apara Ekadashi
24	SAT	Pradosh
26	MON	Amavasya
28	WED	Veer Savarkar Jayanti

June (Jyeshth - Ashadh 2082)

06	FRI	Nirjala Ekadashi
08	SUN	Pradosh
10	TUE	Purnima
14	SAT	Mithuna Shankranti
22	SUN	Pradosh
24	FRI	Amavasya



2025 FESTIVALS CALENDAR

VIKRAM SAMVAT – 2082

July (Ashadh – Shravan 2082)

06	SUN	Devshayani Ekadashi
07	MON	Pradosh
10	THU	Guru Vyasa Purnima
20	SUN	Kamika Ekadashi
21	THU	Pradosh
23	SUN	Amavasya
27	SUN	Hariyali Teej

August (Shravan – Bhadrapad 2082)

04	MON	Putrada Ekadashi
06	WED	Pradosh
08	FRI	Purnima - Raksha Bandhan
15	FRI	Indian Independence Day
15	FRI	Janmashtami
18	Mon	Aja Ekadashi
20	WED	Pradosh
22	FRI	Amavasya
26	TUE	Ganesh Chaturthi

September (Bhadrapad - Ashwin 2082)

03	WED	Parsva Ekadashi
04	THU	Pradosh
06	SAT	Purnima
07	SUN	Shraddha Begins
16	TUE	Kanya Sankranti
17	WED	Indira Ekadashi
18	SUN	Pradosh
20	SAT	Sharadha End
21	SUN	Amavasya
22	MON	Navratri Begin



October (Ashwin - Kartik 2082)

01	WED	Navratri End
02	THU	Dussehra
02	FRI	Mahatma Gandhi Jayanti
03	FRI	Papankusha Ekadashi
04	SAT	Pradosh
06	MON	Purnima
09	THU	Karva Chauth
16	THU	Rama Ekadashi
20	MON	Amavasya - DIWALI
22	WED	Bhaiya Dooj

November (Kartik - Margashirsha 2082)

02	SUN	Pradosh:
04	TUE	Purnima
15	SAT	Utpanna Ekadashi
17	MON	Pradosh
19	WED	Amavasya
30	SUN	Mokshada Ekadashi

December (Margashirsha – Paush 2082)

01	MON	Mokshada Ekadashi
02	TUE	Pradosh
04	THU	Purnima
15	MON	Dhanu Sankranti – Saphal Ekadashi
16	TUE	Pradosh
19	FRI	Amavasya
25	THU	Pt. Madan Mohan Malviya Jayanti
30	TUE	Putrada Ekadashi
31	WED	Pradosh
31	WED	NEW YEAR EVE





THE MARG FOUNDATION



A 501(c)(3) tax exempt nonprofit educational corporation
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The Marg Foundation, a 501 (c) (3) tax-exempt nonprofit educational corporation, promotes the awareness, understanding, and appreciation of Hindu heritage and values. To accomplish its mission, the Foundation publishes a bimonthly magazine, *MARG*, and provides a wide range of services, including:

- Organizes seminars, workshops, and presentation on Hindu Awareness and related topics in support of its mission.
- Maintains a Panel of Speakers on Hindu Dharma related topics.
- Participates in appropriate cultural and dharmic exhibits and shows.
- Provides support to other like-minded organizations.
- In the spirit of “Vasudaiva kutumbkum”, the Foundation runs a sewa (service) program, often in collaboration with other sister organizations.
- Publishes a variety of Hand-outs on Dharma related topics.

For additional information, please contact Dr. Suresh Chander, PH: 301-351-3164; email: suresh.margfoundation@gmail.com

Subscription & Donation Form (2024)

MARG: A Path to Hindu Heritage

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DINOSAURS OF THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT (PART 2)

Dr. Omesh Chopra

The Part-1 of this article was published in MARG V20N6 (November–December Issue) and that described the dinosaurs of India from the Triassic-Jurassic periods to the early Cretaceous Period. The dinosaurs that existed in India during the Cretaceous Period are covered in this article.

As discussed in Part 1 of the article, fossils give a glimpse of the life that existed on planet Earth billions of years ago (mya). Fortunately, the Indian subcontinent is home to fossils of dinosaurs found nowhere else on Earth, e.g., the 80-ton dinosaur *Bruhathkayosaurus* and the chicken-size dinosaur *Alwalkeria*. As mentioned earlier, Major-general Sir William Henry Sleeman, the British administrator in India, happens to be the first to discover dinosaur fossils in 1828 CE on Bara Simla Hill near a British Army gun carriage workshop. The fossil found by Sleeman was named *Titanosaurus* (1877 CE). Since then, fossils of several other dinosaurs have been identified. These dinosaurs were roaming around the Indian subcontinent from the Triassic to the end of the Cretaceous period (≈ 252 –65 mya).

However, before 200 mya, most of the Indian subcontinent as well as Madagascar and Seychelles, were located in the southern hemisphere wedged between Africa and Australia with Antarctica to the south (Fig. 1). Also, according to plate tectonics theory of German geologist and meteorologist, Alfred Wegener, Earth's outer shell is divided into large slabs of solid rock, called "plates," that glide over Earth's mantle, the rocky inner layer above Earth's core. This theory explains mountain-building processes, volcanoes, and earthquakes as well as the evolution of Earth's surface.

Then ≈ 225 mya (Fig. 1a), India-Seychelles-Madagascar began to split away from East Africa, Australia and Antarctica. The subcontinents of

Africa-Arabia and India-Seychelles-Madagascar began drifting north towards Eurasia (Fig.1b), carrying with them plants and animals that evolved in isolation throughout the Cretaceous period. Because of a thin lithosphere, the subcontinent of India-Seychelles-Madagascar moved fast (≈ 18 –5 cm/yr) towards Laurasia. Later ≈ 95 –84 mya Madagascar broke off from India (Fig. 1-c) and the islands of Seychelles separated from the Indian subcontinent ≈ 66 mya according to some scholars and ≈ 63 –62 mya by others (Fig. 1-d). Eventually India collided against Asia ≈ 52 –20 mya. The collision of the Indian plate with Asia resulted in the uplifting of the Indian plate and formation of the Himalayas like mud collecting in front of a plough.

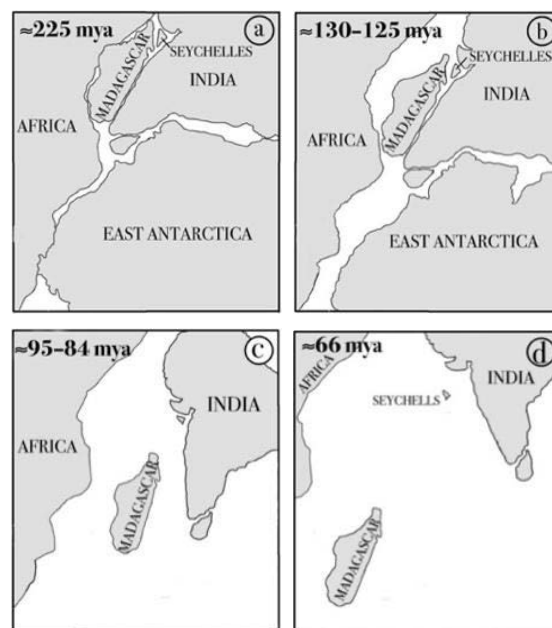


Fig. 1: Continental drifting of India from Antarctica towards Asia.

However, before the collision, India passed over few "hot spots" within the Eaespeciallyst triggering

Table 1: Dinosaurs that existed in the Indian Subcontinent.

Name	Named	Period	Type*	Diet
Shringasaurus (horned lizard)	2017	Triassic, 247–242 mya	Sauropod	Herbivore
Alwalkeria (for Alice Walker)	1987	Triassic, 235–228 mya	Theropod	Omnivore
Jaklapallisaurus (for Jaklapalli town)	2011	Triassic, 210–203 mya	Prosauropod	Herbivore
Nambalia (for Nambal village)	2011	Triassic, ≈203 mya	Prosauropod	Omnivore
Kotasaurus (for Kota formation)	1988	Early Jurassic	Sauropod	Herbivore
Lamplughsaura (Lamplugh’s lizard)	2007	Early Jurassic	Prosauropod	Herbivore
Dandakosaurus (Dandakāranya lizard)	1982	Early Jurassic	Theropod	Carnivore
Pradhania (for Dhuiya Pradhan)	2007	Early Jurassic	Prosauropod	Omnivore
Tharosaurus indicus (Thar desert lizard)	2023	Middle Jurassic – middle Cretaceous (167–100 mya)	Sauropod	Herbivore
Barapasaurus (big-legged lizard)	1975	Early Jurassic	Sauropod	Herbivore
Brachypodosaurus (short-footed lizard)	1934	Late Cretaceous	Ankylosaur	Herbivore
Dravidosaurus (Dravidanadu lizard)	1979	Cretaceous, 89–86 mya	Ankylosaur	Herbivore
Bruhathkayosaurus (huge-bodied lizard)	1989	Late Cretaceous	Sauropod	Herbivore
Coeluroides (hollow form)	1932	Late Cretaceous	Theropod	Carnivore
Compsosuchus (elegant crocodile)	1933	Late Cretaceous	Theropod	Carnivore
Rahiolisaurus	2010	Cretaceous 72–66 mya	Theropod	Carnivore
Dryptosauroides (similar to Dryptosaurus)	1933	Cretaceous, 66 mya	Theropod	Carnivore
Indosuchus (Indian crocodile)	1932	Cretaceous, 70–66 mya	Theropod	Carnivore
Isisaurus (for Indian Statistical Institute)	1984–86	Cretaceous, 70–66 mya	Sauropod	Herbivore
Jainosaurus (Jain’s lizard)	1871–72	Cretaceous, ≈68 mya	Sauropod	Herbivore
Jubbulpuria (Jubbulpore one)	1933	Late Cretaceous	Theropod	Carnivore
Laevisuchus indicus (light crocodile)	1933	Late Cretaceous	Theropod	Carnivore
Lametasaurus (Lameta lizard")	1921	Late Cretaceous	Theropod	Carnivore
Ornithomimoides (bird mimic-like)	1933	Late Cretaceous	Theropod	Carnivore
Orthogoniosaurus (straight angled lizard)	1931	Late Cretaceous	Theropod	Carnivore
Rahiolisaurus	2010	Cretaceous 72–66 mya	Theropod	Carnivore
Indosaurus (Indian lizard)	1933	Cretaceous, 69–66 mya	Theropod	Carnivore
Titanosaurus (titanic lizard)	1877	Late Cretaceous	Sauropod	Herbivore
Rajasaurus (king lizard)	2003	Late Cretaceous	Theropod	Carnivore

**Sauropod*: had very long necks, long tails, small heads, and four thick, pillar-like legs. *Theropod*: was characterized by hollow bones and three toes and claws on each limb. *Prosauropod*: generally grew to very large sizes, had long necks and tails, were quadrupedal, and became the largest animals to ever walk the Earth. *Ankylosaur*: were bulky quadrupeds, with short, powerful limbs.

DADU DAYAL

A SAINT FROM RAJASTHAN (1544-1603 CE)

Lakshmi Chandrashekhara

A spiritual lighthouse claimed as their own by two Indian states, Dadu Dayal was a gifted poet who was born in Ahmedabad, Gujarat and spent his spiritual life in Rajasthan. Affectionately known as "compassionate (Dayal) brother (Dadu)," he attracted both Hindus and Muslims with his nonsectarian teachings.

Some say Dadu was a foster son of a wealthy businessman in Ahmedabad named Lodhiram, who found the baby floating on the Sabarmati River in 1545. In his childhood, Dadu was blessed by an elderly sage named Vriddhananda, or Baba Budha, whom Dadu's followers revere as God Himself. Having received divine instruction from Baba, Dadu commenced worshipping the peerless Absolute Brahman.

Considered a disciple in the lineage of saints Ramananda and Kabir, Dadu was a cotton carder (*dhuniya* or *pinjari*) by occupation, who married and had four children. After some years, he left family life and became a religious wanderer, finally settling down in Rajasthan. There he garnered a large following, which marked the formation of a sect called the Dadu Panth. Some accounts suggest he once met the Mughal emperor Akbar in the famed city of Fatehpur Sikri.

NIRGUNA POETRY

The Dadu sect reveres the Divine as the formless (nirgun), untainted Existence-Consciousness-Bliss (Sat-Chit-Ananda). Historically, the nirguna sant tradition flourished in several parts of North India, particularly Punjab. This strain of bhakti advocates devotion to the ineffable Absolute, without shape or form. Like the renowned 15th-century poet-saint Kabir, Dadu Dayal was known for his influential nirguna compositions. His "Dadu Anubhav Vani" is a compilation of 5,000 verses (*padas*) on such topics as truth, virtue and faith, documented by his disciple Rajjab. Composed in the Brajbhasha dialect, they exalt spontaneous bliss (*sahaja*). The themes of Dadu's poetry echo those in Kabir's poems, as well as motifs used by earlier Sahajiya Buddhists and Natha yogis. In one *doha*, called "Kaya Mahai Rati Dina," Dadu sang: "The breath is the single-stringed musical instrument that continually emerges and subsides within one's body. Dadu says, 'When I found the supreme guru, he made me become one with the primordial sound of God within.'"

Equality of all was a pillar of Dadu's teachings. He preached that devotion to God should transcend religious or sectarian affiliation, and that devotees

HUMANITY

WE ARE ONE FAMILY

वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम् ।

[Vasudhaiva kutumbkam.]

The whole world is one Family.

When it comes to our families, we sometimes see only our differences.

We see the way our parents cling to ideas we don't believe, or act in ways we try not to act. We see how practical one of our siblings is and wonder how we can be from the same gene pool. Similarly, within the human family we see how different we are from each other, in ways ranging from gender and race to geographical location and religious beliefs. It is almost as if we think we are a different species sometimes.

But the truth is, in our personal families as well as the human family, we really are the same.

A single mother of four living in Africa looks up at the same stars and moon that shine down on an elderly Frenchman in Paris. A Tibetan monk living in India, a newborn infant in China, and a young couple saying their marriage vows in Indiana, all breathe the same air, by the same process.

We have all been hurt and we have all cried. Each one of us knows how it feels to love someone dearly. No matter what our political views are, we all love to laugh.

Regardless of how much or how little money we have, our hearts pump blood through our bodies in the same way. With all this in common, it is clear we are each individual members of the same family. We are human.

Acknowledging how close we all are, instead of clinging to what separates us, enables us to feel less alone in the world. Every person we meet, see, hear, or read about, is a member of our family.

We are truly not alone. We also begin to see that we are perfectly capable of understanding and relating to people who, on the surface, may seem very different from us.

This awareness prevents us from disconnecting from people on the other side of the tracks, and the other side of the world. We begin to understand that we must treat all people for what they are — **One Family!**

So, as the Hymn 6 of the Yajur Veda, Chapter 40 says:

आत्मवत् सर्वभूतेषु ।

[Atmavat sarvabhuteshu.]

Look upon all beings
as your own self.



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THE KHURANA LAW FIRM, LLC

www.skulaw.com

9049 Shady Grove Ct.
Gaithersburg, MD 20877

(301)548-9595

americanimmigration@gmail.com



Ramesh Khurana, Esq.
Member (MD & DC Bar)
Admitted to U.S. Supreme Court

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