



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

HARE KRISHNA NEWS

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2011



**Sri Radhanath's Journey
to South Africa**

Cows for Thought?

Ram Rescues Sita



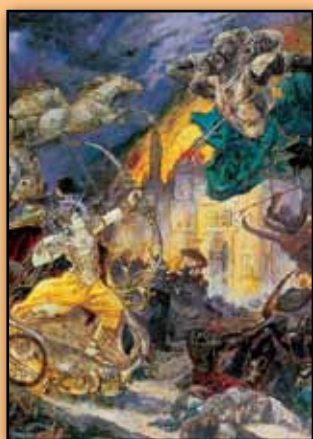
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ON THE COVER

Lord Rama Slays Ravana

"As Rama drew back the arrow, He shone so brilliantly that no one could look at Him. He released the weapon and it flew at Ravana, lighting up the earth and sky and roaring like a tumultuous ocean. It struck the demon on his chest even as he stood firing his own weapons at Rama. Piercing right through his heart, the arrow emerged from Ravana's body soaked in blood and entered the earth. Ravana whirled around and let out a cry which seemed to shake the entire creation. His bow dropped from his hands and he fell from his chariot like a mountain struck down by Indra's thunderbolt." (Ramayana, Part 3, Chapter 13, The Final Battle)



New Beginnings!

Editor's Note

Spring: flowers bloom, leaves turn green again and chirping birds permeate the clean fresh air. I vividly remember "Arbour Day" was a huge hit at school. Each class planted a tree to contribute to our earth's oxygen supply and make a difference to our environment. This issue of the Hare Krishna News touches on the sensitive issue of cow protection and its direct impact on the environment. Since this is the 26th installation anniversary of Sri Sri Radha Radhanath, we remember the history of Their Lordships arrival in South Africa.

Our main focus is the upcoming, most auspicious month, Kartika. For those of you who wondered why we offer a lamp everyday during this month, a special section has been dedicated to explaining this along with the procedure on how to offer a lamp. Remember to cut out the Kartika schedule and diarise the important festivals. His Holiness Bhakti Bhringa Govinda Swami has generously shared his delicious pecan pie recipe.

Finally, best wishes to all the matriculants. May the Lord bless you with strength, courage, determination and enthusiasm. This exam is the culmination of twelve years of hard work, so give it your all and don't forget your spiritual practices. The Lord says in *Bhagavad-gita*, 15.15, "I am seated in everyone's heart and from Me come remembrance, knowledge and forgetfulness."

Create your own schedule of spiritual activities during this stressful time. It will bring you balance, stability and inspiration to work hard. To all parents, it isn't that bad, the time goes by quickly and most importantly, be sure to stay calm and offer your support and encouragement at all times.

Best wishes,

Haripriya Devi Dasi

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Joining the Hare Krishna Movement...with Purpose

Message from the President of ISKCON KwaZulu Natal

Why is ISKCON commonly referred to as the Hare Krishna Movement? This can be understood from various perspectives, but on detailing each of those perspectives, I find that all ultimately centre on chanting and hearing the holy names of Krishna: *Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare*. Thus the Hare Krishna Movement is an institution dedicated to chanting the holy names of Krishna and sharing the chanting of those holy names—we move (spread) the chanting of Krishna's names, and we are moved (spiritually advance) by it! This is *sankirtan*, or the most comprehensive glorification of the Supreme Lord.

On joining an institution one should identify with the goals and purpose of the institution. So in ISKCON, devotees identify with the prime spiritual process and thus as a priority, dedicate time and energy to chanting the holy names and to sharing the holy names of Krishna. Numerous details on what personifies a devotee can be unpacked from this point, but it is initially important for us all to note and implicitly identify with this foundational activity. In this way practicing devotees can always stay focused and resolute in their purpose and have a means to measure their progress in spiritual life.

There are many other activities that ISKCON devotees engage in—deity worship, temple construction, book publishing, festivals, etc. Nowadays we even employ yoga, astrology, *vastu*, etc. But we engage in those activities essentially as a support to the chanting and sharing the chanting of the holy names of Krishna. Srila Prabhupada once commented that all we are doing (building big temples, organizing large programmes, performing gorgeous deity worship, etc.) is simply an arrangement to encourage people to come to hear and chant about Krishna, for the pleasure of Krishna. However, sometimes in the midst of a wide variety of spiritual observances, rituals and practices, the essential activity may become relegated or overshadowed - the support processes become the goal, while the real goal becomes the accompaniment.

Devotees are advised to recalibrate their practices to focus on the prime goal of the Hare Krishna Movement: “To chant Hare Krishna and be happy!”

Among countless references in the scriptures revealing and emphasizing *sankirtan* as the recommended process for liberating us from sufferings in this age of Kali, we find in the *Kali-santarana Upanisad*:

*hare krishna hare krishna krishna krishna hare hare
hare rama hare rama rama rama hare hare
iti sodasakam namnam kali-kalmasa nasanam
natah parataropayah sarva vedesu drsyate*

“The sixteen words of the Hare Krishna *maha-mantra* are especially meant for counteracting the sins of the age of Kali. To save oneself from the contamination of this age there is no alternative but to chant the Hare Krishna *maha-mantra*. After searching through all the Vedic literatures one cannot find a method of religion for this age so sublime as the chanting of the Hare Krishna *maha-mantra*.”

Anyone trying to relieve their material suffering, or make sense of their existence is guided by the bona fide and revealed scriptures to chant the holy names. This process is not manufactured but directly enunciated by the Supreme Lord Himself, (*dharman tu saksad bhagavat pranitam*) so it's not up for debate or challenge. Rather, sincere seekers will enquire about the support and guidance required in the matter of chanting Hare Krishna.

Srila Prabhupada had deep faith that simply by chanting Krishna's holy names, one would be freed from all trappings of the material world and be eventually established in an eternal, loving and blissful relationship with Lord Krishna. He, more than anyone else, blessed the world by giving us the holy names and the guidance and support in chanting those holy names. He blessed us all by giving us ISKCON, the Hare Krishna Movement.

May you all chant Hare Krishna and be happy!
Swarup Damodar Das

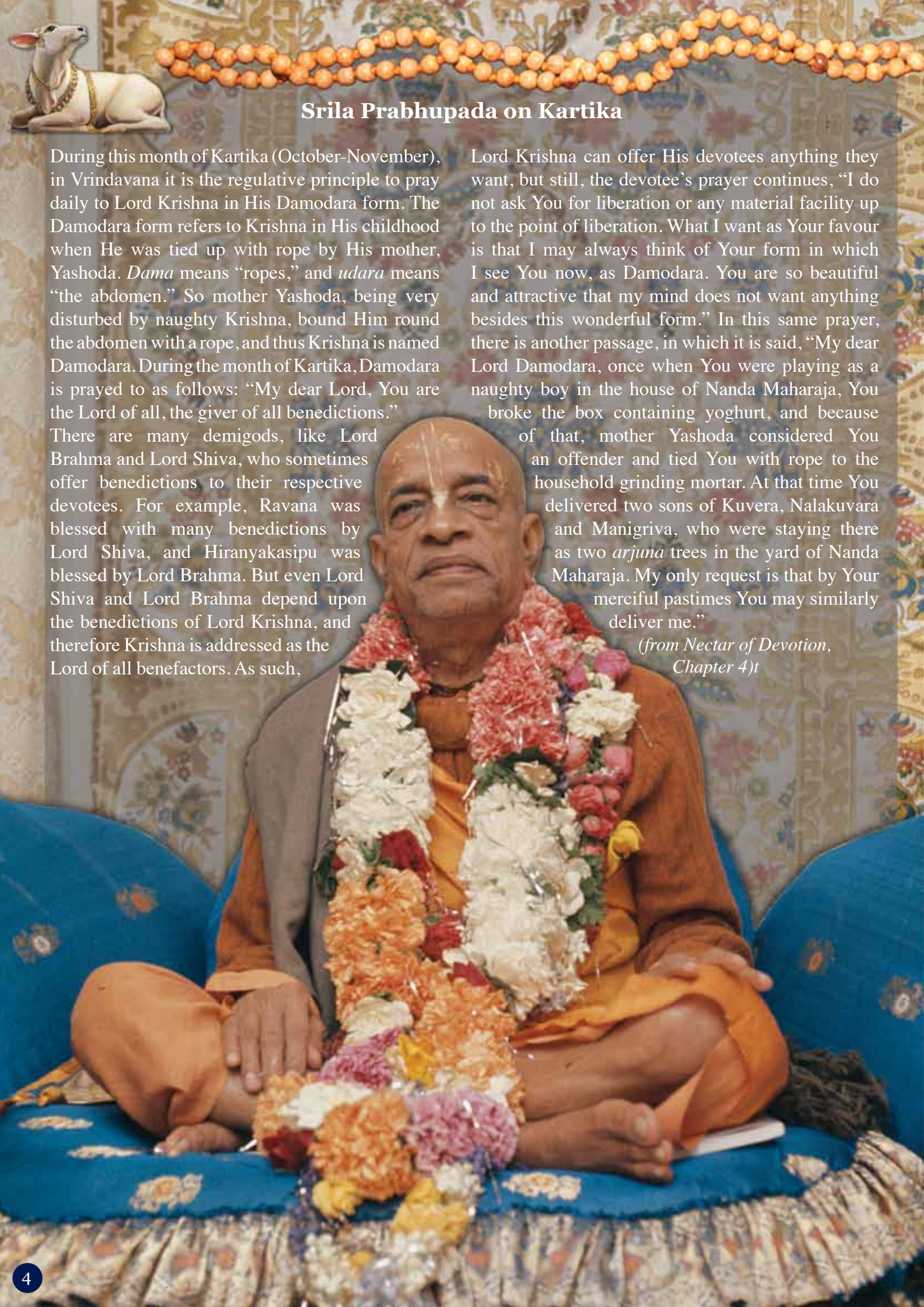
JOIN THE BOOK DISTRIBUTION CAMPAIGN

The book distribution committee is aimed at assisting and engaging everyone in serving Srila Prabhupada's mission of distributing books and Back to Godhead magazines regularly. Current activities are: book distribution seminars, distributing books at events, streets and malls, assisting with home programmes to install *Srimad Bhagavatam* sets, etc. Recently we initiated the ONE BOOK, ONE DEVOTEE, ONE

MONTH campaign. This campaign encourages individuals to distribute at least one book a month as part of their devotional service.

For participation please contact:

Raghunath Bhatta Das	0727180444
Rupanuga Das	0763317368
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Srila Prabhupada on Kartika

During this month of Kartika (October-November), in Vrindavana it is the regulative principle to pray daily to Lord Krishna in His Damodara form. The Damodara form refers to Krishna in His childhood when He was tied up with rope by His mother, Yashoda. *Dama* means “ropes,” and *udara* means “the abdomen.” So mother Yashoda, being very disturbed by naughty Krishna, bound Him round the abdomen with a rope, and thus Krishna is named Damodara. During the month of Kartika, Damodara is prayed to as follows: “My dear Lord, You are the Lord of all, the giver of all benedictions.”

There are many demigods, like Lord Brahma and Lord Shiva, who sometimes offer benedictions to their respective devotees. For example, Ravana was blessed with many benedictions by Lord Shiva, and Hiranyakasipu was blessed by Lord Brahma. But even Lord Shiva and Lord Brahma depend upon the benedictions of Lord Krishna, and therefore Krishna is addressed as the Lord of all benefactors. As such,

Lord Krishna can offer His devotees anything they want, but still, the devotee’s prayer continues, “I do not ask You for liberation or any material facility up to the point of liberation. What I want as Your favour is that I may always think of Your form in which I see You now, as Damodara. You are so beautiful and attractive that my mind does not want anything besides this wonderful form.” In this same prayer, there is another passage, in which it is said, “My dear Lord Damodara, once when You were playing as a naughty boy in the house of Nanda Maharaja, You broke the box containing yoghurt, and because of that, mother Yashoda considered You an offender and tied You with rope to the household grinding mortar. At that time You delivered two sons of Kuvera, Nalakuvara and Manigriva, who were staying there as two *arjuna* trees in the yard of Nanda Maharaja. My only request is that by Your merciful pastimes You may similarly deliver me.”

(from Nectar of Devotion, Chapter 4)t



Vrindavana Mood

Lecture by Partha Sarathi Das Goswami

Kartika is an occasion to increase our remembrance of Krishna. Everything in Krishna consciousness is designed to increase our remembrance of Krishna. The month of Kartika is a wonderful occasion to go deeper into Krishna consciousness and to try to imbibe the Vrindavana mood. Devotees make a special attempt in practicing Krishna consciousness during this month and generally we take a *vrata* (vow) to increase our hearing, chanting and remembering Krishna.

Exactly what each of us does is our personal commitment and we should try to do something special like visit the temple every evening to offer a lamp to the deity of Mother Yashoda binding Lord Krishna. By choosing to come to the temple and offer a lamp we are visiting a holy place, taking *darshan* of the deities and honouring *maha-prasada*. We can also offer a lamp in our homes, increase the quality of our chanting and also increase the quantity of our chanting. It is particularly advantageous to increase the quality of our chanting. A nice vow could be to memorise various prayers. We can consider reading one chapter of *Bhagavad-gita* or perform some service to the Vaishnavas. Any commitment over this month is appropriate and is good.

Hari Bhakti Vilasa states: “Kartika is the best of months. Kartika is always dear to the Vaishnavas. O great sage, a Vaishnava who with devotion serves Kartika delivers his ancestors from hell.” If we are interested in delivering our ancestors, then observe Kartika. “As everyone knows Lord Damodara loves his devotees. Lord Damodara’s month, the month of Kartika, also loves the devotees.” It goes both ways, it’s not that we are just serving Krishna trying to attract Him, but He also is attracted by our service.

The month of Kartika is a personality just like the holy name is a person and the Deity is a Personality. The month of Kartika thinks even the slightest devotional service is very big and important. Doing something very small in the month of Kartika is multiplied. “Lord Krishna is pleased by the offering of a single lamp during the month of Kartika. Lord Krishna glorifies anyone who lights a lamp for someone else to offer.” Even the service of lighting a lamp for other Vaishnavas to offer is beneficial. The clay lamp is our heart and the *ghee* around it is our *prema* (love) and the burning lamp is our *bhava*. *Bhava* means our sentiment, our mood, and our emotion. We are offering our heart in a surrendered way to Radha and Krishna.

In the *Narada Purana*, it is said that of all gifts, the gift of a lamp during the month of Kartika is the best-

there is no equal. In this regard we can encourage our families to come and also offer a lamp. This is the best gift we can give our family. “Worship of Lord Damodara during the month of Kartika is the proper atonement for a lifetime of sins.” All sins are atoned—*prarabhda-karma* (manifest reactions), *aprarabhda-karma* (unmanifest reactions), *kutam* (dormant reactions) and *bija* (reactions in a seed-like state)—by worshipping Lord Damodara.

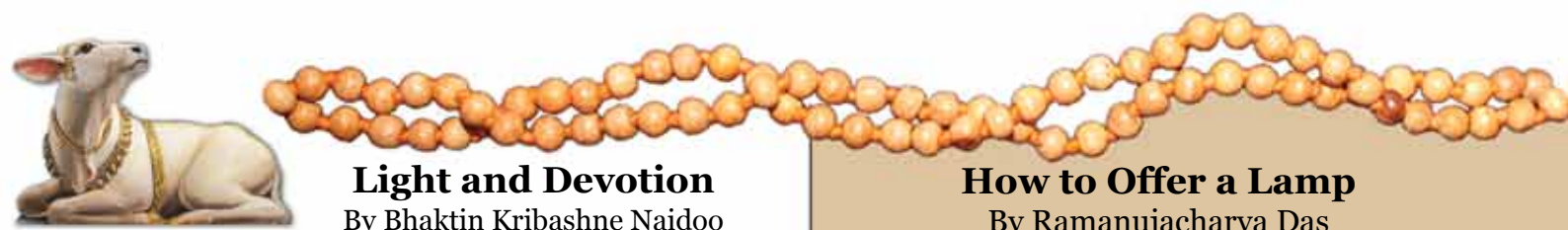
“In the *Padma Purana* it is said because She is the *gopi* most dear to Lord Vishnu, Sri Radha should be worshipped along with Lord Damodara during the month of Kartika.” Generally we worship Lord Damodara—Mother Yashoda binding baby Krishna (Lord Damodara) with ropes. But there is also Radha Damodara. Radha Damodara is the pastime when Srimati Radharani captures Krishna. Radha Damodara is Radharani binding Krishna with flower garlands of love and affection. This is the Vrindavan mood. Srila Prabhupada gave the Vrindavana mood — Vrindavana consciousness.



Sri Vyasa-puja Celebration
His Holiness

Partha Sarathi Das Goswami

Saturday, 8 October 2011 at 6pm
Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Temple
for enquiries call the temple: 031-4033328



Light and Devotion

By Bhaktin Kribashne Naidoo

Temples worldwide bellow in the mood of sweet service to Lord Krishna (Damodara), Who was bound by His mother with a rope around His waist. At this time pilgrims visiting the many temples in Vrindavana circumambulate the temple, participate in *kirtan*, hear spiritual discourses and offer a ghee lamp to the deity form of Damodara and Mother Yashoda. If one manages to capture Lord Damodara with ropes of pure devotion, one will be released from the bondage of repeated birth and death.

Hari Bhakti Vilasa elaborates, “ If even for a short time somebody burns a lamp in the temple of Lord Sri Hari, then whatever sins he has acquired for millions of *kalpas* (a day of Lord Brahma) are all destroyed.”

Srila Sanatana Gosvami further explains that a fire is present in all pieces of wood, however without rubbing the pieces of wood together, fire will not manifest. Hence, although many austerities are performed during Kartika, without offering a lamp, those performances will not be visible.

A lamp offers light which removes ignorance. Light over darkness, good over evil, knowledge over ignorance are symbolic to the meaning behind lighting a lamp as a form of worship. The *Pancaratra-Pradipa* delves deeper in explaining the purity of using a ghee based lamp as opposed to direct fire.

Light as an offering of radiance and illumination to its surroundings is used as worship by various faiths. The Quran states, “God is the Guardian and Protector of those who believe: He brings them forth from darkness into light.” (2:257)



How to Offer a Lamp

By Ramanujacharya Das

Generally we offer lamps while singing the *Sri Damodarastaka* prayers which are found in the *Padma Purana. Hari Bhakti Vilasa* (2.16.198) states, “In the month of Kartika one should worship Lord Damodara and daily recite the prayers known as *Damodarastaka*, which attract Lord Damodara.” If you are at home and are unable to sing these prayers you may play a recording.

Usually in our temples we use clay lamps, each one having a single *ghee* wick. Brass lamps may also be used and these should be washed before reusing.

Ideally, to light the lamp to be offered in *arati*, the flame should come from an existing *ghee* flame.

- Before picking up the lamp you should first purify your right hand by putting some water in it from an *acamana* cup.
- Then with your right hand first present the lit lamp to your spiritual master or to Srila Prabhupada, and pray, “My dear Guru Maharaja, and/or my dear Srila Prabhupada, please allow me to assist you in the worship of the Lord and His associates.”
- Then, with the consciousness that you are offering it on behalf of your spiritual master and Srila Prabhupada, offer the lamp with the full number of circles (listed as follows) to the main Deity.
- Offer the lamp by moving it in clockwise circles fixing your attention on the Deities. Offer four

Hanukkah is the Jewish festival of lights. During the eight day festival Jews light one candle on the first night, two on the next until the eighth night when all candles are lit. This has been an ancient practice to celebrate the victory of the Jewish freedom when the eight-branched temple candelabrum was lit with just enough oil to last one night but miraculously, the candelabrum remained alight for eight nights.

Light in the form of a votive candle is used in traditional Catholic practices. Here these candles are used to create an illumination in prayer for someone else.



Our Radiant Lord

An exciting new dance production, “Krishna Leela - The Divine Pastimes of Our Radiant Lord” celebrates in Bharat Natyam the playful pranks of Lord Krishna. It is a direct interpretation of the *Srimad Bhagvatam*’s message of Sri Krishna’s birth, His youth, and all the wonderful proofs of His divine nature and His superhuman feats of defeating all kinds of demons up to the great Battle of Kurukshetra. In this brilliant story Krishna’s vision has been for all of mankind to be empowered towards a better quality of life, the realisation of our true form and ultimately to master the practice of *bhakti yoga*.



Durban performances are at iZulu Theatre at the Sibaya Casino on 7 and 9 October. Tickets are available through Computicket.

For more information please contact
Verushka Pather on 0833600037
info@natyananda.co.za
www.natyananda.co.za



circles to the lotus feet, two circles to the navel, and three circles to the face; then offer seven circles to the whole body.

- After offering the lamp to the main Deity, offer it as *prasada* to the Lord’s associates in descending order, and to the *guru-parampara*—senior to junior.
(For example: Krishna, Radharani, Gird Govardhana, Caitanya Mahaprabhu, Lord Nrsimhadeva, Mother Yashoda, Tulasi Devi, and to the *guru-parampara* — senior to junior and finally one’s initiating guru. This may vary according to the Deities or pictures on the altar.)
- When offering the lamp, say softly to each personality, “Please accept this offering of a lamp.”
- Then offer it (with one or three circles) to the assembled Vaishnavas as the *prasada* of the Lord and His associates.

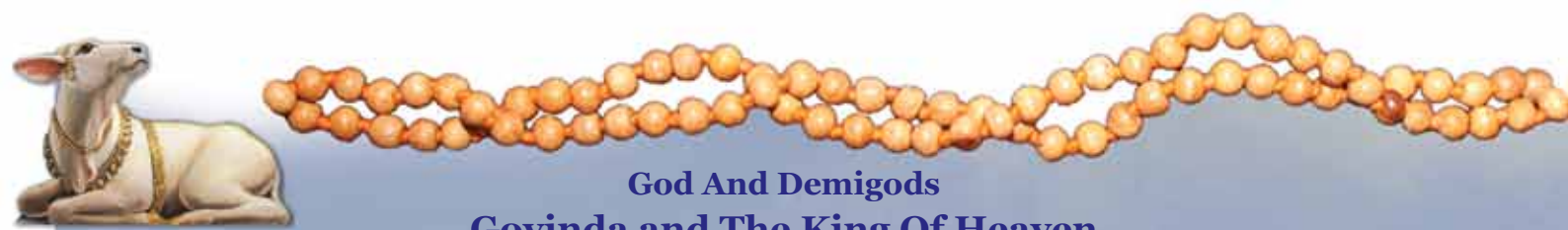
A firm practice in Buddhism is an offering of the lamp which signifies the stability and clarity of patience, the beauty which surpasses all ignorance. An overlap with Vedic culture, Buddhists believe that offering of a ghee lamp has great spiritual benefit.

Amongst the many occasions in the Vedic calendar, Deepavali, also known as the Festival of Lights, is synonymous with colour and lamps. Lamps were placed on the foot-paths to guide and welcome Lord Ramachandra back to Ayodhya.

According to Vaishnavism it is the Person (Krishna or His pure devotees) to whom the lamp is offered that is important, and in that way the lamp becomes important. Through the month of Kartika, let us light up our paths of devotional service by singing *Sri Damodarastaka* and offering a lamp of love to Lord Damodara.

Sri Sri Radha Radhanath's
26th Installation Anniversary
Boat Festival & Pushpa Abhishek
15 - 16 October 2011

Join the festival by sponsoring 1kg of petals for only R108
Contact Sukumari Dasi on 031-4033328
between 9am-5pm Monday to Friday



God And Demigods Govinda and The King Of Heaven

By Nikunja Vilasini Dasi

At the tail of Govardhan Hill rests Govinda Kund, the majestic lake filled with the ambrosia that bathed the divine body of Sri Krishna. The sacred atmosphere and beauty of the place brings to mind a unique pastime of Lord Krishna that took place there. It all began one day when Lord Indra, the king of the demigods listened to a conversation between seven-year old Krishna and His father.

Krishna continued to argue with Nanda Maharaja, "Baba, you are saying that this Indra *pūja* you are preparing for is traditional and is necessary for showing gratitude to the controller of rainfall, King Indra, but there is no need. Every living being takes birth according to his past karma and leaves this life taking the result of his present karma. According to the natural tendency of one's work, one achieves the respective results. So there is no need to worship any demigod: rather let us perform our prescribed duties very nicely."

"What!" Lord Indra retorted, "Who is this impudent young boy thinking that he is so smart?"

Impressed by his little son's arguments, Nanda Maharaja explained that although this may be true, everything is sanctioned by the Supreme Lord and without satisfying the predominating god one cannot derive any good result simply by material activities.

"Oh Baba," Krishna exclaimed, "We do not derive any special benefit from Indra. He also pours water on the ocean. So he pours water on the ocean and the land and it is not dependent on our worshipping him. Our specific relationship is with Govardhan Hill and Vrindavan forest and nothing more. So please use all the paraphernalia arranged for the Indra *yajna* to worship and satisfy Govardhan Hill and the *brahmanas*."

Lord Indra almost fell off his throne in rage. How dare anyone threaten his exalted position, his reputation and pride!

Finally, Nanda Maharaja and the cowherd community relented to Krishna's plea. After all, their entire life was centred on pleasing Krishna. Following Krishna's directions, the cowherd men and women prepared countless large amounts of delicious food offerings for

Govardhan Hill. Using all the paraphernalia meant for the Indra *pūja* they performed the Govardhan *pūja* and joyfully circumambulated Govardhan Hill shouting, "All glories to Giriraj, the great King of Mountains!" Then Krishna assumed a transcendental gigantic form and ate all the wonderful food offerings declaring that he was non-different from Giriraj Govardhan.

Lord Indra's fury knew no bounds. Intent on punishing Krishna and the inhabitants of Vrindavan, he summoned the Samvartaka clouds, the clouds of universal devastation, to destroy Vrindavan. A deathly storm in the form of heavy wind, torrential rain and hail inundated Vrindavan showing no mercy. Immediately the residents of Vrindavan including the cows and other animals turned to Krishna for protection.

Hearing His devotees' pleas for help, Krishna thought, "This demigod who thinks himself supreme has shown his great power, but I shall answer him according to My position. I am the Supreme Lord over all, and I shall thus take away his false prestige, which has risen from his power. The demigods are My devotees, and therefore it is not possible for them to forget My supremacy, but somehow or other he has become puffed up with material power and thus is now maddened. I shall act in such a way as to relieve him of this false prestige. I shall give protection to My pure devotees in Vrindavan, who are at present completely dependent on My mercy and whom I have taken completely under My protection." (from *Krishna Book, Devastating Rainfall in Vrindavan*)

Lord Krishna picked up Govardhan Hill with one hand as easily as a child picks up a mushroom from the ground. With the little finger of His left hand, He held up the enormous hill as an umbrella for His loving devotees. For seven days and nights, Indra relentlessly submerged Vrindavan with incessant rainfall that fell like piercing sharp arrows. However, Krishna effortlessly continued to hold up the hill, giving His devotees the pleasure of His *darshan*.

Giriraj Govardhan felt immense joy serving his Lord unconditionally. Although he is Krishna Himself, he plays the role of the best servant of Lord Hari (Krishna). Thus, the *gopis* declared, "Of all the devotees,





this Govardhana Hill is the best! O my friends, this hill supplies Krishna and Balarama, along with Their calves, cows and cowherd friends, with all kinds of necessities – water for drinking, very soft grass, caves, fruits, flowers and vegetables. In this way, the hill offers respects to the Lord. Being touched by the lotus feet of Krishna and Balarama, Govardhana Hill appears very jubilant.” (*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 10.21.18)

He is also the best servant because his joy increases in the service of his master’s devotees. The incessant rain and devastating hail felt like flower petals on his body because he derived great pleasure in service to Krishna and His devotees. He also allowed Krishna to be manifest before His devotees’ eyes for seven days without cessation relieving their pangs of separation that they so often experienced away from Him. Therefore Giriraj Govardhana demonstrates that

damage, Lord Indra humbly approached Him with tears in his eyes. Clearly, the Lord’s chastisement had vanquished his pride.

After offering beautiful prayers to the Lord, Indra bathed Him with the celestial water of the Ganges from the many trunks of his elephant carrier. Surabhi also bathed him with her nectarean milk. This *caranamrta* (the nectar from the Lord’s feet) collected to form a kund or lake. Great demigods like Brahma, Shiva and their associates also appeared and worshiped Krishna with golden jewelled lamps, fans and other valuable paraphernalia. It was at this place that Lord Indra, together with Surabhi, crowned Krishna as Govinda, the Lord of the cows. Thus, this beautiful lake became known as Govinda kund.

How is it that Indra, being an esteemed devotee of Krishna, caused such a great offense? When

one is deluded by pride, one’s intelligence is lost and so one loses everything. Fortunately, by Indra’s repentance and the mercy of the devotee Surabhi, Krishna forgave him. Srila Prabhupada explains that there is no need to worship the demigods for temporary material advancement. Rather, the temporary result one derives from the demigods is granted by the Supreme Lord.

The *Gita Mahatmya* gives a wonderful account of Indra’s special relationship with Lord Krishna and his journey back to the Lord’s spiritual abode. Once, Lord Indra’s throne was replaced by another Indra who had not performed sacrifices and welfare activities as Indra did. Perplexed, Indra approached Lord Vishnu

to eradicate his doubts.

The Lord explained that the new Indra had performed the most auspicious activity that is greater than anything else – the recitation of the 18th chapter of *Bhagavad-gita* everyday throughout his life, which gives him entrance into the spiritual world after this life. Lord Indra, following the Lord’s advice, did the same throughout the remaining days of his life and thus achieved residence in Vaikuntha, the Lord’s abode, where his happiness was far greater than he had experienced as the king of heaven. If we, like Lord Indra, take exclusive shelter of Krishna and his pure devotees, we will also receive the rain of eternal auspiciousness and bliss.



we can please the Lord better by serving the Lord’s devotees than by trying to serve the Lord directly. In the same way, the *gopis* appreciate Giriraj as the best servant because they realise that their desires to meet and serve Krishna can only be fulfilled by merciful devotees like Govardhan Hill.

Lord Indra, seeing Krishna’s extraordinary power, asked the clouds to cease their destruction. Indra realised his terrible mistake of not recognizing Krishna as his Lord and master and wanted to ask for forgiveness. However, knowing that the Lord was upset with him and that the cows were dearest to Krishna, he took Surabhi the celestial cow to appease His anger. While Lord Krishna examined the storm’s



Glorious Vrinda Devi

By Indulekha Sakhi Devi Dasi

Krishna's devotees sometimes incarnate in natural objects to gain close proximity to Him. One such example is Srimati Tulasi Devi who is the plant manifestation of Vrinda Devi and is one of the most illustrious devotees of Krishna. Scriptures stress the importance of obtaining Tulasi Devi's mercy to make progress in the path of devotion. The *Skanda Purana* states: "Tulasi is auspicious in all respects. Simply by seeing, simply by touching, simply by remembering, simply by praying to, simply by bowing before, simply by hearing about or simply by sowing this tree, there is always auspiciousness. Anyone who comes in touch with the Tulasi tree in the above-mentioned ways lives eternally in the Vaikuntha world."

The Vrindavana forest is named after Vrinda Devi, who performed penances here for 60,000 years. She was born as the daughter of Emperor Kedera, a pious king that attained Goloka Vrindavana. His daughter Vrinda Devi, after sanctifying the forest by her penance, also attained Goloka. Ever since then, the forest has been known as Vrindavana.

Once, Tulasi Devi descended as the daughter of King Kushadvaja. She was married to Sankhacuda, the king of the demons, who drew strength from her purity and chastity. So firm was her chastity that even Lord Shiva could not defeat him. The demigods went to Lord Vishnu for help. At this time, Lord Vishnu went to Tulasi Devi assuming the form of her husband, Sankhacuda. Her chastity was momentarily broken when Tulasi Devi mistook Him, thinking Him to be her husband. Taking advantage of this Lord Shiva killed Sankhacuda.

When Tulasi Devi understood what happened, Lord Vishnu revealed His original form.

An enraged Tulasi Devi cursed Lord Vishnu for His stone hearted behaviour to become a stone. Honouring His pure devotee, Lord Vishnu accepted this curse and promised to appear as the Shalagrama *shila* only in the Gandaki River. He also gave Tulasi Devi the benediction that she will eternally reside with Him as His consort in Vaikuntha. He said that for the benefit of everyone her hair would assume the form of a plant which will be most auspicious for anyone

performing devotional service and her body would become the Gandaki River.

In Krishna *lila* she appeared as a young *gopi* friend of Srimati Radharani. Once, Srimati Radharani was so pleased by the service of Vrinda Devi that with the help of the other *gopis* she arranged a magnificent throne for Krishna and Vrinda Devi. Lalita Sakhi acting as the priest recited the mantras and performed the marriage ceremony of Krishna and Vrinda Devi. Radharani personally exchanged the flower garlands between Krishna and Vrinda Devi, and so this wonderful "wedding ceremony" was performed. Devotees never offer anything to Krishna without a Tulasi leaf. Krishna always adorns Himself with a Tulasi garland.

The goddess of fortune, Laksmi, is sometimes envious of the Tulasi leaves which are placed at the lotus feet of the Lord, for they never forsake their position, whereas Laksmi, although stationed by the chest of the Lord, sometimes has to please other devotees who pray for her favour. The Lord therefore appreciates the service of Tulasi more than the service of Laksmi as stated in *Hari Bhakti Vilas*, text 279: "Laksmi is certainly dear to Lord Vishnu but Tulasi is more dear to Him." Srila Prabhupada writes, "... We should always endeavour after becoming the servant of Tulasi Devi...Tulasi Devi never goes back to Godhead, she is always with Godhead. She is a pure devotee and has thus appeared on this planet to render service to Krishna." (January 6, 1972)

For more info: www.vrindavan-dham.com/vrinda





Vedic Observer Cows for Thought?

By Indulekha Sakhi Devi Dasi

I walk up the aisle. I walk down the aisle. My son points to a new product. The ingredient list is as decipherable as the Rosetta Stone. Whipping out my phone, I start googling as I curse advertisers and their clever marketing that so easily target seven (going on seventeen) year olds. (Note to self: never bring son shopping again). E441, I find, is bovine gelatine so I relegate the product to the shelf. Two hours (and a data bundle) later we finally emerge from the supermarket, my child triumphantly clutching a chocolate bar that he can eat.

‘What is bovine gelatine?’ asks Nimai, happily munching his chocolate. I tell him. ‘Yuck,’ he says mid munch, ‘That’s disgusting.’ I agree with him. We live in a society that has little regard for the sacredness of the cow. In India the cow is revered but even there the MacDonalds’ culture has infiltrated. Ronald [MacDonald’s mascot] teaches our children that burgers grow on trees. Psychologists call this cognitive dissonance. I call this marketing genius.

Leaving aside my pet peeve with the advertising industry the real issue here is the rise in cow slaughter. In the United States alone about 39 million cattle are slaughtered each year for food. Eighty percent of deforestation in the Brazilian rainforest results from cattle grazing. Although it has long been known that cattle ranching has been a principal driver of rainforest destruction in Brazil, a Greenpeace study, entitled “Amazon Cattle Footprint”, is the first detailed assessment of the scale of its impact.

The report uses innovative satellite-mapping techniques to expose direct links between new cattle farms and deforestation in one of the largest Amazon states, Mato Grosso. One map reveals the location of industrial-sized slaughterhouses within the state, and shows how they have become the epicentres of major forest destruction as land is cleared to make way for pasture. Between 1996 and 2006 the area of pastures in the Amazon grew by approximately 10 million hectares – an area the size of Portugal – to accommodate a vast expansion of the Brazilian cattle herd.

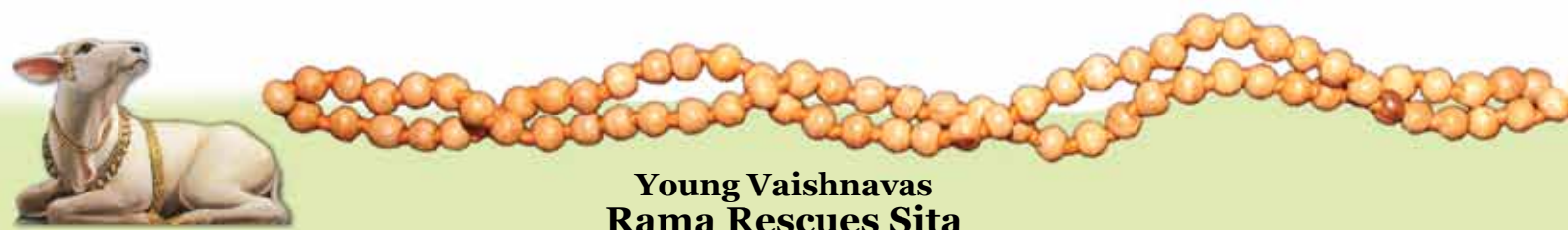
The Amazon basin holds the largest tropical forest in the world, and is the most diverse ecosystem on Earth, playing a vital role in keeping the world’s climate in balance. Destruction of the rainforest escalates global warming.

It is inefficient to grow grains and other feed crops for cows—only a fraction of what they are fed is turned into flesh that humans eat. The highly respected

Worldwatch Institute says, “In a world where an estimated one in every six people goes hungry each day, the politics of meat consumption are increasingly heated, since meat production is an inefficient use of grain—the grain is used more efficiently when consumed directly by humans. Continued growth in meat output is dependent on feeding grain to animals, creating competition for grain between affluent meat-eaters and the world’s poor.”

The socio-economic and environmental reasons alone are motivation enough to invalidate the need for the slaughter houses. But there is further and more compelling evidence why humanity should avoid the senseless killing of these gentle creatures. In his purports in *Srimad Bhagavatam*, Srila Prabhupada explains that violence amongst humans is a karmic reaction to animal slaughter: “Men do not understand that because they unrestrictedly kill so many animals, they must be slaughtered like animals in big wars.” Obviously this reaction will be intensified by the killing of cows that are so dear to Krishna. Prayers in the *Rig Veda* instruct us: “The cow is the mother of the Rudras, and the daughter of the Vasus. She is the sister of the Adityas and a source of nectar in the form of ghee. To all thoughtful men I advise: never kill a cow.” Take that Ronald!





Young Vaishnavas Rama Rescues Sita



Queen Kaikeya forced the noble King Dasarath to banish his beloved son Rama to the forest for 14 years. Virtuous Lord Rama, along with His wife, Sita, and brother, Lakshman, left for the forest where they lived happily and peacefully by hearing talks and serving the great sages.

One day Shurpanakha, Ravana's hideous she-demon sister, upon seeing Rama, wanted to marry Him. She insulted Sita, and for that Lakshman cut off her ears and nose. Running back to Ravana crying, she spoke of Sita's incomparable beauty. Ravana, thinking of Sita's beauty, decided to kidnap Her.

He sent the demon, Maricha, in the guise of a golden deer, with silver spots and a tail that shone like the rainbow, to distract Rama. When Sita saw the deer she asked Rama to capture it for Her. Off he went soon followed by Lakshman leaving Sita alone at the cottage.



At that time Ravana stole Sita! He forced her on his chariot and rode off into the sky with great speed. Jatayu, the bird king, tried to stop Ravana but Ravana cut off the poor bird's wings and he fell to the ground. Lord Rama made an alliance with Sugriva, the king of the monkeys and also met His great devotee Hanuman. Hanuman found Ravana's kingdom, Lanka, an island, across the sea and set fire to the city. Lord Rama along with his army of monkeys built a floating bridge across the sea to Lanka to rescue Sita.



A great battle broke out between Ravana's demons and Lord Rama's monkey and bear army. The monkeys and bears fought so well that Ravana woke up his gigantic brother Kumbhakarna.

walked on the battlefield eating the monkeys by the handful! Still, Lord Rama's army defeated him.

Then Ravana in terrible fury directly attacked Lord Rama. Rama placed an arrow on his bow and released it straight into Ravana's heart. Ravana fell dead! Lord Rama rescued Sita and with Lakshman and Hanuman returned to Ayodhya where he was crowned King.

CELEBRATE DIWALI ON WEDNESDAY 26 OCTOBER 2011



Sri Radhanath's Journey to South Africa

By Bhaktin Kribashne Naidoo

October 2011 marks the 26th anniversary of Sri Sri Radha Radhanath's installation and Temple opening. At that time I was just a little girl amongst the thousands present over the three day Temple opening celebrations. As I watch my Dad's (Sri Nathji Das) video cassette recording, it reveals that the event was filled with pomp, splendour and delight.

During Srila Prabhupada's visit to Durban in 1975 he expressed two desires: a temple be built in the heart of Chatsworth and the Ratha Yatra Festival on Durban's Golden Mile. Many years later a group of dedicated devotees brought Srila Prabhupada's dream to reality.

His Grace Bimal Prasad Das was instrumental in acquiring our Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Deities. In his recent visit to Durban, he fondly recollected the challenges and successes of the carving and installation of the Deities.

Bimal Prasad Prabhu had six months to shop in Vrindavana for deity outfits, backdrops, flutes, bugles, shoes, crowns and other paraphernalia as well as to oversee the deities carving and shipping to South Africa. With the assistance of His Grace Bhaktisiddhanta Das (who is trained in classical marble carving), they travelled from Vrindavana to Jaipur to finalise the details of Their Lordships.

Bimal Prasad Prabhu and Bhaktisiddhanta Prabhu met Mr Panday, the *sthapati* (deity sculptor) in Jaipur. Mr Panday had supplied our Gaura-Nitai deities at the Cato Ridge Temple and They now reside in Lenasia. Mr Panday being expert in marble carving had completed two sets of deities but personally rejected them as the marble was not suitable and knew that it would not be of the standard required.

After a detailed examination of the third set of deities, Bimal Prasad and Bhaktisiddhanta suggested major changes. A three-hour hammer and chisel labour followed further refining the carved forms. Bimal Prasad Prabhu

recollects the *sthapati* completing the final touches to her head.

Thereafter, Mr Panday personally packed the deities in a wooden case and tied Their Lordships securely, ensuring a safe onward journey. No nails were used in fastening the case as fear of customs officials recklessly breaking open the box may damage or crack the marble forms. Hence, screw planks were used so officials would have to unscrew the case. 'This Way Up' was clearly marked in English, Hindi, Sanskrit and Urdu!

Bimal Prasad Prabhu personally travelled to Delhi and met the Station Master to ensure proper handling of the deity case. It took approximately five hours in Delhi station and a bribe to station personnel to secure the safety and cleanliness of the shipment. The deity case then arrived in Juhu, Mumbai where it was stored behind the reception desk for careful protection. The case was then placed in a container and sent to Durban.

Devotees noted that Radhanath (Krishna) has a self-manifested *brahmana* thread. This *upavitam/brahmana* thread was viewed as a symbol of Krishna's anxiety to fulfil the love and wishes of His pure devotee, Srila Prabhupada.

During the Temple opening over 18-20 October 1985, traffic officials were under great stress as vehicles making their way to the festival had backed-up through Higginson Highway. His Holiness Bhakti Tirtha Swami delivered the opening address in the presence of many social and political leaders of the time. Five *yajna kunds* were built and the deity installation ceremony was performed in the most elaborate and bona-fide manner.

To date hundreds of visitors offer their respects to Their Lordships Sri Sri Radha Radhanath on a daily basis as the Lordships lovingly reciprocates by offering Their special *darshan*. The Sri Sri Radha Radhanath has become the spiritual capital of the southern hemisphere!





Vaishnava Kitchen Classic Southern Pecan Pie

By Bhakti Bhringa Govinda Swami

It does not get much more Southern than pecan pie, and it's hard to beat a pecan pie too.

If you have never eaten a homemade pecan pie, then you have not really had pecan pie. They do sell pecan pies in the stores, and some restaurants have pecan pies, but they do not measure up to the ones mixed up and baked in your kitchen.

Although pecan pies taste just this side of heaven and many people think they'd never be able to make a really good holiday pie, pecan pies are not really hard to make.

The hardest part of a pecan pie would be making a homemade crust, but the roll-out crusts in the refrigerator section of the grocery store take care of that. OK. That may be cheating, but the roll-out crusts are hard to beat (unless you're really good with

pastries). Frozen pie crusts are also fine but not as good as the roll out crusts.

Once you have the crust (from scratch or store bought), you just mix up the base for the pecan pie. Then, hand place the nuts or just stir them in. Either way works.

The only real problems with pecan pies are that they may not set when cooking. The two main reasons for that are: old corn syrup—do not use a bottle from last year—something about it sitting there does something to the syrup; also, do not try to double the recipe.

Mix each pie up separately. When you try to double, the ratios seem to go South (pun intended), and that's not good. The pecan pie base just doesn't work out when you double this Classic Pecan Pie recipe.

Ingredients

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1/2 cup sugar • 1/4 cup butter (softened) • 1 cup corn syrup (best quality) • 1/4 tea spoon salt | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 tsp vanilla flavouring • 3 level tablespoons egg replacer • 1 – 1 1/2 cups pecans • 49 cm pie shell (deep dish is best) |
|---|--|

Method

- In a medium sized mixing bowl, cream the sugar and butter well. The sugar and butter should have a nice creamy texture.
- Add the corn syrup, salt and vanilla. Mix again.
- Add a tablespoon of the egg replacer and mix. Repeat until all egg replacer is used.
- Pour the syrup mixture into the uncooked pie crust.
- Arrange pecan pieces on top in a circular pattern, or you can stir them in with the corn syrup mixture in the mixing bowl. If you are using pecan pieces versus whole nut half pieces, then stirring in is easier. The nuts rise to the top in any case. If you have large nut pieces, you can get a prettier pattern by hand placing them.
- Bake the pecan pie in a preheated oven at 180 degrees Celsius for around 45 minutes. The pie should be fairly solid with maybe a little give in the middle when it's done. If it is still soupy when you tap the top with your finger, then cook for longer.





Schedule for Kartika 2011 (11 October-10 November) Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Temple

For all days during Kartika, other than the special days listed below, the programme will be:

7.00pm: *Arati* and *kirtan*, followed by offering of lamps

8.00pm: Light *prasada*

Sunday programmes during Kartika will start at 3pm, not 4pm.

11 October, Tuesday: First Night of Kartika

6.00pm: *Bhajans*

7.00pm: *Arati*, *kirtan* and *darshan* of Deities in a new outfit

7.45pm: Class by HH Partha Sarathi Das Goswami

8.30pm: *Arati*, *kirtan* and offering of lamps

8.45pm: Light *prasada*

15 October, Saturday: 26th installation anniversary of Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Day 1

8.00am: *Darshan* of Deities in flower outfit

10.00am: Preparing flower petals for the *pushpa abhisek* on Sunday

4.15pm: *Arati* and *kirtan*, followed by offering of lamps

5.00pm: Boat festival

6.00pm: Talks by senior devotees

7.00pm: *Arati* and *kirtan*, followed by offering of lamps

8.00pm: Light *prasada*

16 October, Sunday: 26th installation anniversary of Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Day 2

10.00am: Preparing flower petals for the *pushpa abhisek*

3.00pm: Srila Prabhupada Gurupuja

3.15pm: *Pushpa Abhisek* (bathing of large Deities with flower petals)

4.15pm: Class by HH Partha Sarathi Das Goswami

5.00pm: *Prasada* feast

6.00pm: *Japa* in temple room

7.00pm: *Arati* and *kirtan*, followed by offering of lamps

17 October, Monday: Appearance of Srila Narottam Das Thakur

7.00pm: *Arati* and *kirtan*

7.45pm: Class on Srila Narottam Das Thakur

8.30pm: *Arati*, *kirtan* and offering of lamps

8.45pm: Light *prasada*

20 October, Thursday: Appearance Day of Sri Radha Kund

7.00pm: *Arati* and *kirtan*

7.45pm: Class on the Glories of Radha Kund by
HH Partha Sarathi Das Goswami

8.30pm: *Arati*, *kirtan* and offering of lamps

8.45pm: Light *prasada*

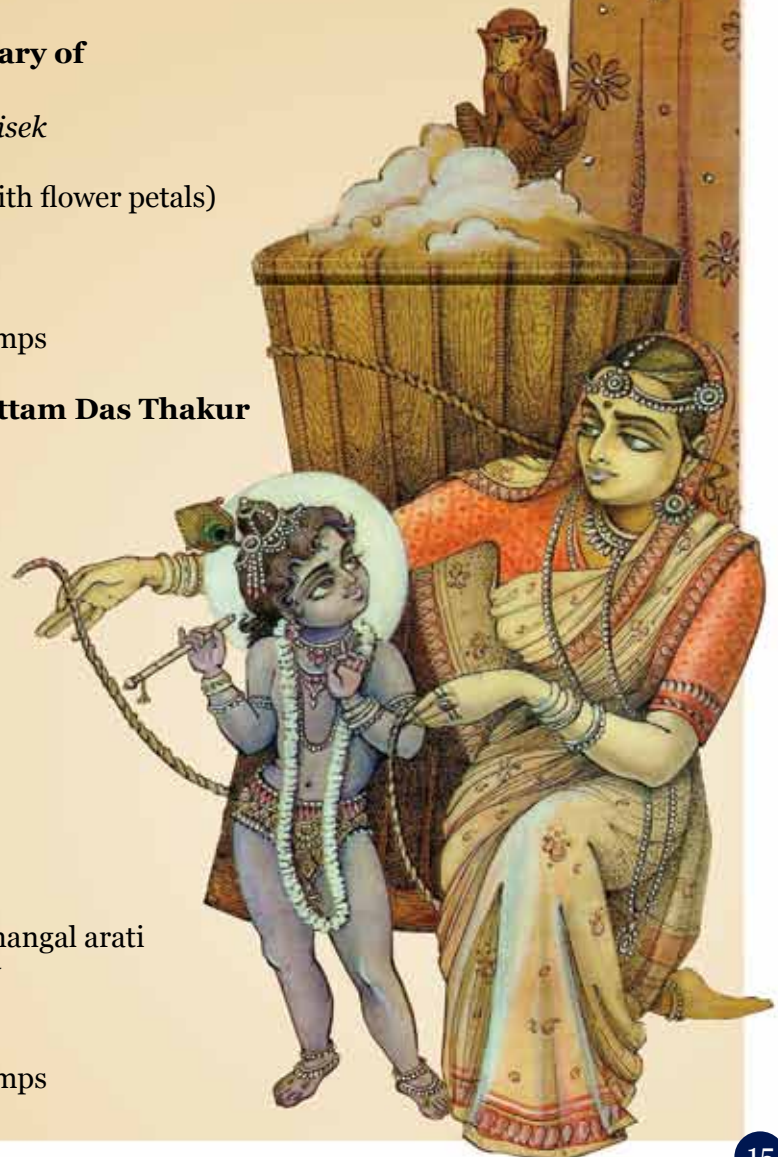
23 October, Sunday: Ekadasi

Devotees will gather to chant 64 rounds of *japa* after mangal *arati*

3.00pm Sunday Love Feast Programme followed by
prasada feast at 5.00pm

6.00pm *Japa* in temple room

7.00pm: *Arati* and *kirtan*, followed by offering of lamps



Schedule for Kartika 2011 (Continued)

26 October, Wednesday: Diwali

7.00pm: *Arati* and *kirtan*, followed by offering of lamps

8.00pm: Light *prasada*

27 October, Thursday: Govardhan Puja and Go Puja

8.00am: *Darshan* of deities in a new outfit

9.00am: Govardhan Puja festival starts followed by a *prasada* feast at midday
All devotees may prepare sweet and savoury offerings for Sri Giriraj on this day!
Please bring your offerings by 11am.

7.00pm: *Arati* and *kirtan*, followed by offering of lamps

8.00pm: Light *prasada*

30 October, Sunday: Srila Prabhupada's Disappearance Day (noon fast)

3.00pm: *Abhisek* and *kirtan*

3.45pm: *Bhoga* offering

4.15pm: Talks by senior devotees

5.30pm: *Prasada* feast

6.30pm: *Japa* in temple room

7.00pm: *Arati* and *kirtan* and then devotees proceed to Srila Prabhupada

7.20pm: Srila Prabhupada tirobhava *arati* and *kirtan*

7.40pm: Offering of lamps

06 November, Sunday: Ekadasi and Disappearance of Srila Gaurakishora Das Babaji (noon fast)

Devotees will gather to chant 64 rounds of *japa* after *mangal arati*

3.00pm Sunday Love Feast Programme followed by *prasada* feast at 5.00pm
(Programme will include offerings and *pushpanjali* to Srila Gaurakishora Das Babaji)

6.00pm *Japa* in temple room

7.00pm: *Arati* and *kirtan*, followed by offering of lamps

10 November, Thursday: Last Day of Kartika

6.00pm: *Bhajans*

7.00pm: *Arati* and *kirtan*

7.45pm: Class

8.30pm: *Arati*, *kirtan* and offering of lamps

8.45pm: Light *prasada*

Other than Sundays, a *prasada* feast will only be served on Thursday, 27 October for Govardhan Puja. All other nights, a milk drink and *maha-prasada* will be served. If you would like to contribute towards one of the main feasts or the nightly milk drink preparation, please contact the temple reception on 0314033328.



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