

March & April 2010

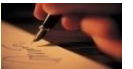
Following the Footsteps...

Prabhu Premi Sangh Newsletter



Volume 3, Issue 3

Reflections from Pujya Swamiji's Diary...



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Inspiring pearls of wisdom from the diary of Pujya Acharya Sri...

Dear Prabhu Premi,

Prabhu bless you.

Knowledge empowers the seeker and imparts purity of the highest kind.

Just like a deadly fire causes destruction and even a blade of grass cannot survive, similarly the fire of knowledge completely destroys all sins, negativities and delusion arising out of one's ignorance, thereby bringing about inner purification.

One should take refuge in such knowledge, as it is the highest and the most divine refuge.

With love,

Swami Avdheshanand Giri

News in a Nutshell

Hari Om!

After three months of continuous programmes and events, the MahaKumbh camp at Harihar Ashram concluded on April 20th, 2010.

During the camp, Shrimad Bhagavad Katha, Shri Ram Katha, several workshops and conferences, Bhagvad Gita classes, yoga camps, prayer sessions, spiritual discourses, cultural events, yajna and other worship

ceremonies were held for the benefit of prabhu premis. Ceremonies such as 'Mahamandleshwar Pattabhishek Ceremony' and mantra diskha (initiation) were also held in the ashram premises.

Upon the completion of the camp, devotees who had been witnessing the activity and buzz of the ashram from the past three months, either in their capacity as 'bhakts' or as 'seva volunteers'

experienced a myriad of emotions - spiritual rejuvenation and zest on the one hand and subtle feelings of sadness on the other.

After Mahakumbh, H.H. Swamiji left for Baku, Azerbaijan where He was invited to participate in the 'World Summit of Religious Leaders'. During the month of May, H.H. Swamiji will be travelling to different parts of India and abroad.

Joy and Sorrow

We have all inevitably experienced sorrow at some time or the other. There is probably no such person who has never encountered unhappiness.

All the people in the world, whether rich or poor, are never entirely happy. Some may possess a lot of wealth, but have no children. There may be some who may have everything else, but not enough wealth and hence are discontented. Yet others may have children and even abundant financial resources required for their upbringing, but they are incapable of achieving much due to their poor health.

God has given both happiness and unhappiness to all human beings. Everyone has to willingly or unwillingly experience unhappiness in small or large quantities according to their fate. Good luck and

misfortune, dejection and elation, ascent and descent are inevitable in life, and cannot be avoided. Just like leaves, flowers and fruits grow and flourish on a tree, and then a time comes when all of it withers and falls to the ground, similarly, the cycle of joy and sorrow continues.

However, we should understand that joy and sorrow are nothing but shadows of life. They are like the seasons which come and go, or like night and day. Just like there is nightfall after daytime and sunrise after sunset, similarly, periods of unhappiness are followed by happiness. It is an altogether different thing that the duration of happiness and unhappiness in is uncertain.

Every person is involved in this cycle of joy and sorrow.

But by understanding their transient nature, we should face the situations of joy and sorrow with equanimity.

Happiness and unhappiness are like two sides of the same coin - one exists right behind the other. All of that which is dependent on external sources (people or situations) exists in the form of sorrow, while all that which is associated with the 'Self' exists in the form of joy.

The omnipresent Lord gives both happiness and pain to all human beings, which one has to accept. Hence what is the point in spending time in fear or being anxious about the unhappy times? As long as a person believes he is unhappy, he will continue to be unhappy. Such a person can never really gain freedom from sorrow. But once he resolves to be happy, he can be free

from the extremes of joy and sorrow.

Generally a person has a lot of expectations, and if he is not able to attain what he desires, he tends to become depressed.

Virtually, although no one in the world is completely free from pain and pleasure, a knowledgeable being has learnt to bear sorrow with a smile. We should also try to adjust ourselves to situations and maintain equanimity in both happiness and sorrow by accepting everything as the will of God.

Every person should be like a 'karma yogi' and making God the primary support of our lives, we should continue to perform our prescribed duty at all times.

(Excerpt from H.H. Swami Avdhesanand Ji's 'Muktipath')

Truth and Illusion

When man obtained the power of thinking, the following questions must have surely arisen in his mind - "Who am I? Where have I come from? Where will I go after leaving my physical body? Will I remain caught up in the recurring cycle of birth and death?"

In addition to this, man must have also had a desire to learn about the nature of the world, and what is his relationship with it? Questions like - 'Who controls the origin, maintenance and devastation of the objects in this world? Am I like the other objects of this world or is there something that distinguishes me from them?' must have indeed cropped up.

These curiosities were

resolved intrinsically back then, and philosophers continue to work on these questions even now.

According to the solutions we have so far, even though we are a part of the world's objects, we are really a component of a Higher, Supreme Being who is dynamic, indestructible, and exists in each and every person.

Things are created in the world, they encounter different circumstances, and at the end of time, they simply merge back. Our physical body which is comprised of five elements also gets merged. However, we are neither born nor do we die, and we also do not experience tribulation of any kind. The cycle of origin, maintenance and



devastation is limited only to the physical body. In spite of being a part of the ever blissful Lord, on account of our ignorance we experience pain and suffering.

All creatures apart from human beings depend on nature. Even if they want, they can not willfully perform actions or live the lives of their choice. They are subjected to the demands of nature. Whatever they receive in this life, they have no option but to accept it. In this context, scholars have said that humans have obtained not

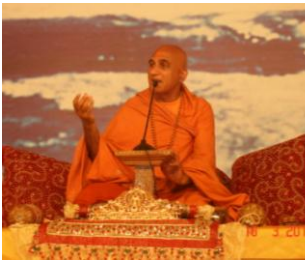
just a human body, but also the ability for thought and judgment. They are blessed with the ability to think, positively discriminate, and take decisions. They can ponder laterally about the past, present, and future and acquire the knowledge of what are the prescribed actions for them, what will be beneficial to them and what can possibly harm them.

'Treating happiness and sorrow, gain and loss, victory and defeat alike, engage yourself in your duty. By doing your duty this way, you will not incur sin.'

- Srimad Bhagvad Gita (2.38)

Shri Ram Katha and Various Conferences organized during Mahakumbh

'Shri Ram Katha Saptah' was held from 18th March to 26th March 2010 at Harihar Ashram in Haridwar. During this katha, the descriptive stories of Lord Ram, the dynamic and selfless characters of Sita Ji, Hanuman Ji, Shabri, Ahilya, etc were illustrated beautifully by H.H. Acharya Sri.



In continuation with the series of different Conferences, a 'Gathering of Nationally Renowned Poets' was organized on March 6th, 2010.

This Conference was presided by H.H. Swamiji and the lighting of the traditional lamp was done by Shri Brahmachari Brahmaswaroop Ji Maharaj, of Jayram Ashram, Haridwar. Among the prominent poets

and ghazal singers present on this occasion were Mr Kunwar Bechain, Mr Afzal Manglori, Mr Iccharam Dwivedi, Mr Kamal Kant Budhkar, Mr Suresh Sapan, Mr Murli Madhavan, and many more.

During this poetry conference, many beautiful and heart touching poetic compositions were recited by the different poets. A lovely poem on 'Mother' was among the ones that moved the entire audience to tears. At the end of the programme, Pujya Acharya Sri and Brahmachari Brahmaswaroop Ji presented 'rudraksh malas' and shawls to all the poets.

This was followed by two programmes on March 7th, 2010. In the first session, held from 3pm to 6pm, a 'Convention of Renowned Philosophers and Intellectuals' was held for which the Chief Guest was Shri Chandrashekhar Upadhyay Ji.

The theme of this event was 'Six schools of Indian Philosophy' during which

the scholars spoke about Vedanta philosophy, Mimamsa, Sankhya etc. In the second session, a 'Sanskrit Poet's Conference' was held from 8pm to 11 pm, in the divine presence of Pujya Swamiji and for which the Chief Guest was Prof Shrinivas Rath from Sanskrit University, Ujjain.

On the occasion of Women's Day, on March 8th, 2010, a Women's Empowerment Conference was held which was presided by Mahamandleshwar Swami Naisargika Giri Ji.

During this conference the invited speakers put forth their perspectives on the issues of women's empowerment and the role that they play in creating a better society, nation and world. They also called upon their fellow women to increase their own self-worth so they can make greater contributions to their families, society and the country.

An International Parliament of Literary Luminaries was held on March 21st while on

March 31st there was a special felicitation programme of eminent scholars and litterateurs.



A Water Parliament was held on April 7th to create awareness towards various water related issues. Several eminent personalities attended this event including Hon'ble Mr Pawan Bansal, Minister for Water Resources, Hon'ble Mr Justice Shambhu Nath Srivastava, Mr Rajiv Pratap Rudy, BJP spokesperson, Mr Mahabal Mishra, Member of Parliament, Mr Sanjay Patil, Member of Parliament, Swami Agnivesh Ji, Convenor of Sarv Dharma Sansad, Acharya Jitendra, National Secretary of the Ganga Mahasabha, Prof U. K Chaudhury, Banaras Hindu University, and Prof Pradeep Gupta, IIT Roorkee.

Mahamandleshwar Pattabhishek Ceremony Held at Harihar Ashram

On April 6th, 2010, eight saints were conferred the title of 'Mahamandleshwar' in a traditional 'Mahamandleshwar Pattabhishek' Ceremony held at Harihar Ashram in Kankhal, Haridwar.

This ceremony was supervised by Junapeethadhishwar Acharya Mahamandleshwar H.H. Swami Avdhesanand Giri Ji and attended by a large number of revered saints of different Akharas including Avahanpeethadhishwar Acharya Mahamandleshwar H.H. Swami Shivendra Puri Ji, Agnipeethadhishwar

Acharya Mahamandleshwar H.H. Swami Ramkrishnanand Ji, H.H. Pilot Baba, and H.H. Soham Baba. Among the other prominent dignitaries present for the event was Bhupendra Singh Huda Ji, Chief Minister of Harayana.

The ceremony began with the new Mahamandleshwar performing a worship and pooja in the 'Paradeshwar Temple'.

Following this, the 'Pattabhishek' was performed by H.H. Swamiji and he announced them as 'Mahamandleshwar'.

Thereafter, the ritual of gifting 'shawls' to them



took place on the stage.

The title of 'Mahamandleshwar' is one of the highest titles offered to saints of the 'Dasnami order'.

Many thousands of devotees from India and abroad formed part of the audience. The event was followed by 'Prasadam' (lunch).

THOUGHT OF THE MONTH



"The world can be truly understood only after attaining Self-Knowledge. Then you will remain peaceful even in times of grief."

Mahakumbh - A Divine Congregation

The Kumbh mela is a meeting ground for people from different walks of society. It seeks to bring about the unification of people from diverse fields and geographical regions by bringing them together on a common platform.



During Mahakumbh 2010, many revered saints, prominent dignitaries, and eminent personalities visited Harihar Ashram.

The Great Master His Holiness Param Pujya Swami Satyamitranand Giri Ji - Founder, Bharat Mata Mandir, Param Pujya Swami Dayanand Saraswati Ji, Swami Adhyatmanand Ji of Sivananda Ashram, Satguru Bodhinath Ji - Founder, Hinduism Today, Param Pujya Morari Babu Ji, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar Ji of Art of Living Foundation, Baba Ramdev Ji, Swami Chidanand Saraswati Ji from Parmarth Niketan, Sadhvi Ritambhara Ji, were among the great saints who also visited during Mahakumbh.

Harihar Ashram is the 'Guru Gaddi' of the Juna akhara. Several Mahants and Mahamandleshwars of Juna Akhara, including Brahmachari Brahmaswaroop Ji, H.H. Pilot Baba, and H.H. Soham Baba visited during the Mahakumbh.

On the occasion of mantradiक्षा of the sanyasis, several thousands of sadhus and sadhvis assembled to

receive their initiation from Pujya Acharya Ji.

During the Kumbh mela, many eminent saints took up the cause of environmental protection and expressed their deep concern for water related issues like, rapid melting of glaciers and drying of the lakes and rivers.

The year 2010 marks the 25th year of the Mercury Shivling at Paradeshwar Temple. During Mahakumbh, and as part of the Silver Jubilee Celebrations, many special events were organized.

A Maharudrabhishek (worship ceremony) was conducted on April 3rd, 2010, in the divine presence



of His Holiness Pujya Swamiji and prominent dignitaries including Shri L.K. Advani Ji, former deputy Prime Minister of India, with his family, Dr. Najma Heptulla, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha (Upper House of Indian Parliament), Dr Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank', Chief Minister of Uttarakhand and several ministers from different states were present for this worship.

On April 5th, 2010 another Rudrabhishek ceremony was conducted which was attended by Ms. Anju Bhargava, Member of President Obama's faith based advisory council.

'Parad Shivling' is extremely

unique, in the sense that it is constituted of pure mercury, and weighs approximately 151 kgs.

On 8th March, 1986, on the occasion of Mahashivratri, Punakumbh, at Haridwar and in the divine presence of former Acharya Junapeethadishwar Mahamandleshwar H.H. Swami Lokeshanand Giriji, the worship of this sacred Mercury Shivling was piously performed by His Excellency, former President of India, Mr. Giani Zail Singh.

The worship of this Shivling is capable of destroying all sins and its mere darshan can bring about purification in the devotee.

Distinguished guests such as Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, Mr Shivraj Singh Chauhan, Chief Minister of Goa, Mr Digambar Kamat, Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh, Mr Prem Kumar Dhupal, Congress General Secretary Mr Janardhan Dwivedi, also visited during Mahakumbh.



Among the famous personalities from the fields of art and culture that visited were renowned dance and film artistes Hema Malini, with daughter Esha Deol.

On April 12th, 2010 a great flute recital by the internationally acclaimed flute maestro Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia Ji, was organized. It was indeed a

memorable evening which left the audience enthralled by his brilliant performance.



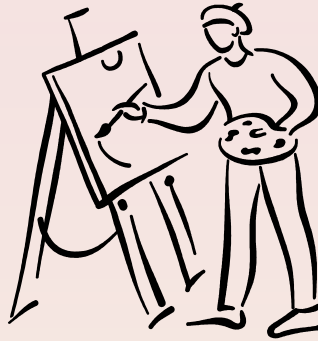
At a special 'bhajan sandhya' programme, famous Sufi singer Gurdaas Maan Ji presented some beautiful bhajans. An Indian cultural dance performance was also organized on April 14th, 2010.

The Kumbh was also multicultural and global as there were saints and devotees not just from India, but also from different places abroad such as Europe, USA, Japan, China, Malaysia, etc. The ambassadors of many international embassies also partook in the Kumbh festivities.

While on the one hand, devotees felt blessed to receive darshan of divine saints of international fame, they also experienced meditative oneness during the various cultural and musical programmes. The diverse conferences were intellectually stimulating, where many learned scholars, and nearly one dozen vice chancellors of various universities participated.

Hence, Mahakumbh festival was in the true sense a divine congregation.

A Child's Understanding



Once upon a time there was a king who was really fond of painting. One day, he went hunting in the jungle alone. After a while, when he got bored with hunting, he pulled out his canvas, paints, and brushes and climbed on top of a hill.

From there, he could see a beautiful view of the sunset. He started to paint the picture and soon finished it. Then he started looking at his creation from every angle. He took a few steps forward, backward, to the left and right. He kept taking steps backward and did not realize that he was next to the cliff of the hill.

At the slope of the hill, a child was taking his herd of animals home. He saw that the king was at the tip of the hill and could fall any moment. He ran to the top of the hill, and tried to catch the king's attention, but did not succeed. Finally, he grabbed the painting and began tearing the beautiful picture apart.

Upon seeing this, the king started running ahead and towards the boy so he could save his painting. He slapped the little boy on his cheeks, and said "How dare you to tear up my beautiful picture?"

The boy answered – "Dear king, please notice where you were standing. Had you taken even a single step backward, you would have fallen off the cliff and died."

The King was taken aback by his response. He took the child back to his palace and gave him education from the most capable teachers. When he grew up, he was elected as the General Secretary of the court.

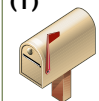
Prabhu Premi Sangh

H.H. Swamiji's Upcoming schedule

- **May 1st to May 6th : Different places in India**
- **May 7th to May 15th : Harihar Ashram, Haridwar**
- **May 16th to May 31st : Different places abroad**

CONTACT INFORMATION

(1)



Harihar Ashram
Kankhal,
Haridwar - 249 408
(Uttarakhand), India.



Mobile: +91-8006008682
+91-8006008683
+91-8006008684
Fax : +91-1334-246973

(2)

Prabhu Prem Ashram
Jagadhari Road,
Ambala Cantt -133 006
Hararyana, India.



Phone: +91-171-2699335, 2699367



Email: prabhuprem@hotmail.com
pps.ambala@gmail.com

About the Organization...

'Prabhu Premi Sangh' is founded, directed and led by His Holiness Param Pujya Acharya Swami Avdheshanand Giriji Maharaj. H.H. Swamiji is the spiritual head of the JunaAkhada, the biggest and the oldest order of the Sanatan Vedic Hindu Dharma, which has millions of saints. Revered Swamiji is the Trustee of Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha, the apex body of the Hindu dharma. H.H. Acharya Sri is playing a vital role as a board member of the 'World Council of Religious Leaders', a council of great religious leaders devoted to the noble purpose of promoting world peace and communal harmony.

His divine vision for the spiritual and social welfare of mankind and his devoted efforts in this direction, led to the formation of 'Prabhu Premi Sangh'. It has beautiful ashrams established in a divine, peaceful setting in the cities of Ambala and Haridwar, as well as numerous branches throughout India and abroad. Prabhu Premi Sangh is constantly engaged in various spiritual pursuits and programs with the mission to promote amongst society a spirit of selfless service, and impart spiritual knowledge via the study of scriptures, yoga camps, discourses and spiritual gatherings (satsang).



Please visit us online at: www.prabhupremisangh.org.



Feedback

Prabhu Premi Sangh's e-newsletter welcomes your suggestions, comments and queries. We invite you to share with us your viewpoints concerning spirituality, prayer and meditation. You can also send us your personal views, experiences with Swamiji which we will publish under the "Straight from the Heart" section. Please email us at prabhupremisanghnews@gmail.com.

"Blessed are those who have conquered evil."