



INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS
Founder Acharya: His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

HARE KRISHNA NEWS

May/June 2026



Cover Art by Ana Kishori Peres

Ana Kishori
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Vaishnava Calendar

11 Jun Th	Ekadasi
12 Jun Fr	Break fast 06:48 - 10:13
24 Jun We	Ganga Puja
25 Jun Th	Pandava Nirjala Ekadasi
26 Jun Fr	Break fast 06:51 - 10:16
27 Jun Sa	Panihati Cida Dahi Utsava
29 Jun Mo	Snana Yatra
10 Jul Fr	Ekadasi
	Sri Srivasa Pandit's Disappearance
11 Jul Sa	Break fast 07:05 - 10:18
14 Jul Tu	Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura's Disappearance (Fast until noon)
	Sri Gadadhara Pandit's Disappearance
15 Jul We	Gundica Marjana
25 Jul Sa	Ekadasi
26 Jul Su	Break fast 06:45 - 10:16
29 Jul We	Guru (Vyasa) Purnima
	Srila Sanatana Gosvami's Disappearance
	First month of Caturmasya begins (Fast from green leafy vegetables for one month)
3 Aug Mo	Srila Gopala Bhatta Gosvami's Disappearance
7 Aug Fr	The incorporation of ISKCON in New York
9 Aug Su	Ekadasi
10 Aug Mo	Break fast 06:34 - 10:12





Boundless Love

One the Cover

By Ana Kishori Peres

As a 19 year old, I reflect on how fortunate I am to be a devotee since birth. Growing up, I was always surrounded by many depictions of Krishna and His pastimes through art. I would often find myself enchanted by the beauty of each artists' perception of Him and would examine every detail of it. Each painting always had a different mood that reflected the devotion and love of the devotee who painted it. Sometimes so much so, that I could feel the Lord's presence within them. I think it is because of this, I became so in love with art. I desire to pour my heart into paintings that convey the same beauty and feeling that I felt seeing other artists' work.

Honestly, I wouldn't call my artistic adventure an adventure at all. Throughout my childhood and teenage years, I was never really skilled at drawing and painting nor was I consistent in practicing it. There were times where I would go months without painting at all. However, every time I would finally get the inspired to paint again, something almost inexplicable would happen. Even though I had very little experience, somehow, I would end up creating something I never imagined I could. Every time I paint, it's as if Krishna has completely taken over me, guiding me, while I watch everything unfold. My art is far from perfect, but I feel like I cannot take any credit for any beauty that shines through, as it is only due to Krishna's mercy alone.

For this piece, I used watercolour, which is my favourite medium because of the softness it naturally creates. It requires patience because of the slow layering process. Watercolour can be a bit unpredictable, and I made some mistakes in this piece, but you learn to guide it rather than control it. But even when mistakes happen, sometimes the painting turns out all the more beautiful.

I started this piece after a long break from art. I had the desire to express the boundless love of Radhe-Shyam and I hope, even in a minuscule way, that this painting allows you to feel this love of Theirs. And through this feeling, I pray it can awaken longingness within us, urging us to meditate, "My dear Lord Krishna, although I have forgotten You for so many long years in the material world, today I am surrendering unto You. I am Your sincere and serious servant. Please engage me in Your service." (Sri Chaitanya-caritamrita, Madhya 22.33)



About A Kitten

Living With Srila Prabhupada

By Govinda Dasi

We were fostering a kitten, and when Srila Prabhupada visited, we had not yet found a home for him. Srila Prabhupada would often affectionately tease me about the small kitten and even in lectures he would mention it.

Sometimes when I worked down in the garden, Srila Prabhupada would watch me from his window up above and he would see the kitten running around my feet. Then later on he would chuckle and say, "Oh this cat is always at Govinda Dasi's feet, but that is fortunate because she is Vaishnavi." This kitten had the habit of getting underfoot, almost tripping people as they walked. It stayed outside the kitchen door and each morning when Srila Prabhupada went for his walk, he invariably stepped on the kitten. Of course Srila Prabhupada did not hurt the kitten. I was amazed at how often this small creature managed to get under Srila Prabhupada's lotus feet as he left for his daily walk. The kitten always seemed to be hungry, even though we fed him *prasada* everyday. Of course I felt somewhat embarrassed about the situation, and so we continued to look for a home for the kitten.

Srila Prabhupada stayed with us for about a month and the day of his departure, we had a chanting and feast program at our home. Many people came and one young couple agreed to adopt the kitten. We were glad to find him a good home.

A few days later however, the couple informed us that the kitten, although perfectly healthy, had suddenly died on the very evening Srila Prabhupada left Hawaii. I wondered about the good fortune of the kitten that was stepped on by Srila Prabhupada's lotus feet daily. Thank you Srila Prabhupada for giving your grace to anyone, even a kitten that took shelter under your lotus feet.

May we always remember to take shelter beneath your lotus feet and focus our love entirely on you and Krishna and be spared the danger of taking birth in the body of a deer, a cat, a dog or any other creature which does not allow us to serve you in the most complete way. Thank you Srila Prabhupada.

Are Nama-hattas Still Relevant?

Message from the Temple President

Devadeva Das

I've been thinking a lot about *nama-hattas* lately. And honestly, I'm convinced they're more important now, in modern-day ISKCON, than ever!

Here's why: temples are amazing. But let's be real, not everyone is ready to walk into a temple from day one. The crowds, the Sanskrit, the big building, and the protocols can be intimidating. Simply put, fear of the unknown. It can feel like a lot for someone new. But a *nama-hatta* is different.

Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Temple has fourteen *nama-hattas*, or weekly satellite gatherings in and around the greater Durban area.

Some of our *nama-hattas* are held at local schools, halls, or temples, and some are at devotees' and friends' homes. It's shoes off at the door, *kirtan* in a circle or on the couch. Questions you can ask without feeling silly. *Prasada* is shared in a small group or around the coffee table. Suddenly, Krishna consciousness isn't a far-off thing. It's right there with your friends in an intimate setting. That's the bridge. That's how curiosity turns into practice. That's living the message.

For those of us who can't make it to the temple every week

Life gets full. Work runs late. The temple is an hour away. You have kids, or health, or transport issues. I get it. So do thousands of devotees. *Nama-hattas* keep us connected, nourishing our *bhakti-lata* (the creeper of devotion growing in the heart) when the temple isn't a practical option.

COVID taught us this the hard way. Remember how we'd jumped on a 20-minute Zoom *kirtan*, and it would carry us through the week? We realised how much we need each other. When association is rare, we treasure it. When it's always there, we forget. *Nama-hattas* make sure no one goes spiritually hungry.

Small gatherings, big impact!

Nama-hattas let the Movement breathe and expand without waiting for the next big project.

One home program can transform a whole apartment complex. One family starts chanting, then neighbours get curious, maybe a coworker shows up. That's how Mahaprabhu's *sankirtan* movement spreads in this age: from home to home, heart to heart. Simple, affordable and with sincerity from the heart.

Where leaders are made

You want to learn how to lead a *kirtan*? Host a *nama-hatta*. Want to practice giving class? Host a *nama-hatta*. Learn to cook, welcome guests, look after people, handle the sound system or even offer an *arati* — this is where we grow up in *bhakti*.

I've seen families transform their homes into temples. I've seen mothers become incredible teachers. I've seen teenagers run the whole show because someone gave them a chance. *Nama-hattas* train the next generation of devotees, who in turn can do this for a lifetime. I am a testament to this — it is how I learned.

This was Srila Prabhupada's idea all along

Srila Prabhupada didn't want Krishna consciousness locked in big buildings. He said, "Make your home into a temple." Chant Hare Krishna, read *Bhagavad-gita*, offer your food, invite people over. That is a *nama-hatta*!

When we do that, spiritual practice stops being a Sunday event and becomes the fabric of our life. That's living life by example.

Why committed devotees at *nama-hattas* change everything

One of the biggest blessings any *nama-hatta* can have is when committed devotees show up regularly, sit down, and give their association. Committed devotees are those who practice seriously, are dedicated to Srila Prabhupada's mission, and deeply value the devotees. That presence changes the whole room. It brings strength, warmth, and the kind of spiritual nourishment you can't download from the internet. It's not only about them giving a class. It's the atmosphere they create by being there.

Walking the *bhakti* path isn't always smooth. We hit doubts, dry spells, family drama, and health issues. When newer devotees, or even those of us practising for years, get to sit with someone who's walked that path for decades, it's huge. They've faced the challenges. They've stayed steady. They've built real faith through real life. And you can feel it when they speak with us. That kind of encouragement you can't get from books alone; they are living *bhagavatas*.

Devotee camaraderie keeps the *nama-hatta* sharp. Without it, groups can drift. The discussion remain shallow. The mood gets casual. But when a committed devotee is regularly present, everything lifts. The questions get deeper. The *sadhana* feels more real. There's more humility, more service, more: "Oh, this is why we do it. And this is how to do it!"

And honestly, their example teaches louder than any class. Just watching how they treat people, how they



handle *prasada*, how they listen, how they chant *japa*, that leaves a mark. You go home thinking, "I want to be like that."

How we keep *nama-hattas* vibrant

We may want to grow our *nama-hatta*. But growth isn't only numbers. It's depth. It's staying connected to the heart of Krishna consciousness. Regular association does that. It builds devotees. It strengthens faith. It ties the whole group back to Prabhupada's mood.

If you're an experienced devotee reading this, please hear me: your presence at a local *nama-hatta* might be the reason someone doesn't give up this year. Your story, your steadiness, your care, that's the glue.

You don't have to prepare a big lecture. Just come. Chant. Share what you've learned. Answer the awkward questions. Tell us how you got through when your *japa* felt challenging. That's the medicine.

For the rest of us

If you have committed devotees coming to your *nama-hatta*, treasure them. Make it easy for them. Pick them up if transport is an issue. You don't have to put them on a pedestal, just love them and appreciate them. Ask them to share. And take notes, not just in your book, but in your heart.

If your *nama-hatta* doesn't have that calibre of association, invite someone. Be bold. Devotees may want to give their association but don't know where they're needed. And many may live close to you.

Imagine if every *nama-hatta* had a few steady, seasoned devotees who keep showing up. More

homes would feel like temples. More devotees would feel held. More would stay on the path for the long haul.

That's what Srila Prabhupada wanted. That's what Lord Chaitanya's movement runs on: association. Not just any association, but the kind that carries depth, experience, and love for Krishna. If you've tasted even a drop of this process, you know it's worth sharing. *Nama-hattas* are still the easiest, most natural way to do it.

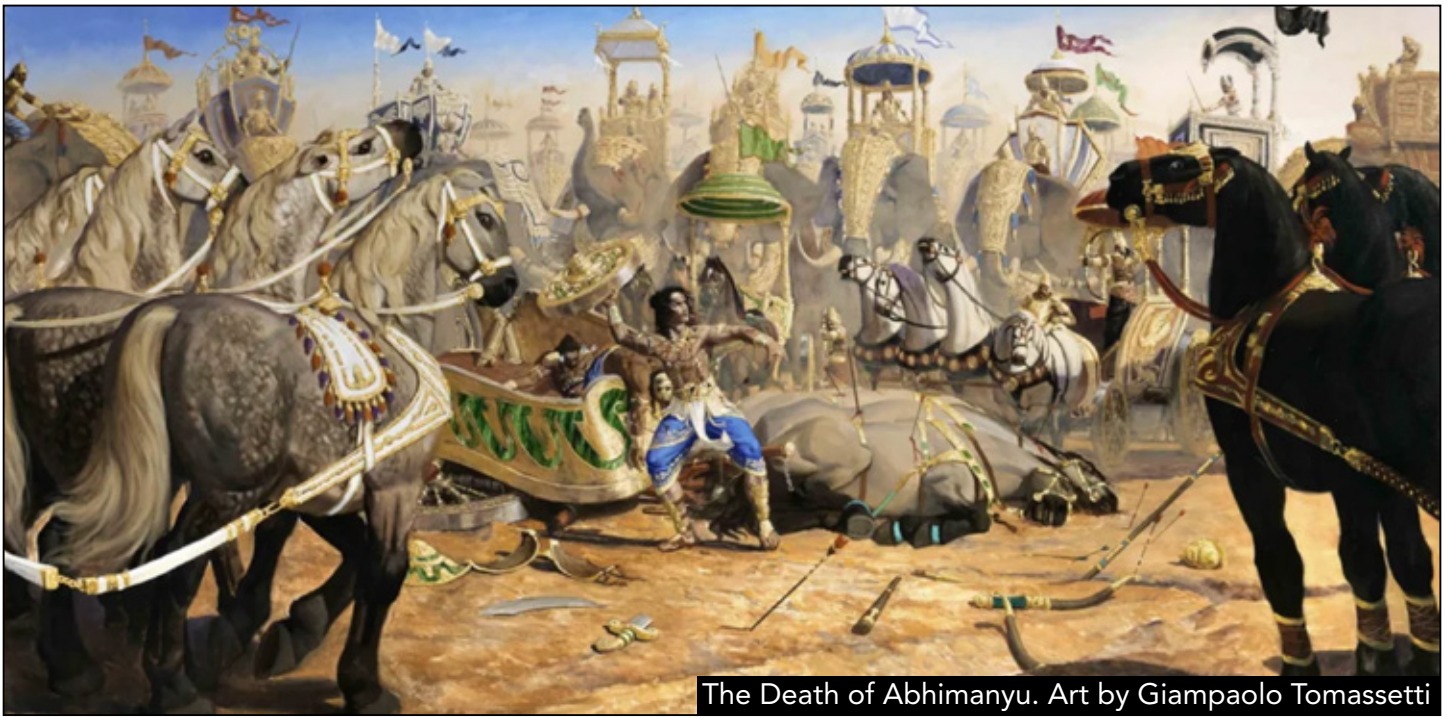
If you host a *nama-hatta*, thank you. You're carrying the mission forward. If you attend one, bring a friend next time. If there isn't one near you, maybe Lord Krishna is empowering you to start one. It doesn't have to be perfect. Play some *kirtan*, read a verse from the *Bhagavad-gita*, and offer some fruit. Start there!

Imagine if every town had 5, 10, 20 homes where people gathered for *krishna-katha* every day of the week. More living rooms would become temples. More hearts would find their way back to the Lord.

Let's make space for it. Let's ask for association. Let's keep our *nama-hattas* strong and make a difference no matter where we are in our Krishna conscious journey.

That's Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's plan. That's what Prabhupada wanted us to do. Let us keep it going and bring as many as we possibly can to the lotus feet of Sri Sri Radha Radhanath. Hare Krishna!

Find a *nama-hatta* near you here: <https://iskcondurban.net/contact-us/kzn-nama-hattas/> or contact Dayal Chaitanya Das at 083 557 1062 or Paramatma Das at 076 549 5474.



The Death of Abhimanyu. Art by Giampaolo Tomassetti

Even This Was Yours

Soul Poetry

By Kusum Sarovara Dasi

Subhadra:

"Your son, Abhimanyu is dead."

Those words shattered me

I wailed and I refused to believe it

He was my son, my son

You're my dear brother, Krishna

But I tend to forget that You are the Supreme Lord

Why, Krishna? He was only 16

How does one move on from losing a loved one?

How does an uncle allow his nephew to die?

Why would You let a mother cry?

I spend days and nights replaying those words

His own family members that he looked up to,
killed him

Krishna, my brother, the Supreme Lord

Why? Why do I feel this way?

You control everything, everything happens by You

Isn't that what You say?

I am approaching You

Tell me what to do

Why did you allow this?

Was I a bad mother?

Or am I a bad person for not trusting You?

Krishna:

My dear Subhadra,

He was never lost from Me

Nor Arjuna nor you

The name Abhimanyu means fearless

He carried out his duty

Don't let your love be clouded with grief

Pain makes time feel like cruelty

Nothing is ever done without My sanctioning

You are not a bad mother

You are a mother who loves deeply

You asked why I allowed this....

Now, I'm asking you to see beyond what is seen

Is the Sun cruel to set when it is time for day to
end?

Would you claim the ocean unjust because waves
must return to depth?

You're not being punished

You're just being reminded to think of Me beyond
joy and sorrow

Cry

I will hold your grief

But don't ever state yourself unworthy of My love

You're loved by Me

And so was Abhimanyu

And you, Arjuna

Don't allow grief to become a chain around your
dharma

Hold onto each other

But don't forget or lose Me while in pain

Don't forget that I too feel

I am the heart within all hearts

Abhimanyu, My nephew, a brave warrior

Is never apart from Me

And yes, This is Mine

**HARE KRISHNA HARE KRISHNA KRISHNA KRISHNA HARE HARE
HARE RAMA HARE RAMA RAMA RAMA HARE HARE**

Indian Consulate Yoga Day at the Temple



BYS Semester Picnic





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gratitude, dependence, and love.

Among her most poignant prayers is a particular verse where she astonishingly prays for calamities to happen again and again so that she may remember Krishna. At first this seems shocking. Why would a mother pray like this? Parents sacrifice so much for their children in the hope that life will eventually become peaceful and secure. Yet Kunti's motherhood never became sentimental or possessive. Through every hardship, her dependence on Krishna deepened. She transformed suffering into remembrance, and remembrance into attachment to Him.

Importantly, Kunti is not glorifying pain itself. Spiritual life is not meant to become a kind of sadism where suffering is worshipped. Rather,

Queen Kunti

By Gaura Bhumi Devi Dasi

Queen Kunti's prayers are the first set of prayers we encounter in the *Srimad Bhagavatam*. They are deeply moving because they reveal not only her devotion, but also her character. We often know Kunti primarily as the mother of the Pandavas, yet motherhood was only one of her many roles she carried throughout her life. What made her such an extraordinary mother was the depth of her spiritual identity. At her core, Kunti knew exactly who she was: an eternal soul surrendered to Krishna.

The *Bhagavatam* gives voice to the inner heart of the devotee, and Kunti's prayers reveal remarkable emotional depth, humility, intelligence, and dependence on Krishna. Her life was not easy. Born the daughter of King Surasena, she was adopted by King Kuntibhoja, from whom she received the name Kunti. As a young girl, she faithfully served the unpredictable sage Durvasa Muni, who blessed her with a mantra by which she could summon any demigod. Curious to test the mantra, she invoked the sun-god and gave birth to Karna. Later she married King Pandu, who was cursed and unable to father children. With Pandu's death, Kunti was widowed and responsible for raising the Pandavas amidst constant danger and uncertainty.

When we encounter her prayers in the First Canto, it appears to be the final time she will personally see Krishna before He departs for Dvaraka. These prayers are therefore not casual words, but the culmination of a lifelong relationship shaped through suffering,

she recognises that when human beings become materially comfortable, they often forget Krishna. In moments of danger, however, the heart naturally cries out for shelter. Kunti saw that Krishna's presence transformed every calamity into an opportunity for grace.

Her prayers continue with another beautiful theme: why Krishna is worth depending on. Kunti acknowledges that Krishna is beyond material perception, unknowable to ordinary people, yet somehow He stood before her intimately as family. She explains that worldly advantages such as birth, wealth, beauty, and education often create the illusion of independence, but again and again Krishna personally protected the Pandavas. This is love.

She knew Krishna was the Supreme Lord and her family member. The same Krishna who liberated Putana, protected Draupadi, and guided Arjuna's chariot remained affectionate toward His devotees. Kunti understood that Krishna's intimacy did not diminish His greatness; it revealed it fully.

Kunti's final prayers capture the essence of her heart. She asks only that her consciousness flow naturally toward Krishna, just as the Ganges naturally flows toward the ocean. Motherly love flows naturally and continuously, and Kunti simply redirected that current toward Krishna. Perhaps we may not pray for calamities, but we can pray for remembrance. Kunti remains such a powerful example of motherhood because of who she was as a spiritual person. Having Krishna does not mean life will be free from trials. It means we have shelter while moving through them.

Krishna & Friends Lila Dolls Craft

For the Kids

By Lila Suka Devi Dasi

Little friends little friends,
Do you like to play pretend?
Floating in outer space while you jump on a trampoline!
Turning into tigers in a jungle when it's just a garden scene!

Now what could be better than playing pretend with your Supreme Bestie, Krishna in mind. We have a wonderful craft for you that will keep those imaginations flowing in the best way!

Krishna & Friends Lila Dolls Craft

Age group: 5 and over

Materials: Templates (on pages 10 to 15), child-safe scissors, cardboard, markers, crayons, or colouring pencils) and a glue stick.

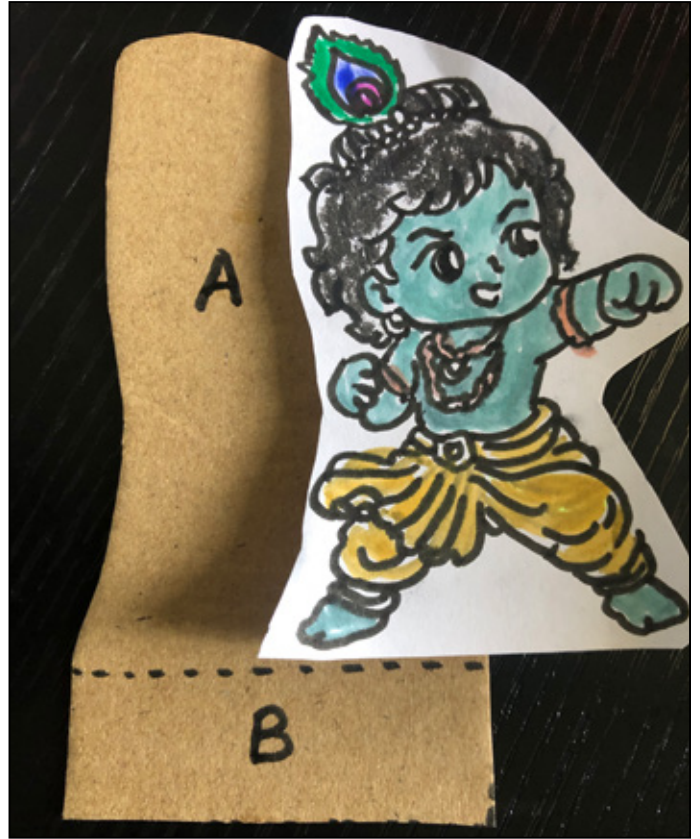


Step 1:
After printing out the templates for whichever *lila* you want to play with, colour the pictures and cut them out.



Step 2:

Place the picture on the cardboard. Make an outline of the picture onto the cardboard so you can get an accurate size. The cardboard will help to create the *lila* doll and make it steady enough to play with. At the base of the *lila* doll make a rectangle slightly bigger in width than the doll and a few centimetres down. This will act as the base of the doll so you can stand it up and move it around to play.



Step 3:

Apply glue to A and stick the *lila* doll image onto the cardboard. Make a fold with part B, make sure to fold it behind the image to make the doll stand



And there you have it! Now for the real fun! Once you have several Leela dolls made we can re-enact the pastimes. You can get mom and dad to read for you or with you from Krishna Book or watch your favourite episode from Little Krishna for inspiration.

Please find templates on the next page.



You can make your own backgrounds (we have also included one for you here), use your toys, blocks to build a village and whatever else you like to make the magic happen. Here are some great ideas you can try or build on:

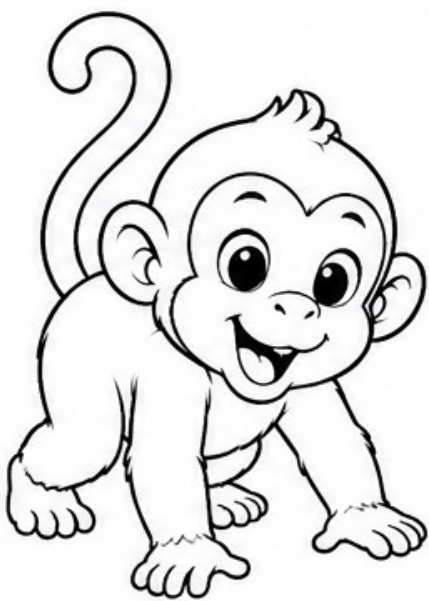


Make as many Lila dolls as you like. Store them in a safe box or plastic bag and take them along on *nama-hattas*, temple programs, or wherever you like to share Krishna and his fun pastimes.

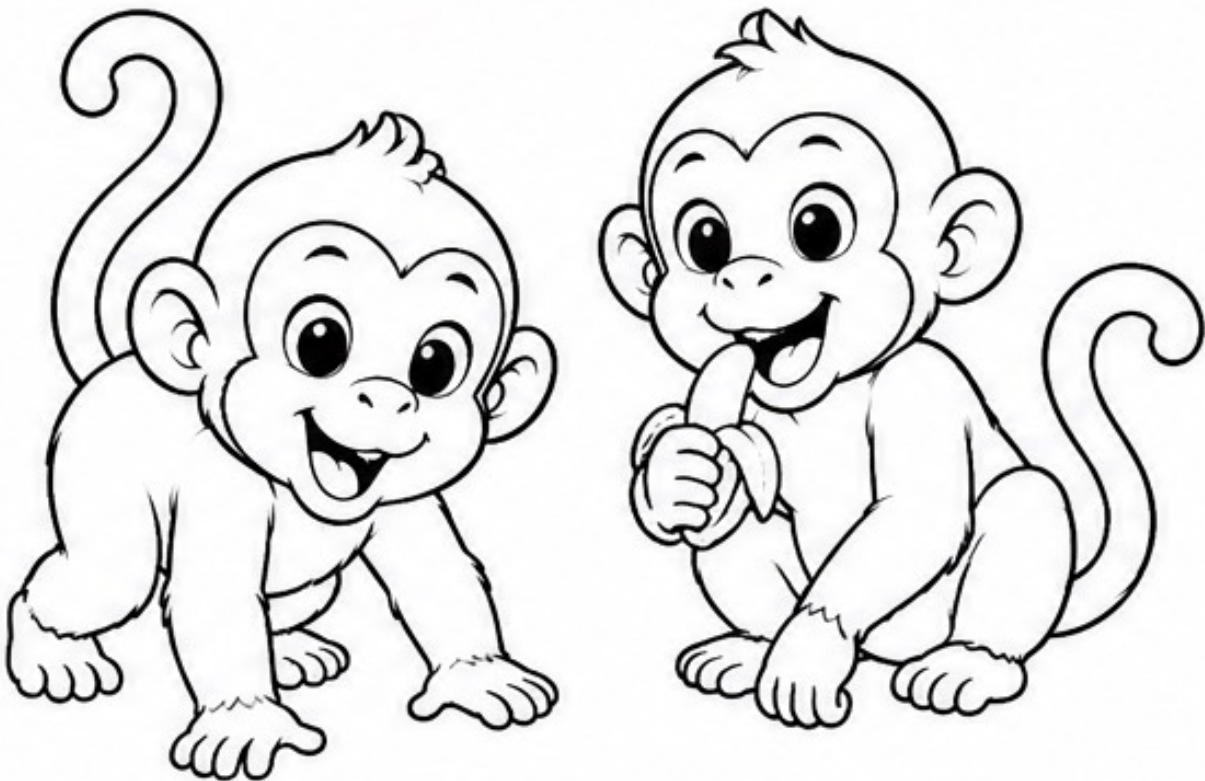
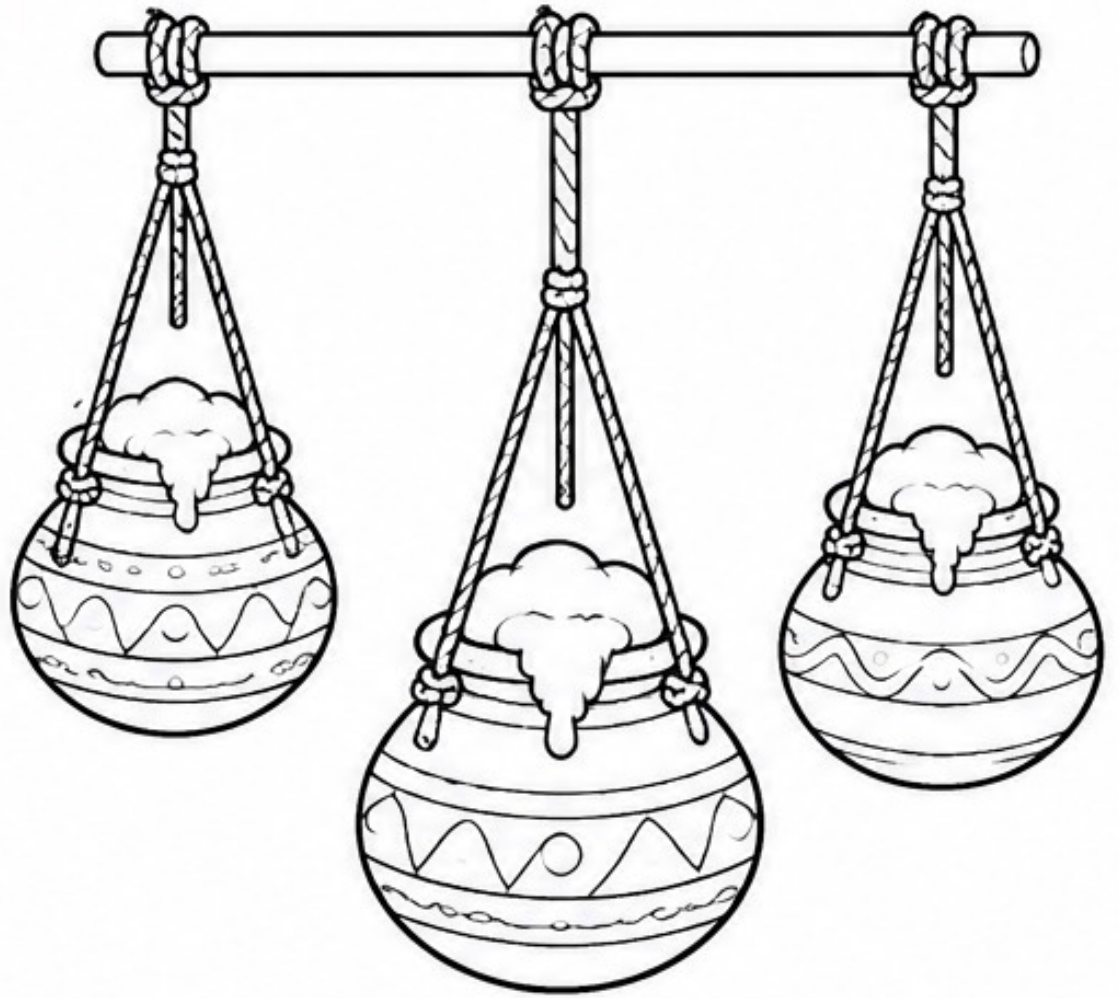


We have included several pastimes but if there is a pastime you would like to have Lila dolls for that we did not include here, feel free to make a request to the Editor, and we will happily add it to the next issue. Have fun keep smiling and remember Krishna!

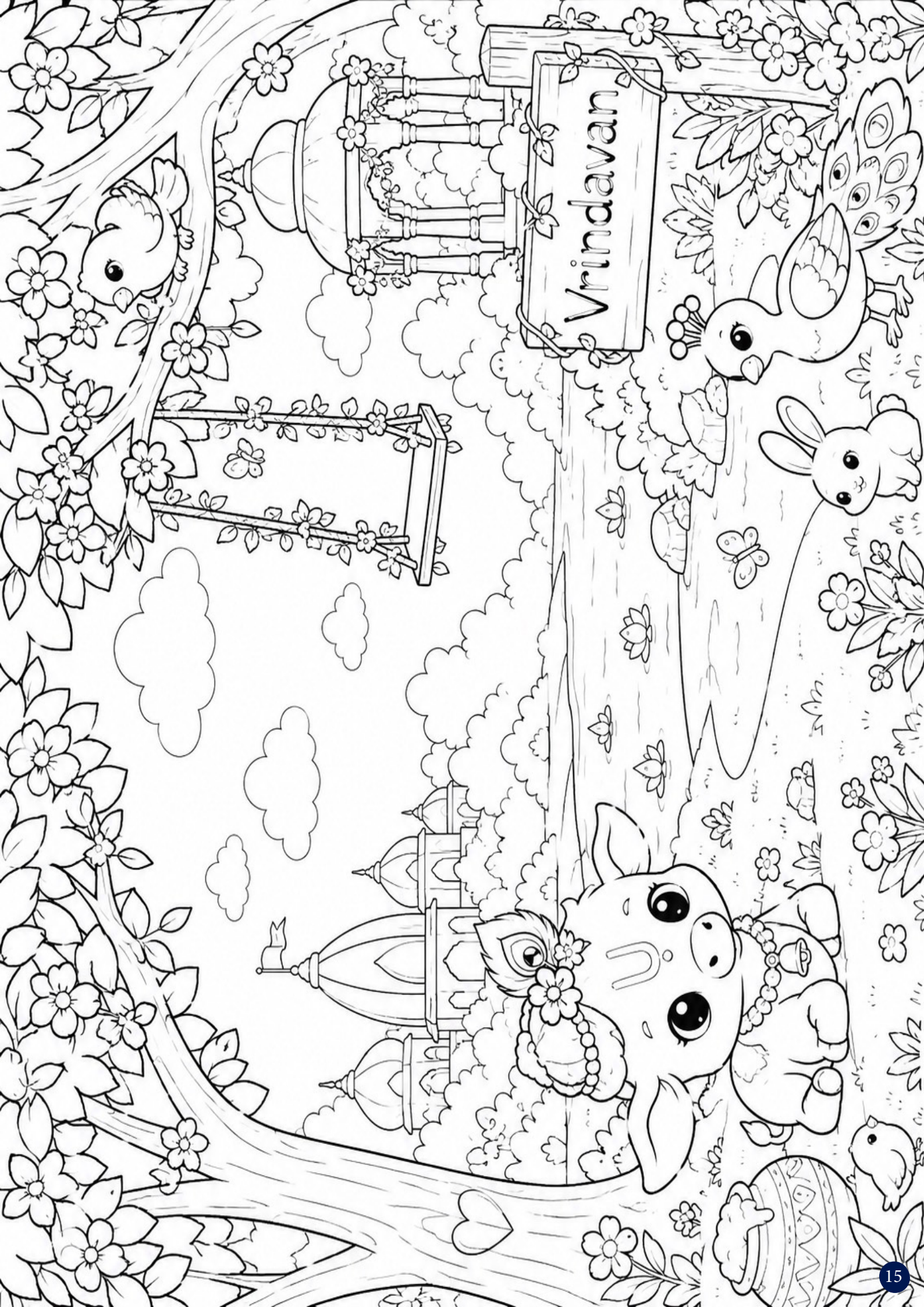














Savoury Scones

The Vaishnava Chef
By Ananga Sundari Dasi

Ingredients

2 cups self-raising flour
2 Tbsp butter, cold
1 tsp salt or less
1/2 tsp sugar
1/2 tsp ground black pepper
1 tsp paprika
1 Tbsp finely chopped parsley or coriander (both can be used)
2 fresh red chillies, deseeded and finely chopped
1 cup of grated cheddar cheese
1 tsp dried mixed herbs

1 tsp ground cumin and coriander powder (optional)
Sour milk to create a soft smooth dough

Method

- Rub in cold butter to the flour mixture and then gradually add in all other spices, herbs and cheese.
- Use enough sour milk to create a soft smooth dough, keep in mind to not over knead the dough.
- Roll out the dough to least 3cm thickness, cut to desired shapes and bake at 180 degrees Celsius for roughly 20 to 25mins or until light brown and fully cooked.
- Offer to Krishna and then serve with butter and more cheese if desired. Enjoy!