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KWAZULU NATAL

International Society for Krishna Consciousness
Founder Acharya His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

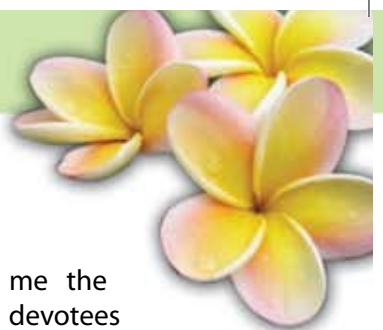
HARE KRISHNA NEWS

September/October 2010

Festivals of the Spiritual World
Serving from the Heart
Pulling out that Thorn



SRI SRI RADHA RADHANATH TEMPLE
25TH ANNIVERSARY (1985-2010)



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The Mercy of Sri Sri Radha Radhanath and Sri Gaurahari

This year we are blessed to offer appreciation for the twenty five years of causeless mercy that was showered upon us since the deities of Sri Sri Radha Radhanath and Sri Gaurahari were installed in October 1985. The Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Temple of Understanding has had a tremendous impact on the lives of the people of South Africa; being the singularly most important beacon of hope in an otherwise degenerating situation. When one looks on from a perspective of ultimate and eternal impact, the 2010 World Cup pales in comparison to the 25th anniversary of the temple opening!

Inherent in the glory of this temple and being responsible for the desiring of the existence of this temple is His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. By Srila Prabhupada's desire to have a temple in Durban, Lord Krishna was impelled to make it a reality. And inspired by that desire were many devotees who toiled so hard to preach, collect, and build this amazing facility. Once, while appreciating the sincere efforts of Mr P.L. Sethi in building residences for the devotees at ISKCON Juhu, Srila Prabhupada remarked, "Just as you are building residences for my devotees here, Lord Krishna is building your residence in the spiritual world." I really do feel that the devotees who served to establish this temple will be similarly blessed.

I wish I could list and glorify them all and in detail but space restricts my intent. The best possible way to honour them is to use every inch of this facility in pure Krishna consciousness—for the purposes that Srila Prabhupada wanted: (1) to attract conditioned souls back to the lotus feet of Lord Krishna by the beauty of the temple and the programmes that are maintained in it and from it, and (2) to train them in the culture of Krishna consciousness, in serving Lord Krishna.

By Krishna's grace I have been allowed to serve here as the Temple President for about ten years. During that time my numerous shortcomings were covered over by the deities' mercy in the form of support from many steadfast

devotees who continued with me the wonderful offering made by the devotees who built this temple. I am eternally grateful for their association and guidance.

Krishna consciousness is anandam-bhudi vardanam—Krishna's bliss is ever expanding and the opportunities to increase Krishna's happiness are also expansively unlimited. That is the essence of service—to increase Krishna's pleasure. Over twenty five years, thousands of devotees have served to increase the deities' pleasure by preaching Their glories, maintaining Their temple, and

worshipping Them. It is my clear realization that there is so much more that is to be achieved in the deities' service for Their pleasure. The opening of the Radha Radhanath Temple was but one important milestone in the history of the salvation of this country. There are many more milestones waiting to unfold. All that is necessary from our side is commitment, endeavour and sacrifice.

I would like to express to all the devotees who have been blessed by the Deities' mercy to count those blessings, and secure it deep in your heart by making a firm commitment to help uncover some of those milestones that lay waiting. And just as Krishna's happiness is unlimitedly increasing, by this commitment, ours will also increase unlimitedly.

Wonderful festivities are planned to commemorate the 25th anniversary and we can use that as an inspiration to dedicate ourselves to fulfilling the purposes for which this temple was built.

All glories to our most merciful Lordships Sri Sri Radha Radhanath, Sri Gaurahari, Sri Giriraj, and Srila Prabhupada. All glories to the devotees of Sri Caitanya Maharaprabhu!

Your servant,
Swarup Damodar Das



The Vedic Lifestyle Expo 2010

The inaugural Vedic Lifestyle Expo, presented at the prestigious Durban International Convention Centre on 21-22 August 2010 was an innovative platform to facilitate alternate avenues to attract people to experience the richness of Vedic culture.

Searching for broader ways to attract newcomers who ordinarily would not appreciate the essence of Krishna consciousness, Sunil Mohan prabhu and Hemangi Devi Dasi conceived of the Vedic Lifestyle Expo as a way of presenting other aspects of Vedic culture which in turn would then ease the interested persons into the experience of Krishna consciousness. Helping Sunil Mohan prabhu develop and organise this event was Sri Hari Das and Anuradha Devi Dasi.

While many expos, conventions on yoga, astrology, and other Vedic sciences have been organised in South Africa, the Vedic Lifestyle Expo was glaringly different in one essential component—purity. The authenticity of the presenters, the purity of purpose and motivation behind the expo, and the experience all distinguished this event from others in its apparent class.

Key in the presentations was HH Bhakti Charu Swami, expounding the six developments of Vedic philosophy to the point that only Krishna consciousness in its essence can really bring success and purpose to one's lifestyle. HG



Drutakarma Das (Michael Cremo) discussed validity of Vedic cosmology for archaeological, environmental, and scientific perspectives. HG Ajamila Das discussed the position and use of astrology and Vastu in one's life. HG Govardhan Das discussed vegetarianism from a religious, health, and economic perspective. Also, eagerly received were the yoga presentations by HG Charu Chandra Das. And finally, the insightful discussions with Dr. Ramkumar tremendously helped in better understanding the efficacy of Ayurveda.

ISKCON was also invited to showcase various aspects of pure Krishna consciousness: Srila Prabhupada's books, potent and sumptuous prasadam, etc. In all it was a wonderful event aimed at attracting newer people into the sublime experience of Krishna consciousness.



My Special Janmastami Experience

By Yukta Chetty

Often we hear that everything belongs to Krishna. We have to acknowledge all that we are and have is simply due to the Supreme Lord's mercy. What can we offer to someone who owns everything? We can give back some of what He has given to us, as an offering to Him. In light of this I urged my parents to participate in the Kalash Maha Abhishek programme.

My family and I received royal treatment on both Janmastami and Srila Prabhupada's Vyasa-puja celebrations. We received a bag full of interesting items: a box of maha-sweets, an arati set, a portable altar, maha-jewellery, caranamrta (bathing water) and a most exquisite and ornately designed kalash—and excuse me—it had my name on it!

In the temple room, the temple president welcomed and briefed us on the Kalash activities. A flood of excitement came when we were asked to prepare our arati sets to offer arati to the Deities—one hundred ghee lamps offered simultaneously is a wondrous sight! We then participated in a yajna, offering grains into the sacrificial fire while chanting the holy names of the Lord. During Sri Sri Radha Radhanath's abhishek we had the good fortune of being close to the Deities. We poured water into the conch that

was used to bathe their Lordships.

The next morning we brought our kalashes to bathe Srila Prabhupada. As I bathed Srila Prabhupada I prayed for his blessings and that whatever I do, he will be proud of me and that I will never let him down. Finally, we were invited to an elaborate prasadam feast which the devotees prepared and presented with love. The Kalash Maha Abhishek programme was perfect in that we rendered personal loving service to their Lordships.



Festivals of the Spiritual World Mothers of Devotion

By Nikunja Vilasini Dasi

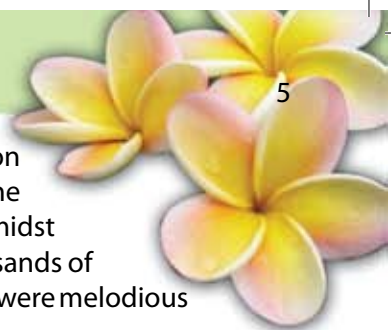
When I lived in Vrindavan some years ago, everyday I would get up to the sound of peacocks and parrots, temple bells and recitation of mantras. Vrindavan, Lord Krishna's holy land, is saturated with the presence of Krishna, is filled with the chanting of His name, glories and pastimes, and is centred in loving service to Him. Thus, it is non-different from Goloka Vrindavan, the spiritual sky. In Vrindavan, every word is a song, every step is a dance and every day is a festival. There are elaborate festivals to celebrate the appearance days of Lord Krishna, His expansions, and His pure devotees. Some festivals mark the arrival of every season while numerous other festivals commemorate the Lord's different pastimes. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura, a great Vaisnava saint, described such festivals as "Mothers of Devotion" as they nurture our devotion to Krishna.

Now living in Durban (Door-ban—the furthestmost forest of Vrindavan), I have a similar experience whenever I enter the Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Temple of Understanding in Chatsworth.

It was Jhulan-yatra, Radha and Krishna's wonderful swing festival. When I saw the little wooden swing at the temple, gorgeously decorated with flowers and greenery, it reminded me of the various gigantic swings on the hilltops of Varsana (Srimati Radharani's home) where Radha and Krishna enjoyed swinging together. For five days every evening, hundreds of devotees and visitors pushed the beautiful little Radha Krishna deities on the swing. At every festival devotees dance to the harmonious kirtan (chanting of Krishna's names) and relish a sumptuous feast.

When Lord Krishna appeared in Vrindavan on Earth, His abode, associates and devotees appeared before Him to welcome him into this world. Lord Balarama, Krishna's older brother and a direct expansion of Him, appeared prior to Krishna in order to serve and please Him in every respect. The full moon ushered hundreds of devotees to the temple to celebrate Lord Balarama's divine appearance in this world and in their lives. The occasion was even more special with the presence of His Holiness Bhakti Charu Swami, a stalwart leader in ISKCON and senior disciple of Srila Prabhupada. Renowned for his golden voice, he sang the Gopi-gita, pulling everyone's mind and heart to the Lord. He spoke about the splendid preaching efforts of many South African devotees abroad. The foremost desire of the spiritual master is to serve and please Krishna, and Lord Balarama, being the first servant of Krishna and the original spiritual master, is pleased when we assist in spreading Krishna's glories. Thus, Maharaja's inspiring talk was appropriate, emphasizing the importance of preaching the message of Godhead.





At last, Sri Krishna Janmastami, Lord Krishna's appearance day arrived after weeks of preparation and anticipation. The celebrations started before sunrise, leading to a host of festivities for the day. Sri Sri Radha Radhanath were adorned with three new exquisite outfits during the day, amidst elaborate flower arrangements and decorations on Their altar. The Lord's mercy attracted thousands of people to behold His breathtaking form and hear His transcendental glories and pastimes. There were melodious kirtan, enlightening lectures by His Holiness Bhakti Caitanya Swami describing the Lord's advent, and an abhishek ceremony during the day where everyone had the privilege of bathing a deity of Krishna.

The Kalash Maha Abhiseka was one of the highlights where over 108 patron members bathed the Lord with water from a gold-plated kalash (water pot). I watched in delight as the fortunate kalash donors first performed an arati ceremony to the temple deities in unison. Attracted by the chanting of sacred mantras, I proceeded to another tent where the kalash group was performing a yajna (fire sacrifice). Then at the main tent, we welcomed the little Radha Radhanath deities, who were riding on a palanquin. Our hearts



raced in excitement as we showered

Them with rose petals and watched the children dressed as little gopis and gopas, lead the procession. The bathing ceremony by the kalash donors then resumed with great pomp and merriment.



The crowd grew bigger as midnight approached and everyone eagerly anticipated the divine darshan of the Lord. Who can describe the ecstasy in the devotees' hearts as they gazed upon their Lordships' stunning forms at midnight? This reminded me of the reason for the Lord's advent. "When the Lord assumes a humanlike body to show mercy to His devotees, He engages in such pastimes as will attract those who hear about them to become dedicated to Him." (SB 10.33.36) He only comes to reclaim and deliver us, His lost children.

But it didn't end here. The next day was Nandotsava, the day Krishna's father, Nanda Maharaja, performed a grand festival celebrating Krishna's birth. Therefore, it was the most appropriate day for our beloved spiritual master, Srila Prabhupada, the

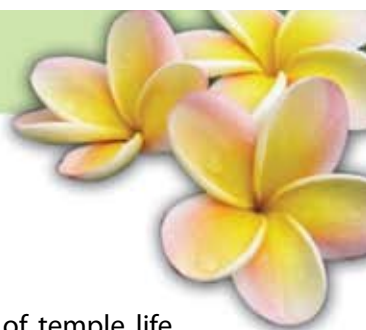
founder-acharya of ISKCON to appear in this world. Devotees were overcome with emotion and gratitude as they offered their homage and glorification to their guru who had saved their lives. As the kalash donors bathed Srila Prabhupada's deity with

their golden water pots and the crowds of people sang 'Jaya Prabhupada', we could only reflect on what our lives would have been like if Srila Prabhupada hadn't risked his life to spread Krishna consciousness. He gave us Sri Vrindavan dham by establishing hundreds of temples, by writing hundreds of books about Krishna, by engaging us in Krishna's service and by giving us Krishna's holy name. No one had ever done this before. By his extraordinary mercy, he gave us the means to return to Krishna's abode—to Goloka Vrindavan, where every word is a song, every step is a dance and every day a festival.



See you at the next festival!





Serving from the Heart

By Shakti Krishnan

I spent just over a month at the Sri Sri Radha Radhanath and it felt like living in the spiritual world. Waking every morning for mangal arati, the opportunity to sing, dance, pray and just start the day with intense love, ecstasy and bliss is the best feeling for me.

Temple life is food for the soul. Without doubt residing at the temple strengthens our faith, establishes and intensifies our relationship with Srila Prabhupada, Lord Krishna and His associates. As young aspiring devotees, we often face similar obstacles in the journey back to Krishna. Most significantly I feel that whatever phase we may be in, we should make the time for japa. We often take the importance of association with the holy name for granted. We should structure our day around japa and not the other way around. Japa will automatically clear our path to do loving devotional service.

I did various types of service: preparing bhoga, cooking, cleaning, receptionist duties, and realised that there is no hierarchy in devotional service. I did whatever was requested and it gave me personal satisfaction and bliss. I enjoyed the association of all devotees and am grateful for the transcendental experience at the temple. Now the challenge is to keep up the practices on the outside but by

the Lord's mercy I will try.

My reflection on my experience of temple life is that we all have a propensity to serve and love therefore, we should seek to understand our place and purpose in this lifetime. We should endeavour to surrender consciously and progressively to the lotus feet of Sri-mati Radharani and Sri Krishna. My advice to fellow youth is to take an opportunity to stay at the temple as often as possible.

Little Vaisnava Column

Kartik Word Search" by Kribashne

N	P	I	U	S	U	O	O	B	S	U	X	S	Z	P
R	F	W	O	W	N	U	K	U	X	R	O	U	B	M
U	L	B	X	A	T	P	V	B	L	F	P	O	U	I
H	A	R	V	N	T	E	G	P	P	G	U	I	T	R
C	M	A	R	H	X	M	P	W	Q	T	N	C	T	K
H	P	T	N	S	P	A	S	T	I	M	E	I	E	E
Q	R	R	D	I	C	V	D	Y	P	U	L	P	R	O
O	O	O	A	R	G	M	X	G	X	H	C	S	A	H
Z	L	M	V	K	F	U	O	N	O	A	F	U	W	L
L	S	A	A	P	A	O	K	I	R	D	T	A	D	P
A	S	R	N	V	X	R	Y	D	I	O	G	M	N	J
U	P	A	A	O	Q	A	T	N	L	H	C	R	I	M
G	R	L	J	B	H	M	Y	I	R	S	P	S	B	B
G	X	A	G	N	K	K	S	R	K	A	Y	D	O	B
H	X	B	Y	O	R	Y	T	G	N	Y	U	A	I	T

Krishna
Churn
Kartik

Vrndavana
Yashoda
Grinding
Balaram
Lamp

Bind
Butter
Mortar
Auspicious
Pastime



Pulling out that Thorn

By Bhakta Yogesh

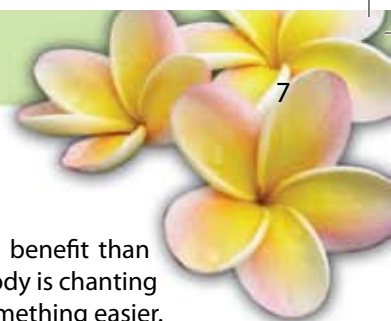
My one regret during my campus days is not attending any Bhakti Yoga Society (BYS Campus Programmes) retreats, so when my sister told me they needed one more person on the BYS Retreat in Ramsgate, I jumped at the chance.

Many may question what the goal of such an event is. Is it a bonding session for people with a common perspective or is it a means to give curious persons a chance to experience Krishna consciousness in a not so rigid or formal setting as in a temple, to take them to the next level, like pulling out a thorn with a needle? Ultimately the goal of anything we do is to please the Supreme Lord, Krishna, and by doing that all other things are achieved.

The retreat was wonderful and inspiring. Events included interactive sessions from our facilitators (Anuradha Dasi, Vibhu Caitanya Das and Bhakta Igratius), fun team building events like obstacle courses (which the girls took a really long time to complete!), and art presentations, not to mention sumptuous prasadam. The highlight for many was the group project—performing a skit based on an abstract quote. The skits were excellent—even the master comedian, Krishna Chandra Prabhu, was rolling on the floor in laughter!

For me, however, the focus was the holy name in the roaring morning and evening kirtans as well as the japa sessions on the beach. From my perspective the quote "hell is others" comes to mind. I like to be in control and being controlled by others can be torturous, however keeping our goal of pleasing Krishna, the so called "hell of others" teaches me co-operation as well as honesty. At the end of the day it seems that the thorn has been pulled out and the devotees are ready to be taken to the next level, any takers?





No Nama, No Dharma

By Vaisnavah Sookraj

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura, "He reasons ill who says that Vaisnavas die, when thou art living still in sound! The Vaisnavas die to live, and living, try to spread the holy name around."

I cannot glorify His Grace Aindra Prabhu to the extent he truly deserves...so instead I am sharing Aindra Prabhu's realisations on kirtan:

Kirtan means glorification of Krishna—whether it be Vedic discourse or preaching. All is kirtan...the most important form of kirtan is harinama-sankirtan (the congregational chanting of the Lord's holy name). All other activities are subordinate to this in the Kali-yuga. If we cannot directly engage in chanting then we should perform activities which will aid the chanting. Our actions of preaching and worshiping the Lord's deity form are to facilitate chanting. Chanting is the greatest devotee service, not only a service to Krishna. It is crucial we sing tunes which are appealing to crowd. If they want to hear simple tunes, sing simple tunes. He emphasized on how



chanting aloud does infinitely more benefit than merely dancing and listening. If nobody is chanting aloud then change the melody to something easier.

Aindra Prabhu didn't chant kirtan because he liked it...but because he felt nothing else is more important. He said it is our responsibility to continue the "Harinama-sankirtan Revolution" that Lord Caitanya inaugurated. He wanted nothing more other than for Krishna's holy names to be chanted across the world.

Aindra Prabhu's passing came as a shock to many but if you want to appreciate, honour and please this humble devotee you can achieve it by doing what he desired to do the most...so let us

all use this event as an opportunity to increase the rate of our activities and saturate the worlds atmosphere with the sublime chanting of the maha-mantra!



Ajita Krishna Dasi's Passing Away

By Dwijamani Dasi

Ajita Krishna Dasi, a disciple of HH Giriraj Swami, recently departed from this world. She had been suffering from cervical cancer. Understanding that her time was short, she took shelter of the temple and prepared to leave her body in a spiritual way. Devotees assisted by reading sastra, chanting and singing the holy names to her daily. Even though her bodily suffering was great, she kept her mind focused on her deep love for Lord Krishna. Her own worshipable deities Sri Sri Radhe Shyama bore witness to her passing whilst she was hearing japa. For those of us who knew and loved Ajita, the pain of separation is heart rendering. We feel simultaneous grief and happiness: grief—that we will miss her loving and unique association, and happiness—for now she is free of her diseased and ailing body. Ajita will be remembered for her intelligence, sincerity, humility, simplicity, childlike purity and loving nature.

Rupa Ragunatha Dasa: Ajita was a pioneer in mass African preaching; by her Food For Life activities in the mid-eighties she paved the way for the Soweto preaching project. On a return flight from Europe, she convinced a high ranking businessman to donate monthly to the food relief project, which he did for nearly twenty years thereafter.

Kunti Dasi: I met Ajita in 1985. She was the kind of person who stood out in a crowd, not only because she was beautiful, but because she radiated a natural happiness. She was so likeable. Ajita inspired people with her natural and spontaneous expression of devotion. She made Krishna consciousness look effortless.

Noticeboard

The family and friends of Ajita Krishna Dasi thank the Thekwini Funeral Centre for their generous sponsorship for her funeral service. We are deeply indebted to Rajesh & Reena Maharaj.

Thank you to the Chatsworth Hospice, Sister Beryl and Sister Mano who took care of Ajita Krishna Dasi, ensuring that she was medically and emotionally comfortable.

Congratulations to the recently initiated disciples of His Holiness Partha Sarathi Das Goswami Maharaj.

Due to ill health, His Holiness Lokanath Swami's Bhagavat-katha is delayed until further notice.

Thank You to our photographers Sri Nathji Das, Sunil Mohan Das and Jeffery Govender for their outstanding photos and Lashika Ravjee for the excellent design and layout of this issue of Hare Krishna News

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If you would like to receive SMS or email notifications about various happenings and updates, email us at: kzn@pamho.net

Guruseva Dasi: Ajita had an incredible ability to enthuse people to offer some big service to Krishna. She was a beautiful and faithful devotee. She offered service from a deep place within her heart and inspired people to drop their critical natures. There was no room for being envious or judgmental.



The Most Auspicious Event



25th Appearance Anniversary of Their Lordships Sri Sri Radha Radhanath and Sri Gaurahari 16-17 October 2010

Saturday, 16 October 2010

Maha Harinam in Chatsworth

Puspa Abhishek of Sri Sri Radha Radhanath and Lord Caitanya
Remembrances in Service to Sri Sri Radha Radhanath

Sunday, 17 October 2010

Deities Offered a Beautiful New Outfit

Boat Festival

More Remembrances in Service to Sri Sri Radha Radhanath



HH Bhakti Caitanya Swami, HH Partha Sarathi Das Goswami,
HG Ramanujacharya Das, HG Shyamlal Das and many other senior devotees!

* Share in the ecstasy of the puspa (flower petal) abhishek on this special anniversary!
Sponsor a kilogram or more of flower petals at R100 per kilogram. Goal is 500kg!